

FREIRE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025 - 2026

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I. SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

The mission of Freire Charter School is to provide a college-preparatory learning experience with a focus on individual freedom, critical thinking, and problem solving in an environment that emphasizes the values of community, teamwork, equity, and commitment to peace.

VISION

Freire Charter School is the power to build your future.

We can offer your student all of the tools needed for a bright future, but ultimately this success depends on your student taking full advantage of these tools themselves.

SHARED VALUES

For more than two decades, Freire Schools has developed, refined, and implemented its educational program based on current research on what is best for students. But we have learned over time that it is our values, more than any collection of program elements, that define who we are as a network of schools and make us a uniquely strong, creative, and collaborative Freire Family. At Freire Charter School and in the Freire School Network, we believe:

- Love binds our Freire Family and drives everything we do.
- Every student has the power to build the future. Preparing all kids for college ensures their futures are limitless.
- A safe, supportive, and uplifting community must be a diverse and antiracist community.
- We are all works in progress, committed to our growth as individuals, as schools, and as a network.
- Safe and peaceful schools free our kids to take risks and dream bigger.
- Freire = Family.

The values and policies of Freire Charter School are explained in detail through the Student & Family Handbook. All members of the Freire community are bound to the values, policies, and procedures found herein.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

Ten Things You Need to Know About Freire Charter School

1. **Freire Charter High School serves any and all 9th - 12th grade students in the City of Philadelphia.** Where there are too many students and not enough spaces, Freire uses a random lottery system to determine enrollment. We do not discriminate based on race, gender, creed, sexual orientation, academic ability – or anything whatsoever.
2. **The students who succeed at Freire are the ones who take action to help themselves.** Students who see a bright future for themselves are willing to do whatever it takes (i.e. long nights of homework, studying on the weekends, going to the library on a sunny day) to get the best education available.

3. **We mean what we say at Freire.** Perhaps other schools tell you that if you break their Code of Conduct there will be consequences. Then, when it comes right down to it, many of these schools do not enforce their rules. At Freire, we enforce everything we say. Honestly. We do what we say we are going to do, and we expect you to do the same.
4. **We are a nonviolent and peaceful school.** We strive every day to be a nonviolent school, because we believe that the absence of violence and a universally held commitment to peace will enable the conditions required for deep and meaningful learning for everyone. As a result, acts of physical violence of any kind are not tolerated and mostly will result in a formal hearing with potential recommendation for expulsion to the school's Board of Directors.
5. **Freire Charter School is a college prep school.** We prepare any student who desires to go to college to be successful when they get there. Your student will be happy with our rigorous educational program, if they are excited to learn, work hard, access support when they need it, and prepare for their futures every day.
6. **Remaining a student at Freire takes hard work, courage, honesty, and constant determination every day.** Getting into Freire means getting a space through our lottery. That's the easy part. The hard part is staying at Freire. We guarantee there will be challenges at Freire, and we will ask community members to do things they think are beyond their abilities. Those who succeed at Freire are the ones who never stop trying, and who are willing to work as hard as it takes to achieve excellence. No excuses.
7. **Freire teachers and staff are some of the most talented, dedicated, and caring in the country.** These professionals come to Freire to serve students and families to the best extent ever imagined in a school.
8. **Parents/Guardians must be involved and must participate in their student's education with us as equal partners.** We will expect and demand this of all our families. Freire students need support, family involvement and encouragement every step of the way through high school.
9. **Learning at Freire is rigorous and joyous, challenging and exciting.** Learning happens everywhere – in classrooms, on school trips, at internships, on athletic fields, using the internet, planning school dances, eating healthy food before school, and doing homework at night.
10. **Freire is a place to take risks, dream big, and then work hard every day to meet those dreams head on.** We strive for excellence in our community every minute of every day. Freire is a school for those who want to do and be their best all the time.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Students Must:

1. Communicate honestly and openly with each other in order to build excellence into every part of Freire.
2. Support all other community members.
3. Act lawfully and responsibly and always with care for others.
4. Uphold the rules set forth in the Code of Conduct.
5. Arrive at school on time.
6. Follow all policies and procedures of the school.

7. Strive at all times to solve conflict in a peaceful way that emphasizes respect for all parties.
8. Report any potential bullying, harassment, or violent activities that they have knowledge of.

All Parents Must:

1. Communicate honestly and openly with each other in order to build excellence into every part of Freire.
2. Support other parents and community members.
3. Act lawfully and responsibly and always with care for others.
4. Help your student uphold the rules set forth in the Code of Conduct.
5. Make sure your student arrives at school on time.
6. Help your student follow all policies and procedures of the school.
7. Maintain accurate contact information with the school.
8. Assume an active role in furthering the success of all students.
9. Strive at all times to solve conflict in a peaceful way that emphasizes respect for all parties.
10. Report any potential bullying, harassment or violent activities that you have knowledge of.

Parent Code of Conduct:

1. All parents must sign in with the receptionist upon entering the building.
2. Parents will be given a visitor's pass which must be displayed at all times.
3. Parents are expected to model adherence to all rules of the student Code of Conduct.
4. All parents must strive to work in a mutually respectful, collaborative effort with Freire staff and constituents.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Family & Student Handbook does not contain all School policies applicable to students in full. The Charter School has additional policies that create rights and protections for students that can be found on the Charter School website. These include but are not limited to transgender and non-conforming students, married pregnant and parenting students, homebound students, teen dating violence, etc. This Student and Family Handbook, along with the policies found on the [website](#), will contain all of the policies applicable to Freire Charter School Wilmington's students and families.

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing address:

Freire Charter School
2027 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Telephone: 215-557-8555

Fax: 215-557-9051

Website: freirecharterschool.org

SOCIAL MEDIA

Freire Schools uses social media to celebrate our students and our schools, as well as to relay important information. Please follow **@freireschools** on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and Freire High School's accounts **@fchs.1** on Instagram and **@freirecharterphila** on Facebook.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school day runs from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Given the nature of the current health environment, school hours are subject to change.

STAFF LIST & CONTACT INFORMATION:

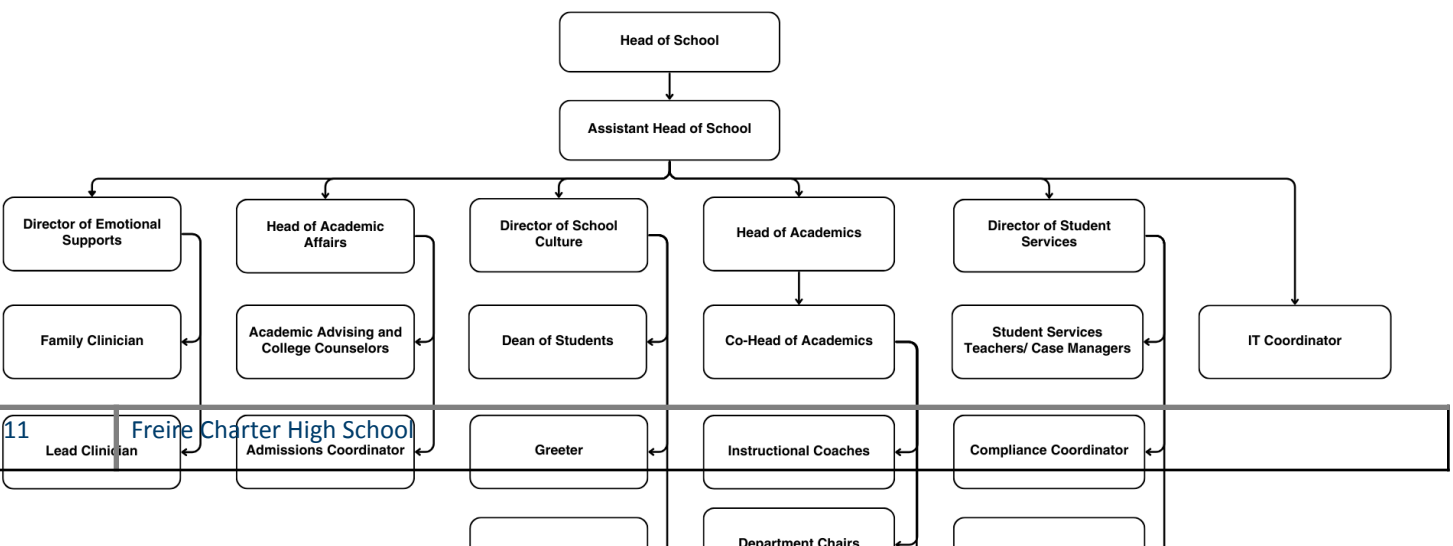
A complete list of staff and their contact information can be found on our website.

Administrative Contact Information:

- Pamela Dougherty, Head of School, ext. 3903, pamela.dougherty@freirecharterschool.org
- Katie Pick, Head of Academics, katie.pick@freirecharterschool.org
- Adam Antonioli, Assistant Head of Academics, ext. 3923, Adam.antonioli@freirecharterschool.org
- Alexis Prince, Head of Academic Affairs, alexis.prince@freirecharterschool.org
- Nyaka Kimp, Head of Academic Supports, ext. 3913 Nyaka.Kimp@freirecharterschool.org
- Adam Visconto, Director of Student Services, ext. 3913, Adam.Visconto@freirecharterschool.org
- Ben Moore, Director of School Culture, ext. 3919, Ben.Moore@freirecharterschool.org
- Rayna Vinson, Dean of Students, ext. 3908, Rayna.Vinson@freirecharterschool.org
- Lynn McGinley, Dean of Students, ext 3931, lynn.mcginley@freirecharterschool.org
- Chris McNeal, Dean of Students, ext 3933, Chris.McNeal@freirecharterschool.org

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

High School Organizational Chart



LINK TO SCHOOL CALENDAR

The School Calendar can be found on our website [HERE](#) and will be updated as necessary.

III. STUDENT CONDUCT AND FREIRE POLICIES

This handbook serves to highlight key policies to help parents and understand school rules and expectations. A complete list of these policies can be found on our website [HERE](#). If you have any questions or would like additional clarification on any of these policies, please reach out to the Head of School.

BOARD POLICY 201: CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT AT FCS

We believe that it is important for FCS to set forth the expectations of all community members. This Code of Conduct is designed to support FCS's mission and provide a college-preparatory learning environment with a focus on the individual avenues of problem solving, freedom, and critical thinking, as well as the collective values of nonviolence, safety, community, and teamwork.

CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDING PRINCIPLE

As an educational institution we recognize that it is our responsibility to educate students regarding nonviolence and the Code in general. Our practice is based upon the belief that as students progress from one grade to the next they become more responsible for the rules and gain a greater capacity for independent decision making.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Freire Charter School will provide our students with skills that they need for the future. The teachers, counselors, administrators, and custodial staff at Freire are dedicated to the education and well-being of our students. In turn, Freire expects and requires all students to show respect and care for the staff, volunteers, visitors, the building, each other, and people of all cultures represented in the school. Freire also expects students to take care of the property within the school and in the community as defined below.

DEFINITIONS

Student: A person enrolled in Freire Charter School.

Parent/Guardian: The official caregiver of a minor child, including but not limited to mother, father, stepparent, grandparent or court-appointed guardian, including DHS workers and/or group home employees as identified at time of admission or amended in writing thereafter; or an emancipated minor (of which proof is required).

Staff: Any person employed by, or volunteering at, Freire Charter School.

Community Member: Any Freire Charter School student, parent, staff member, mentor, board member, volunteer, neighbor, or any other person a student may encounter while on school grounds (defined below). These integral parts join together to create a special community.

School setting: School setting means (1) in school; (2) on school grounds; (3) in school vehicles; (4) at designated bus stops; (5) at activities sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by Freire (e.g. field trips, sporting events, events where students are representing Freire Charter School); or (6) in any other circumstance or location (on or away from school property) where Freire has jurisdiction over a student's conduct.

Intervention: A consequence assigned by the school as a result of a violation of the Code of Conduct. Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct will result in more severe interventions. Students who do not respond to repeated interventions and continue to behave in ways that violate the Code of Conduct and challenge the expectations of the community may be asked to leave the community.

Mediation program: A conflict resolution program where trained students and staff guide individuals who are in conflict toward a peaceful resolution. Every student has the opportunity to participate in mediation when there is a conflict with another community member so that the conflict can be resolved in a constructive, nonviolent manner. Mediation is to be used in a proactive manner **PRIOR** to an infraction of the Code of Conduct, not as a result of an infraction of the Code of Conduct.

Emotional Support Team: A team of trained mental health professionals, which may include social workers and master's degree level interns, that the school uses to provide services to students and families. Any student/family referred by Freire to participate in family therapy is encouraged to do so. Family therapy is provided free of charge and is a very important part of building and strengthening our community. In certain cases, mandatory meetings with a member of the emotional support team may be assigned by the school as a behavioral intervention.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The Board authorizes school administration to develop procedures to implement this Policy, setting specific behavioral expectations and outlining interventions and consequences.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT POLICY

The physical punishment of students for infractions of the discipline policy is strictly prohibited.

Teachers and school authorities may use reasonable force under the following circumstances:

- To quell a disturbance
- To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects
- In protection of persons or property, or for the purpose of self-defense

PROCEDURE 201A: GENERAL BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

ALWAYS BE KIND AND RESPECTFUL

Creating and maintaining a good relationship with the entire surrounding community both inside and outside of the school grounds is an important goal of our school.

The following actions conflict with our expectations and are unacceptable:

- Sexual activity or public displays of affection.
- Loitering on the street corners or sitting on the steps of surrounding buildings.
- Making excessive noise when entering the building or leaving the building.
- The use of profanity (cursing) anywhere inside or out of the building.

- Interrupting the learning environment.
- Speaking to or treating any community member in a rude/disrespectful manner.
- Theft
- Physical Recklessness
- Using local businesses as places to hang out, or gathering inside stores, restaurants or local businesses before or after school.

Grounds Kept Clean and Neat

The following actions conflict with our expectations and are unacceptable:

- Littering anywhere near the school grounds – inside or outside.
- Eating or drinking in any area except the designated areas. Food items are permitted only in the lunchroom, during advisory, and the first period of the day.
- Possession of a glass bottle.

On Time and Ready to Learn

The following actions conflict with our expectations and are unacceptable:

- Using school telephones without permission.
- Roaming the building without a pass.
- Disrupting the learning environment in any way.
- Playing cards or dice, or gambling in any way.
- Being tardy to class.

Safety First

The following actions conflict with our expectations and are unacceptable:

- Horseplay or play fighting, inside or outside of school. Horseplay and play fighting are defined as rough, noisy, unruly, or rowdy play that may or may not involve physical contact.
- Running down the stairs or hallways in the school, around school, and outside of the school.
- Throwing objects anywhere in the building (extreme circumstances could lead to recommendation for expulsion).
- Speaking to any community member in a way that makes them feel unsafe or violated. (Extreme circumstances may lead to a suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion).
- Tampering in any way with school building systems or equipment (such as fire alarms or fire extinguishers).
- Being in areas of the buildings before or after school without the permission and presence of a staff member.

Board Policy 201B: Interventions

The Board grants the Head of School authority to develop a program of consequences and interventions for violating the Code of Conduct. In the event of potential violations of the Nonviolence and Commitment to Peace Policy, Policy Against Bullying and Cyberbullying, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy, or other serious infractions, students shall be afforded all rights defined by 22 Pa. Code Chapter 12.

First Level Interventions

If a student chooses to act in an unacceptable way, the Dean's office will assign a consequence for the student's actions. **Each intervention is meant to be used as a warning that the student's behavior is unacceptable and therefore should NOT BE REPEATED. Repeated or excessive violation of the same rule will result in more severe consequences.**

The following is a list of interventions which may be used by the Dean. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather a sample of the interventions the Dean may use:

- Anger management
- Apology letter
- Community outreach/service
- Behavior contract
- Probationary contract
- Detention
- Educational Seminars
- Hours outside of school time
- Informal Hearing
- Losing privileges to attend school functions
- Loss of privilege to go out at lunch
- Parent conference (phone or personal)
- Personalized Improvement Plan (PIP)
- Public apology (written or verbal)
- Research project
- Support groups
- Teacher/Student Conference
- Teacher detention
- Therapy

A student whose behavior does not change or intensifies will be subject to interventions of increased severity.

All students and parents will receive a warning notification if unacceptable behavior continues, or the frequency of that behavior increases. Depending on the severity of the infraction, a student could end up in one, or more of the following tiers of consequences:

1. Lunch Detention
2. After School Detention
3. Morning Detention
4. Family Meeting
5. In-School Suspension
6. Suspension

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

An in-school suspension (ISS) may be enforced in cases including, but not limited to, when the student skips or misses multiple morning or lunch detentions. The Head of School and Dean have the authority to determine the instances in which an in-school suspension is appropriate. The Deans reserve the right to issue an ISS based on the circumstances beyond an accumulation of detentions. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance. During an in-school suspension, students are expected to work on academic work that may be collected by their Academic Advisor or Case Manager. The student will also meet with the Dean, members of the Family Therapy Program, and other adults who can intervene, depending on the circumstances.

INITIAL INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

If there is a suspected violation of the Nonviolence and Commitment to Peace Policy, the Policy Against Bullying and Cyberbullying, the Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy, or another serious infraction, the School will follow these steps:

- Students will be separated as necessary.
- A preliminary investigation to determine whether the policy was violated will be conducted.

- Once the Dean has provided the family with the opportunity to explain their story and evidence has been discussed, the Dean will determine two things:
 - Did the student know about the policy?
 - Did the student break the policy?
- If it is determined the policy was violated, then the following steps will be taken:
 - For a first violation of the Policy Against Bullying and Cyberbullying, the student will be issued, at minimum, an after-school detention.
 - For a repeat violation of the Policy Against Bullying and Cyberbullying, or any violation of the Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy, the student will be suspended for a minimum of 2 days (see the Suspension Policy and Procedure below). If the suspension is for 4 days or more, an Informal Hearing will be held (see the Hearings Policy below).
 - Extreme or repeat violations of these policies may result in a recommendation for expulsion.
 - A Behavior Contract, as deemed appropriate by the Head of School or Dean (see the Behavioral Contract Procedure below). This may include counseling for the student(s) involved.
- Should the Dean find that the student both knew about and violated the Nonviolence Policy then the Dean is required to recommend the student for expulsion from the school.
- In a case where a student may have violated the law, the school may refer the incident to law enforcement while simultaneously continuing the school's disciplinary process. Consequences imposed by the School are independent of and in addition to any penalties imposed under the law.

PLEASE NOTE: A Dean's recommendation for expulsion is a recommendation only. A student is not formally expelled until after a formal expulsion hearing is held and the Board of Directors votes to expel the student.

Upon a recommendation for expulsion, the student and their parent will be provided with the following:

- Their rights and responsibilities as a student/parent.
- The formal hearing/expulsion policy and procedures

BOARD POLICY 202A: SUSPENSIONS

Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days. Suspensions may be issued by the Head of School or Dean. A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for suspension and has been given the opportunity to respond. Parents/guardians shall be notified immediately in writing when a student is suspended. Prior notice of the intended suspension is not required if the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened. When the suspension is for 4 or more school days, the student and parent/guardian shall be given the opportunity for an Informal Hearing in compliance with the requirements of §12.8(c) (see the Hearings Policy below). The Head of School can develop procedures and expectations around suspensions within their authority under 22 Pa. Code Chapter 12 and the board policy.

SUSPENSION/REINSTATEMENT PROCEDURES

If a student has been suspended, they will be prohibited from attending school, being on school grounds or participating in or attending school activities (dances, field trips, athletic events, etc.). Students are required to make up all class work and tests missed during a suspension.

Actions that will result in a suspension from school activities include, but are not limited to:

- Jeopardizing the safety of another community member
- Active or passive participation in the destruction of property
- Possession of weapon, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal items
- Breaking the Nonviolence Policy
- Cutting class or leaving the classroom without permission
- Stealing
- Sexual harassment
- Severe acts of defiance or disrespect that cause harm to the community and take away from the learning of other students

After a preliminary investigation is conducted by the Dean's Office and it is determined that a suspension is appropriate, the school will verbally notify parent or guardian of the reason for the suspension using the contact information on file and will mail and/or email a copy of the suspension notice to the address on file and give the family an opportunity to respond. The school will also attempt to schedule a Reinstatement Meeting with the student and parent or guardian at this time. If a parent gives verbal permission for the student to leave school, the suspension will begin immediately and the student will be dismissed. If the parent cannot be reached, the student will be held until the end of the school day.

REINSTATEMENT MEETINGS

If a student is suspended but not expelled, the student and their parent or guardian are required to participate in a meeting with the Dean's Office before the student will be permitted to resume attending school or school activities. Students may not attend school or school activities until this mandatory meeting occurs.

The Reinstatement Meeting will serve as a warning to alert the student and their parent/guardian that they have seriously or chronically violated the school's Code of Conduct. It is further hoped that the student will realize the impact their behavior has had on their learning and that of their fellow students, and therefore make all necessary changes in their behavior while in school.

The School may waive the requirement for a Reinstatement Meeting only if a behavior contract was put in place as part of an informal hearing.

BOARD POLICY 202B: INFORMAL HEARINGS

Informal hearings are held in cases where a serious infraction of the Code of Conduct has occurred, when a suspension is 4 or more days long, and/or any instance where the School may make a recommendation for expulsion. Informal hearings will follow the format described below:

- The school will offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 3 days of the suspension.
- The school will provide both parent and student with sufficient notice of time and place of the informal hearing.
- During the informal hearing, the school will state the concerns and observed behaviors.
- The school will provide the results of any investigation should the incident have required one.
- Both parent and student will have the opportunity to provide their observations, comments and concerns regarding the incident.
- Students have the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
- Students have the right to speak and produce witnesses on their own behalf.

- Upon conclusion of the meeting the school will determine the next action, which may include a recommendation for expulsion or a probationary behavioral or probationary contract.
 - Recommendation for Expulsion:
 - See formal “Formal Hearing/Expulsion Policy” (next page)
 - Behavioral or Probationary Contract:
 - The Head of School or Dean may determine that a behavior contract is required

BEHAVIORAL/PROBATIONARY CONTRACT PROCEDURE

- The administrator will review with the student the written warning, which states the student understands:
 - **This is their final warning from Freire.**
 - Students will be required to fulfill the conditions of the contract.
 - **Failure to fulfill the conditions of the contract may result in a recommendation for expulsion from the school.**
- When a contract is issued, the student and parent are made aware of the terms being presented by the Dean’s office.
- The contract will establish a time and date when the compliance of the contract will be reviewed.
- The contract may include restorative measures such as an apology letter or other interventions assigned by the School.

NOTE: Contracts are non-negotiable. Students and parents must adhere to all terms of the contract as dictated by the school. Since contracts are issued in lieu of a recommendation for expulsion, if a parent/student does not agree to follow the terms of the contract, then there is a possibility that the refusal could result in a recommendation for expulsion. Prior to this, a meeting to review the contract will be held and will include the Head of School, a Dean, or their designee parent/guardian, and the student and provides a space for students and parents to provide feedback on the contract terms.

BOARD POLICY 202C: FORMAL HEARINGS/EXPULSIONS

If a student is recommended for expulsion as a consequence of their actions, they have the right to a formal expulsion hearing. This hearing must commence within 15 days of formal charges (unless mutually agreed upon by both parties). Special Education students have additional rights as described below in the Policy on Discipline of Students with Disabilities.

- A formal hearing is **REQUIRED** in all expulsion actions.
- An expulsion hearing will be arranged and notification of the charges, all evidence, and the rights of students/parents shall be sent to the student’s parents or guardians at least 3 days prior to the hearing. The information will be emailed and sent via certified mail.
- The hearing will commence on the agreed upon date with an independent Fact Finder presiding over the hearing.
- The school will present evidence, statements, and its case, giving the parent and student a chance to view all information.
- Parents and students will be given the opportunity to question witnesses and present their own information.

- The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
- The Fact Finder will write a summation of facts that will be presented at the following Board Meeting.
- Only the Board of Directors, through a majority vote of the entire board, can determine whether a student will be expelled.
- Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

PARENT AND STUDENT RIGHTS

- In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.
- A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions.
- This hearing will be conducted by an impartial Fact Finder.
- The Board of Directors is given a summation of facts by the Fact Finder and a majority vote of the entire governing board is required to expel a student.
- The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:
 - Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
 - At least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student, and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension. Otherwise the hearing will proceed as scheduled.
 - The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
 - The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and must have the parent or guardians (as identified in the PowerSchool database) attend the hearing.
 - 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.
 - The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
 - The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on their own behalf.
 - A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
 - The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:
 - Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
 - Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400—1482).
- Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.
- The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the district's superintendent. Parents have 5 days to find the appropriate placement and notify the school.

PARENTS RIGHT TO WITHDRAWAL

Freire Charter School is a school of choice for families. Parents may choose to voluntarily withdraw their student from the school at any time for any reason. The School cannot formally expel a student who is no longer enrolled at Freire. Should a parent choose to withdraw their student from Freire prior to potentially being expelled, any remaining procedures related to expulsion will cease. The student's academic record will reflect the withdrawal, not an expulsion. If a parent decides to withdraw their student, they must submit an Official Withdrawal Form.

BOARD POLICY 202D: DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Freire Charter School will develop and implement positive Behavior Support Plans and programs for students with disabilities who require specific interventions to address behaviors that interfere with learning.

Students with disabilities who violate the Code of Conduct, or engage in inappropriate behavior, disruptive or prohibited activities and/or actions injurious to themselves or others, which would typically result in corrective action or discipline of students without disabilities, will be disciplined in accordance with requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), its implementing state and federal laws and regulations and school policy.

SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

A student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) days of school per school year, for the same reasons and duration as a student without a disability. Such suspension shall not constitute a change in the student's educational placement.

CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT/MANIFESTATION DETERMINATIONS

A manifestation determination is required by IDEA (2004) when considering the exclusion of a student with a disability that constitutes a disciplinary change of placement.

In certain circumstances, students who have not been determined to be eligible for special education may assert the protections of IDEA 2004 if Freire had "knowledge" that the student was a student with a disability before the occurrence of the behavior that precipitated a disciplinary action. Freire will be deemed to have knowledge if: (1) the parent/guardian of the student expressed a concern in writing (unless the parent/guardian is illiterate or has a disability that prevents compliance with the requirements contained in this provision) to Freire that the student is in need of special education and related services; (2) the parent/guardian of the student has requested an evaluation of the student; or (3) the teacher of the student, or other Freire personnel, expressed a specific concern about the behavior or performance of the student to the director of special education or other supervisory personnel at Freire.

DISCIPLINARY CHANGE OF PLACEMENT

A disciplinary change of placement occurs when a student who is receiving special education services is excluded from school:

- For more than ten (10) school days in a row,
- For more than fifteen (15) school days in any one school year,
- When days 11-15 constitute a pattern of exclusion, OR
- When a series of removals constitutes a pattern, through consideration of factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another; OR
- For any length of time for a student with an intellectual disability*.

*For students with intellectual disability, any disciplinary suspension or expulsion is a change in educational placement and may not be made without parental consent or judicial approval.

The School may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for no more than forty-five (45) school days without a manifestation determination review under the following circumstances, and where the underlying conduct is at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of Freire:

- Carrying or possessing a weapon
- Knowingly possessing, using, selling or soliciting illicit substances
- Inflicting serious bodily injury upon another person

In addition, a student with a disability may be removed to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if a hearing officer orders the change in placement after determining that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

On the date a decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement due to a violation of the Code of Conduct, Freire will notify the parent/guardian(s) of that decision and provide procedural safeguards to the family. A student with a disability who is removed from the student's current placement shall continue to receive educational services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP (with services as determined by the student's IEP team); and shall receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

Note: IDEA 2004 does not prohibit Freire from reporting a crime committed by a student with a disability to appropriate authorities, nor does it prevent state law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of federal and state law to crimes committed by a student with a disability. Any such reports made by Freire shall comply with IDEA 2004, the Memorandum of Understanding between Freire and the Philadelphia Police Department and Pennsylvania Department of Education Guidance.

MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION PROCESS

Within ten (10) school days of the decision to change the student's placement, the parent/guardian and members of the students' IEP team shall conduct a Manifestation Determination meeting to answer the following questions:

1. Was the behavior caused by, or directly and substantially related to, the student's disability; OR
2. Was the behavior a direct result of the failure to implement the IEP?

If the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP team will take one of the following actions:

- Conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), unless one was already conducted prior to the change of placement occurring, and implement a positive Behavior Support Plan for the student; OR
- If a positive Behavior Support Plan has already been developed, review and modify it as necessary to address the behavior; and return the student to the placement from which they were removed, unless the parent/guardian and IEP team agree to a change of placement as part of the positive Behavior Support Plan.

If the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability:

- The student may be disciplined in accordance with school policy, rules, and regulations in the same manner and to the same extent as students without disabilities.

BOARD POLICY 203: NONVIOLENCE AND COMMITMENT TO PEACE

VISION

AN ABSENCE OF VIOLENCE AND A COMMITMENT TO PEACE ENABLE THE CONDITIONS REQUIRED FOR DEEP AND MEANINGFUL LEARNING FOR US ALL.

PURPOSE

The Board recognizes the importance of the concepts of nonviolence and a commitment to peace in the educational program, and strives to offer all students an educational environment free from violence. Violence of any kind deprives students and staff of a safe environment for learning. This policy is designed to preserve the unique history of the formation of Freire's nonviolence requirements and to outline how nonviolence and a commitment to peace interacts with other Board policies.

If the Board determines that this policy or any related procedures have caused undue harm to the Freire community, the Board will take appropriate corrective action to ensure that the policy remains responsive to community needs, and adequately protects students from undue bias or prejudice of any kind. In addition, the Board's commitment is to provide sufficient opportunities for students to learn to de-escalate conflict and use conflict productively. We do so by teaching students and all members of the school community to communicate effectively and respectfully, in a way that honors self-expression, preserves respect for others, and, consequently, avoids violence.

HISTORY

Nonviolence has come to be a way of life inside Freire Charter School, driven in large part by the students themselves. When Freire first opened in 1999, students openly told stories of their experiences at previous schools. These stories were raw tales of the violence experienced at the hands of fellow students and even from teachers, and were filled with feelings of horror and fear. In the wake of these stories the students expressed the hope that Freire would be different, and would be a place where teachers could safely teach and students could securely learn.

During that first year, Freire students worked weekly with the school leadership to build the core elements of what Freire would one day later become. Students and staff committed to the values of non-violence and high academic achievement. At the end of the 1999-2000 school year, Freire students and school leadership created and approved the first version of Freire's Nonviolence Policy. Students, staff, and parents may look to this Policy as evidence that Freire is committed to safety and that all community members are bound together in trust and mutual respect.

As part of our Commitment to Antiracist Action, the Freire Schools network went back to revisit the Code of Conduct and ensure equity, student voice, and fairness for all. Over the past three years, Freire Schools conducted a study of our nonviolence policy during which a group of Freire students, culture leaders, administration, and professional researchers interviewed students, families, staff, Board members, and alumni about how safe Freire Schools campuses feel, how safety compares to previous years, and how our culture compares to other schools. We learned the following: (1) our community does not want us to compromise our commitment to school safety, (2) we need to increase our efforts to prevent violence, including increasing visibility of our available student supports, and (3) we need to better define violence and communicate this clearly and frequently. This document reflects changes that came out of this study, and is one of the ways we communicate our definition of physical violence and our expectation that physical violence will not be tolerated under any circumstance. Our Freire community stands firm today in our value to preserve a safe, peaceful environment in which all of us can take risks, learn, and thrive.

DEFINITIONS

Code of Conduct means the policies, procedures, rules and regulations of Freire Charter School governing the conduct of all students during the time they are under the jurisdiction of the school. Student disciplinary procedures are set forth in the Board Policy 201: Code of Conduct and Board Policy 202: Suspension and Expulsion.

School Setting means: (1) in school; (2) on school grounds; (3) in school vehicles; (4) at designated bus stops; (5) at activities sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by Freire (e.g. field trips, sporting events, events where students are representing Freire Charter School); or (6) in any other circumstance or location (on or away from school property) where Freire has jurisdiction over a student's conduct.

GUIDELINES

1. Freire students shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects a commitment to nonviolence. Students are expected to:
 - a. Act in a manner that affords all other students the opportunity to learn which is physically safe and free from distractions.
 - b. Admit mistakes, and take increased responsibility for their own learning and social actions.
 - c. Respect self and all others, and respect individual differences.
 - d. Behave appropriately while in school, on field trips, and in any forum where the student is representing the Freire community.
 - e. Avoid hurtful language.
 - f. Use appropriate channels to express concerns, fears, or complaints.
2. Physical violence occurs when an individual student harms, attempts to harm, or threatens another individual via physical force. It is a deliberate act. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Any type of striking or grabbing by one student or another person (punching, biting, kicking, hair pulling, etc.)
 - b. Fighting another student or a group of students, including joining a fight
 - c. Serious threat to cause harm to another via social media or other serious verbal intimidation.
 - d. Throwing objects
 - e. Structural violence such as the physical destruction of property that causes any function of the school to be temporarily suspended
 - f. Weapons possession
 - g. Sexual assault, as defined in Board Policy 116: Title IX Policy
3. Freire defines other types of violence as the harm or intent to cause harm in a non-physical way (e.g. mental or emotional). Examples include but are not limited to:
 - a. Invading an individual's personal space
 - b. Recklessly endangering other students, staff, or community members
 - c. Verbal intimidation or threats, including threatening to bring another individual to fight someone, or arranging for a non-student or non-community member to engage in harassment of another student (including threats made by text, video, or using any type of social networking site/app)
 - d. Abusive or derogatory language

- e. Bullying, as defined in Board Policy 204: Anti-Bullying
 - f. Hazing, as defined Board Policy 214: Anti-Hazing
 - g. Unlawful harassment, as defined in Board Policy 115: Harassment
4. When Freire students are in a School Setting, the Code of Conduct and the procedures and timelines set forth therein shall apply. When a student engages in conduct that is prohibited in this Policy, it shall constitute a violation of the Code of Conduct. Violations may result in disciplinary consequences up to and including a recommendation that a student be expelled from Freire.
- a. Unless leadership determines that there are extenuating circumstances requiring a different result, the disciplinary consequence for students who engage in physical violence (defined above) shall be referral for a formal expulsion hearing unless that student is protected under IDEA (34 CFR §300.530(d)(4)).
 - b. Acts of violence where the intent is not to cause physical harm (defined above) may lead to a formal hearing. The school administration will evaluate the situation on a case by case basis and determine disciplinary consequences.
5. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to abridge student rights to due process, including procedural and substantive rights, that are granted by law or another Freire Charter School policy.
6. Some acts of violence, including those listed above, may also constitute violations of the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In those instances, law enforcement may be contacted by the school.
7. Freire shall utilize restorative practices that respond to acts of violence, and shall also offer pro-active supports to students to prevent violence and respond to it. Supports may include orientation for new students, peer mediation programs, instruction in conflict resolution, connecting students and families with community resources such as family therapy and counseling, restorative circles, and other programs.

DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. The Board authorizes school administration to develop procedures to implement this Policy.
2. The Board directs school administration to develop and issue a “Nonviolence and Commitment to Peace” acknowledgement of this Policy and which shall be included in the Student & Family Handbook signed by all Freire students and parents/guardians.
3. The Board authorizes school administration to develop a comprehensive system of supports to prevent violence at Freire Charter School and to encourage and maintain a positive, peaceful school climate.

Chart of Possible Consequences (Consequences are determined on a case-by-case basis as stated above, and subject to any applicable protective procedures under the IDEA as set forth in law or school policy)

Act	Likely Consequence
Unprovoked physical harm	Informal hearing leading to a formal hearing leading to board vote on expulsion
Provoked physical harm	Informal hearing leading to a formal hearing leading to board vote on expulsion

Direct threat to cause physical harm	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Volatile/aggressive behavior intended to intimidate or escalate a situation (examples include yelling, flipping a desk or chair, punching a wall, throwing objects)	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Retaliation in legitimate self-defense (e.g. fighting back)	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Verbal abuse/bullying with physical threat over social media/text/or otherwise	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Verbal abuse/bullying without physical threat over social media/text/or otherwise	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Bringing a weapon to school (gun, toy/mock gun, knife, etc.)	Informal hearing leading to a formal hearing leading to board vote on expulsion
Bringing a pellet gun, cap gun, or water gun to school	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Bringing outside people (including relatives of any kind) to the school to fight	Informal hearing leading to a formal hearing leading to board vote on expulsion
Threats to bring outsiders (including relatives of any kind) to the school to fight	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Blatant disrespect to others	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion

Note1: Your job as a student/member of this community is to use every resource you have NOT TO GET INVOLVED in a fight or any of the above.

Note 2: The behaviors listed above are not permitted in any way nor anywhere nor to anyone. In other words, these acts are not only not permitted on school property, they are not permitted anywhere or against anyone.

BOARD POLICY 116: TITLE IX

Freire Charter School (the “Charter School”) is committed to providing a safe, respectful and supportive learning and working environment, free from Sex Discrimination, in which all members of the The Charter School community can thrive and succeed.

The Charter School has adopted this Title IX Policy (the “Policy”) in order to advance its goal of maintaining an environment free from Sex Discrimination, including Sex-Based Harassment, as well as related Retaliation. The Charter School encourages individuals who have been affected by Sex Discrimination and/or Retaliation to promptly make a Report to The Charter School using any of the reporting options described in this Policy. The Charter School will respond promptly and equitably to all Reports or Complaints of Sex Discrimination and/or Retaliation, and will take appropriate steps to eliminate the behavior, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

BOARD POLICY 204: POLICY AGAINST BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

The Freire Charter School (Charter School) Board stands firmly against bullying. Bullying behavior is contrary to the mission and vision of the Charter School, negatively affects the Charter School's culture and environment, and can be damaging to the Charter School community at-large.

Bullying (including Cyberbullying) is prohibited in the Charter School's Code of Conduct. Student conduct which may constitute Bullying or Cyberbullying shall be addressed in the same manner as other student disciplinary investigations, consistent with the Charter School's Code of Conduct. Allegations of Bullying or Cyberbullying will be investigated promptly. In addition, a determination of whether the target of the Bullying or Cyberbullying was targeted or reports being targeted wholly or in part due to the target's race, age, marital status, creed, religion, color, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or national origin will be made. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

BOARD POLICY 214: ANTI-HAZING

The Freire Charter School (Charter School) Board stands firmly against hazing. Hazing is contrary to the mission and vision of the Charter School, negatively affects the Charter School's culture and environment, and can be damaging to the Charter School community and/or its reputation. In all of its forms, hazing is prohibited at the Charter School and in certain instances may constitute a crime. The Board directs that complaints of hazing shall be investigated promptly, and that corrective action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

BOARD POLICY 121: NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Freire Charter School (Charter School) is committed to maintaining an education and workplace environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the Charter School community include the Charter School's Board of Trustees, employees, administration, faculty, staff, school volunteers, parties under contract to perform work for or with the Charter School, and family members participating in school meetings or school-sponsored activities.

The Charter School does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of the Charter School from or otherwise discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), age, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnic background, marital status, pregnancy, disability, veteran/military status, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies or in its programs and activities. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

BOARD POLICY 224: TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING YOUTH POLICY

The Freire Board of Directors is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students, and to ensure that every student has equal educational opportunities and equal access to educational programs and activities. As such, the Board, administration, staff, and students will comply with Federal and state laws which require that all programs, activities, and employment practices be free from discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. This policy is designed in

keeping with these mandates to create a safe learning environment for all students and to ensure that every student has equal access to all school programs and activities.

This policy sets out guidelines and expectations for addressing the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming students and is aimed at promoting their inclusivity, privacy, and safety at all times. This policy does not anticipate every situation that might occur with respect to transgender or gender non-conforming students and the needs of each transgender or gender non-conforming student must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, the goal is to not exclude, separate, deny benefits to, or otherwise treat differently on the basis of sex any person in the school's educational programs or activities. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

BOARD POLICY 205: SAFE SCHOOLS POLICY

PURPOSE

Freire Charter High School (the "School") believes that maintaining an environment supportive of learning and free of violence is important to the success of our students' education. This policy, along with the Code of Conduct and Nonviolence Policy, is designed to ensure that students are able to learn in a safe environment in accordance with the School's nonviolence expectations.

ACT 26

Act 26 of 1995 (the Safe Schools Act) creates a mandatory one-year expulsion for the possession of weapons on school property, including school-sponsored events. It requires parents to provide a sworn statement upon registering their student in school as to whether the student had previously been suspended or expelled from another school. Act 26 also requires schools to maintain records on acts of violence and weapon possession and to forward student discipline records when a student transfers to another school.

Act 26 defines the term weapon as "including but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, or instrument capable of inflicting serious bodily injury." The law requires action for documented cases of weapon possession in school or while traveling to and from any school or school program, including while on public transportation or school buses.

REPORTING A FREIRE COMMUNITY MEMBER

Any member of the public or school community may report another community member for violating the Code of Conduct. Students have the responsibility to inform a staff member if they become aware that a fellow student is in possession of illegal substances, firearms, weapons, or any items that could endanger the health, safety, or welfare of the school community or property. The Dean's Office will follow up on all reports.

RETALIATION

It is the School's policy that a positive, open environment be maintained at all times. Therefore, the School encourages all community members to report problems or concerns **without fear of retaliation or reprisal**. All reports will be promptly investigated. The School is committed to doing whatever is necessary to protect students from retaliation resulting from a concern or complaint. Should the School determine that retaliation has occurred, or that a community member is planning retaliatory action, disciplinary steps will be taken. The consequences could include any of the following:

- Community service
- Written apology
- Suspension
- Informal hearing
- Recommendation for expulsion
- Police notification

EXPECTATION ON CONDUCT OF FRIENDS AND/OR FAMILY

This policy applies to Guests (non-Freire students who are brought by Freire students to School-sponsored events) and to family members of Freire Students or other adults who visit School or attend School-sponsored events. It is the Student's responsibility to ensure that their Guests are aware of this Policy and other student conduct rules.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

When a reasonable suspicion exists that a search of a student's person, locker, device, or other belonging will uncover evidence of a violation of School policy, school rules, or applicable law, the Head of School or their designee may conduct a search. A student shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present during the search unless there is reasonable suspicion that the search may uncover material which poses an immediate threat to the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff, in which case the search may be conducted without prior warning.

The Head of School or their designee may institute general search procedures, including at the point of entry to the School building, lockers, hallways, or randomly selected portions of the Building or grounds, when necessary to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the School community, students, and staff. General search procedures may also be instituted at school functions, such as school dances or proms. Students and families shall be notified in advance of any functions at which these general searches may occur.

Searches may include the use of metal detection devices such as wands or automated weapons detecting systems and students may be asked to remove coats, empty pockets, or open their backpacks, purses etc.

A student who refuses or otherwise obstructs a search may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Any violations of school policy or school rules, including those outlined in the Code of Conduct and Parent/Student Handbook, that are discovered through the searches described herein shall be addressed in accordance with School policy or Memorandum of Understanding with law enforcement.

If a search uncovers an item, material, or substance, the possession of which would appear to be in violation of applicable law, the matter shall be reported to local law enforcement authorities. The staff member or administrator responsible for conducting a search is responsible for the safekeeping and proper retention/disposal of any illegal, unauthorized, or prohibited materials found as a result of the search. Care should be taken to ensure that any seized material is properly secured until surrendered to law enforcement. The School reserves the right to perform its own independent testing/analysis of any substance seized in order to determine whether or not possession of such substance constitutes a violation of School policy or applicable law. The parents/guardians of the student shall be notified as soon as practicable after the search has been conducted.

BOARD POLICY 206A: STUDENT ATTENDANCE

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular school attendance is a primary factor in a student's successful academic and social development and lays the groundwork for a successful and productive life beyond school. Frequent absences of pupils from regular classroom learning experiences disrupt the continuity of the instructional process.

EXCUSED VS. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

EXCUSED ABSENCE

An excused absence is any absence that is documented for official business. Examples include, but are not limited to: court dates, death in family, doctor or dentist appointments, etc. Excuses of this kind must be documented on official letterhead or back to work slips from a doctor, court, or other professional. Hand-written notes or parent notes will not be accepted as proof of official business. In addition, suspensions will be counted as excused absences. Students will also be excused for participation in a project sponsored by an organization eligible for Pennsylvania Agricultural Fair Act grants (such as FFA for 4-H), to participate in a musical performance for an event or funeral with a national veterans' organization, or if health or sanitation laws or regulations prevent a student from attending school.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An unexcused absence is any other kind of absence from school. Examples include, but are not limited to: sickness, family trips, etc. **While parents should still send a note to school explaining the absence in order to mitigate truancy, parent notes do not excuse absences.** The Head of School is authorized to develop a system of consequences for attendance. See below for the School's Truancy Policy and Procedures.

Pennsylvania regulation requires that we remove any student from the roll who has accumulated 10 consecutive unexcused absences. A certified letter will be sent to notify parents of their child's removal from the school roll.

PROCEDURE 206A: STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Parents/Guardians: Please email attendance@freirecharterschool.org to communicate any attendance information to the school (lateness, absences, early dismissal, etc.)

LATENESS PROCEDURES

A student is considered late if they are not present in their first period classroom by the official start of the school day, which is at 8AM. Lateness can lead to serious consequences, including the following:

- Students will not be permitted into the building after 8:45 AM. Students who attempt to enter the building at 8:46 AM or later will be sent home.
- Students will only be permitted into the building after 8:45 AM if the PARENT/GUARDIAN signs them in in person or if the parent notifies the front desk by email (fchs.attendance@freirecharterschool.org).
- Repeated unnecessary lateness may result in disciplinary or other corrective action at the discretion of school administration.
- All students must arrive to school before 9:30 AM, even with an excuse.
- Being Late to school (unexcused) may prohibit students from retaking assessments, attending field trips and events, participating in student privileges.

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

To protect student safety, the school reserves the right to only release students to a parents/guardian or an emergency contact on file with the school. The parent or guardian would need to call or email the school or submit a completed release form. Click [HERE](#) to complete the form. **Form MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE 10:00 AM, day of requested Early Dismissal.**

In emergency situations, the Head of School may permit the release to another individual with written or emailed consent from the parent/guardian. For the safety of your student, please limit emergency requests. A student must be present in the second period (official attendance period) in order to be marked present for that day. Therefore, any student who receives an early dismissal prior to this time will be marked absent for the remainder of the day. If a student has more than 3 early dismissals, the school will require a parent/guardian to pick them up from school or they will not be released otherwise.

Please note: For safety reasons, the school will deny an early dismissal in the event that any of the above procedures are not followed.

IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL DUE TO DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

If a student is dismissed due to disciplinary or safety precautions, it is expected that the student will immediately leave and go to their residence. Parents/guardians will be notified when their student is dismissed.

IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL DUE TO HEALTH EMERGENCIES

In the event that there is a public health emergency and a student begins showing signs or symptoms of an illness, parents/guardians must be able to accommodate an immediate dismissal of the student from school.

MAKE-UP PROCEDURES

It is the responsibility of a student who has been absent to obtain missed work, homework, and assignments from their teachers.

If a student misses class and does not have a valid excuse (doctor's note, letter from court, college visit, etc.) **the student is unable to make up effort assignments missed during the absence.** If a student misses a mastery assessment, they must make up this assessment within a defined timeline (typically, one additional school day per absence).

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES

If a student knows ahead of time they will be absent or miss a class, they should make every effort to collect work from teachers the day before and/or contact teachers or classmates about missed assignments before returning to school. Alternatively, students or parents can reach out to academic advisors to assist in collecting work.

MASTERY ASSIGNMENTS (PAPERS/PROJECTS/MAJOR ASSESSMENTS)

At a teacher's discretion, papers and other assignments that students were informed about before being absent are due upon the student's return or by email. The Major Assignments provisions from the Make-Up Policies section of the Academic Policies in this handbook still apply for late assignments.

It is the student's responsibility to make an appointment with a teacher to make up a missed test or quiz. Generally, students have the number of days to submit/make up an assignment equal to the number of days they were absent. Teachers may create additional, specific procedures outlined in class syllabi.

MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MASTERY (MOMs) POLICY

Student mastery of content and skills improves with each opportunity they have to demonstrate that mastery. With that in mind, Freire teachers offer Multiple Opportunities for Mastery (MOMs) for each mastery assignment, which requires a minimum of 1 retake of each mastery assignment/I Can. More than 1

retake/remastery can be offered at the discretion of the teacher. Details on the MOMs policy and requirements for eligibility can be found [here](#).

EFFORT ASSIGNMENTS (HOMEWORK/CLASSWORK)

Students who have an unexcused absence are unable to make up EFFORT assignments (such as classwork/homework) but are able to make up MASTERY. However, students are encouraged to check in with teachers during office hours and centers upon their return in order to ensure that they are caught up on missed learning.

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

A student absent from school may not participate in any after school activity on the day they were absent. It is the responsibility of the student to make up any and all assignments missed as a result of an absence (illness, suspension, field trip, etc.).

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES

The school will use the following methods to notify parents/students of their attendance record:

- Daily automated attendance call to all students who are absent (please make sure that the school has the most up-to-date contact number for you at all times).
- Attendance will be printed on all official grade reports that are sent home on a quarterly basis.
- A letter will be sent to the student's home when they have accumulated 3, 6, 10, 15, and 20 unexcused absences. See the Truancy section below for more information.

NOTE: Parents may view attendance through their personal access to the PowerSchool system.

BOARD POLICY 206B: TRUANCY

A student is considered truant after 3 truant absences. A child is considered habitually truant after 6 or more truant absences. To avoid truant absences, students must always bring a parent note explaining their absence when they return to school. The standards to avoid a truant absence are less strict than those to have an absence excused. However, while a parent note may be used to avoid a truant absence, the School must still determine that the absence was for a legitimate reason. Parent notes can only be used to prevent up to 6 truant absences per year. After 6 absences with parent notes, any further such absences will be considered truant.

Within 10 days of a student's third truant absence, Freire will notify the student's family of the child's violation of compulsory school attendance. The notification will be sent in writing to the person in parental relation with the child who resides in the same household as the child. When transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, the notice will also be provided to the child's biological or adoptive parent if the parent's mailing address is on file with the School and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order. The notice will:

- Include a description of the consequences that will follow if the child becomes habitually truant
- Be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation

Upon reaching 20 absences, a student may be mandatorily retained, regardless of student's end of year grades, at the discretion of the Head of School.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

After a student reaches 6 unexcused absences, the School will hold a School Attendance Improvement Conference to address barriers to a student's attendance. The School will send a second notice to the family as described above which will additionally include notice of the conference. Neither the child nor the person in parental relation may be legally compelled to attend the conference, but Freire strongly urges both to participate. The conference must occur even if the person in parental relation declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference after written notice sent in advance and attempts to communicate via telephone. Freire reserves the right to provide notice and subsequently hold a conference at its discretion regardless of whether a student has yet accumulated 6 unexcused absences.

The conference should ideally engage the student, family, school, and all participants involved in the student's life to explore possible solutions to increase the student's school attendance. In the case of a follow-up conference after a student has already been referred to the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, Truancy Court, or Family Court, the conference will also include a representative from the appropriate office. Maintaining open communication between the student and adults will facilitate positive outcomes.

The purpose of the conference is to discuss the cause(s) of the truancy and to develop a mutually agreed upon plan to facilitate regular school attendance. The conference provides both parties with the opportunity to identify, understand, and explore all issues contributing to the student's truant behavior. Participation by the student and family is an integral component for this conference. In addition, representatives from relevant and/or involved community-based agencies, community and school services, and school personnel should be invited to participate, as needed. During the conference, a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) shall be developed cooperatively with the student and other meeting participants.

Issues to be addressed at the conference should include but not be limited to:

- Appropriateness of the student's educational environment
- Possible elements of the school environment that inhibit student success
- Student's current academic level and needs
- Social, emotional, physical, mental, and behavioral health issues
- Issues concerning family and home environment
- Any other issues affecting the student's attendance

The participants in the school-family conference should work collaboratively to conduct a holistic assessment to determine the reason(s) the student is exhibiting truant behavior. Every member should have a vested interest in and responsibility for determining an appropriate plan to assist the student to succeed both socially and academically. This conference should also provide an opportunity to ensure that both the student and the family clearly understand the School's attendance requirements and the legal ramifications of not adhering to the state's compulsory attendance requirements. This methodology promotes full understanding and appreciation of the root causes of truancy as well as the resultant personal and societal impacts when truant behavior is not adequately addressed.

The School may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until the conference has occurred. The outcome of the conference must be documented in a SAIP. The SAIP must be documented on an official form substantially similar to one developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This plan substantiates efforts made by the school, the family and other vested third parties to assist the student in addressing and resolving school attendance issues.

LEGAL CONSEQUENCES FOR SUSTAINED TRUANCY

Freire must report incidents of truancy to the Pennsylvania Department of Education and may report them to the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Attendance and Truancy, the Philadelphia District Attorney, the Philadelphia Family Court, and/or the Philadelphia Department of Human Services. Families may be required to appear at court hearings or be assigned a caseworker who will make home visits. Parents or guardians

convicted of violating compulsory attendance can be fined, required to complete an appropriate course, or perform community service. In order to support legal proceedings conducted under Pennsylvania's truancy law, Freire will document all truant absences, all outreach efforts made, any conferences held, and any interventions pursued.

BOARD POLICY 207: DRESS CODE

Freire Charter High School does not have a uniform. We grant students the right to choose clothing that is comfortable to them, affordable, reflects their personal style and identity provided what they wear supports their learning and engagement in school. We limit this right only when a student's clothing creates issues of safety for the school or harms the learning environment.

The following actions conflict with our expectations around safety and maintaining a positive learning environment:

- Wearing any non-religious head covering that obstructs the face, for example, balaclavas and sheistys.
- Wearing clothing with obscene images, language, phrasing, or logos displaying violence or drugs (including alcohol and/or tobacco) on any clothing or accessories.
- Allowing private areas of the body to show. This includes: exposing genital area, rear end, chest/stomach, excessive cleavage, upper legs, "bathing suit area", wearing see-through clothing, etc.
- Allowing undergarments to show. This includes; bras, see-through tights, underwear, boxers, and briefs.
- Pants below the waist.

The administration reserves the right to determine on a case-by-case basis whether a student's clothing may have the potential to harm school safety or the learning environment, as it is impossible to list every deviation from the dress code. Therefore, the above list should not be considered exhaustive.

We will strive to apply this policy fairly and will not discriminate based on an individual's body shape or size. In the event a student receives unwanted sexual advances, harassment, or sexual comments (including those about their body or clothing), the burden of the responsibility for the incident is on the other individual perpetrating the harassment who will be subject to disciplinary sanction (see Sexual Harassment policy). A student's dress will never be treated as justification for another's harassing behavior and the harassing individual will be held accountable as such.

School staff may additionally demand different standards of dress for special events, trips, etc. For example, "business casual" or "professional dress" may be mandated for an important class presentation.

The Dress Code Policy also applies to the Zoom virtual learning space.

BOARD POLICY 208A: STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Freire Charter School (FCS) provides students with computer equipment, computer services, the system network, and Internet access, and other technological equipment and resources. FCS has the right to place reasonable restrictions on this privilege.

All access and rights are privileges granted by FCS and students should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of personal files and access. The situation is similar to the rights you have in the privacy of your locker. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect privacy with regard to any files stored on school or cloud servers. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the FCS system may lead to discovery that

this policy, the FCS Code of Conduct, or the law has been violated. In these cases, students will be held accountable to the expectations of the school and the law.

All users agree to abide by applicable federal, state, and local laws and FCS rules when using FCS technology. FCS will not assume legal or other responsibility for any use deemed unacceptable or for any content students find online.

The use of FCS technology is a privilege, not a right, and the purpose of this agreement is to define acceptable and unacceptable use of computer equipment, computer services, the system network, and the Internet, and other technological equipment and resources as defined by FCS. Unacceptable use, as defined by this agreement, or at the discretion of School staff, may result in restriction or cancellation of access (even for required coursework) as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

PROCEDURE 208A: STUDENT TECHNOLOGY

Technology resources are defined as any electronic tool, device, program, or system that aids the academic environment for a student. Technology includes:

- All computer software and hardware including student chromebooks
- Cell phones, tablets, and smart watches
- Analog and digital networks (e.g., data, video, audio, voice, and multimedia)
- Email systems and communications technologies
- Administrative systems, media systems, and learning information systems
- Smart Boards
- Related and forthcoming systems and new technologies

ACCEPTABLE USE

Acceptable use of the School's technology is any use that is consistent with the educational objectives of the School and in accordance with the Code of Conduct. This includes academic work, college exploration and research, and employment exploration and research. For further clarification on uses not listed here, please refer to the Technology Director. All use is subject to review by the School's staff

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are on school grounds and in the community. Communications on the network are often public in nature and general school rules apply. Students must respect the rights of others in both the school community and in the global community.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

These rules provide general guidelines and examples of prohibited uses for illustrative purposes but do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by students. General examples of unacceptable uses which are expressly prohibited include but are not limited to the following:

- **Illegal Activity** – It is unacceptable use to promote or engage in any activities which are deemed criminal under federal, state or local laws.
- **Copyright Laws** – It is a violation of copyright laws to copy, distribute, display, exhibit, or perform copyrighted works without authority of the owner of the copyright. A copyright notice is not required.
 - Students may not utilize peer-to-peer file-sharing applications or execute programs to facilitate the downloading or exchange of copyrighted or unauthorized music, movies, and other intellectual property, etc.
 - Students may not use the FCS network to arrange for the purchase of illegal substances or alcohol, engage in criminal activity, or threaten the safety of any person(s).
- **Plagiarism** – Students may not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet or other resources (including content generated from artificial intelligence systems).

- **Vandalism** – It is unacceptable use to harm or destroy the hardware, software or data of another user, whether at FCS or at any site connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the creation or spreading of computer viruses. If a student breaks a piece of equipment while using it, the family of the student is responsible for replacing that equipment.
- **Security** – Under no conditions should you provide your password to another person. Users are responsible for the security of their account. Users may be held accountable for actions performed under their account name if it has been determined that their account was negligently left accessible. It is also unacceptable to change individual or system passwords. If a user suspects their account security has been compromised they are required to immediately contact an administrator. It is unacceptable to trespass in others' folders, work, or files or to use or to attempt to use another's account, including the System Administrators' accounts. It is unacceptable to post information that could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
- **Offensive Behavior and Harassment** – It is unacceptable use to harass, insult, or attack others. It is unacceptable to send or receive any data, which is offensive and/or obscene according to the Code of Conduct. Note that the School may consider an action to be harassment regardless of whether it is considered harassment under the law. Any repeated or unwanted communication may constitute harassment. Any communication with the direct intention of harassing, threatening, implying, or otherwise causing harm to individuals and classes of individuals is a violation of school policy. Be sure to save copies of all harassing material. Provide hard copies to the administration. Harassment is taken very seriously at the School, and anyone who makes false accusations will be penalized. Kinds of Harassment include:
 - Sending/forwarding unsolicited email, junk mail, or propagating chain letters.
 - Email "bombing," spamming, etc.
 - Inappropriate images, text, audio, commentary, etc. that demeans based on ethnicity, race, religion, sexuality, sexual orientation, age, class, disability, etc.
 - Forging electronic information.
 - Creating, altering, or deleting the attribution of origin ("from" in email, IP address headers, etc.).
 - Sending messages under someone else's address or posing as another user in any way.
- **Respect for Resource Limits** – It is unacceptable to intentionally waste limited computer resources. It is unacceptable to download large files. It is unacceptable to post or forward chain letters, send "bomb" emails, or engage in "spamming." Sending numerous or large email messages to one person is considered "email bombing." Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.
- **Respect for Privacy** – It is unacceptable to repost a message that was sent to you privately without permission of the person who sent you the message. It is unacceptable to post private information about another person.
- **Personal Safety** – It is unacceptable to post personal contact information about yourself or other people. Personal contact information includes your address, telephone, work address, etc. It is unacceptable to agree to meet with someone you have met online for non-academic reasons. This is subject to review by the administration.
- **Commercial Use** – It is unacceptable to offer, provide, or purchase products or services through FCS.
- **System Tampering** – Any unauthorized alteration of operating systems, individual accounts, software, networking facilities, and/or other programs.
- **Obscenity** – Students may not use the network to access material that is profane or obscene. This includes pornography, inappropriate music or text, etc.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

The policy above states that students may not access any obscene or inappropriate content, that students should have no expectation of privacy, and that system monitoring may lead to the school discovering violations. Freire takes this issue extremely seriously and will issue consequences for violations.

Students are monitored by a service such as Gaggle, which uses technology and trained professionals evaluate content 24 hours a day for potentially harmful content, messages, documents, images and more. If there is discovery of objectionable content or a potentially harmful situation, the monitoring service alerts the school. Programs such as Gaggle are also required by federal law to report suspected child pornography to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

If Freire's automated monitoring system discovers that a student has accessed, stored or sent sexually explicit or inappropriate images, the school will impose discipline and parents and law enforcement will be notified if the School suspects the student has committed a crime.

CHROMEBOOK USE

Freire Schools students have access to Chromebooks. This allows students to direct their own learning and have a greater reliance on active learning strategies. Students will be able to transfer knowledge across disciplines. The increased access to technology will enhance instruction and provide more achievement opportunities for our students.

Software: Only legally licensed software/applications, media, or other data is permitted on the Chromebook. As this computer is the property of the School, the School has the ability to install and uninstall software at our discretion and remotely. Students may not download software, operating systems, applications, or media (including songs, photos, videos) without a prior approval from an authorized school employee.

Privacy: The Chromebooks provided are the property of the School. The chromebook may be examined or searched at any time at the discretion of the School or its employees.

Neither students nor parents/guardians have any right to privacy of any data saved on the Chromebook or in any network drives. The School has the ability to remotely monitor student activity on this Chromebook and will do so at its discretion. The School will never access the camera when the camera has not been activated by the student.

Furthermore, Electronic mail, network usage, and all stored files shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use. The School cooperates fully with local, state or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to violations of computer crime laws, and may give proper authorities access to email, files, and network usage data during the course of an investigation.

Saving Files: Students should not save files on the device. The School will provide students locations to save their school-related work. There should be no assumption that files saved directly to the chromebook will be stored indefinitely. Files saved improperly may be deleted at any time. The School accepts no responsibility for lost files.

Remote Access: For chromebooks approved for off-campus use, students and parents are expected to comply with all requests for remote access by the School or approved employees. The School also has the ability to remotely access the Chromebook for purposes, such as locating a lost device, software or program updates, IT support, etc., and may do so without notice to you or your child.

School Rules: All rules, policies, and procedures of the School that apply to students in/during/or at school apply while using the Chromebook. School administrators may develop additional rules regarding use of the device in the future.

Media Access & Safety: Students will have access to all available forms of electronic media (websites, videos, files, etc.) and communication which are in support of the School's educational goals and objectives. Some media and content have been blocked to better ensure the safety of our students. For chromebooks approved for off-campus use, these filters do not replace the importance of parents/guardians in monitoring student Chromebook usage. Parents are expected to be partners in ensuring students' Internet safety.

Acceptable Use: All acceptable and unacceptable uses of technology outlined in the technology policies apply to student chromebooks.

Personal Use & Use by Others: The Chromebook is intended solely for educational use by the student enrolled in the School. Students are not permitted to use the computer for personal use. Family members and others are not permitted to use the chromebook for any reason except for assisting a student with a school-sanctioned activity or assignment. For virtual parent-teacher conferences or other parent-school-family virtual meetings, parent use of the chromebook to participate in such meetings is acceptable.

Login Information: Students must log in only with their provided account information. **Students may not provide their passwords to others.** Users may be held accountable for actions performed under their account name if it has been determined that their account was negligently left accessible. If a user suspects their account security has been compromised they are required to immediately contact their school's IT Coordinator for support.

In addition to the technology and chromebook policies outlined above, the following policies apply:

CHROMEBOOK ASSIGNMENT

Whether assigned a Chromebook for the class or for approved off-campus use, students are responsible for its care while it's in their possession. Students should not swap or borrow chromebooks from one another. If a student is found to be in possession of a chromebook that is not assigned to them, the chromebook will be returned to the School. If a student is no longer in possession of their originally assigned chromebook, they will be responsible for paying the fee associated with a lost/missing/stolen chromebook.

FEES

If the following damages or losses occur, the parent/guardian agrees to and is responsible for the following fees for repairs and/or replacements which must be paid according to the schedule determined by the School:

Chromebook Charger	\$15
Broken/Cracked Screen or Similar Repairs	\$50
Lost/Missing/Stolen Chromebook or Damage Beyond Repair	Replacement Cost of Chromebook (minimum \$100, not to exceed \$300)

Note: Repeated offenses will result in a more substantial charge (not to exceed \$300). Repairs due to defects or other technical issues will not incur charges or fees.

CARE OF CHROMEBOOKS

Students are responsible for the general care of the specific device they have been issued by the school:

- The device must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, other than any applied by the School.
- For chromebooks approved for off-campus use, the student has responsibility for keeping the chromebook in their possession and supervision at all times. If the chromebook is lost or stolen, replacement fees will be charged (minimum of \$100 and not to exceed \$300). Lost, missing, or stolen chromebooks must be reported to IT Support immediately.

BRINGING CHARGED CHROMEBOOK TO SCHOOL

For chromebooks assigned for off-campus use, students are expected to come to school each day with a fully charged chromebook. If the chromebook battery is dead or they forget to bring their chromebook, they WILL NOT receive another chromebook for the day. In rare cases for exceptional circumstances (state testing, etc.) a loaner chromebook may be given at the discretion of authorized school employees. The student takes responsibility for this chromebook and may be charged fees for damage/loss of this chromebook as if it were their original assigned chromebook.

RETURN OF CHROMEBOOKS

For chromebooks assigned for off-campus use, the school reserves the right to require the immediate return of the chromebook at any time. The chromebook must be returned if a student withdraws, whether voluntarily or through expulsion, or graduates. Should you fail to return the device within 30 days of the designated return date or if the device is damaged, you agree to pay up to the replacement cost of the chromebook (minimum \$100, not to exceed \$300).

EXTERNAL RECORDS SHARING WITH ONLINE PLATFORMS

As with the use of most software and websites, students and parents are agreeing to the terms of use and privacy and data sharing provisions, including those of G Suite, Google Classroom, Zoom, Edmentum (Study Island), IXL, GoGuardian, Gaggle, etc.

You can find the Terms of Service for these platforms below:

- G Suite: https://gsuite.google.com/terms/2013/1/premier_terms.html
- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/terms>
- Edmentum (Study Island): <https://www.edmentum.com/terms-of-use>
- IXL: <https://www.ixl.com/termsofservice>
- GoGuardian: <https://www.goguardian.com/eula/>
- Gaggle: <https://cdn.gaggle.net/termsofservice.html>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the IT Coordinator, [Kelly Davis](#) at kelly.davis@freirecharterschool.org.

ZOOM EXPECTATIONS

All participants will be held to the following expectations during Zoom sessions:

- Participants will use appropriate language (no cursing, no derogatory language, no disrespect or yelling) during Zoom sessions.
- Participants will mute themselves when they are not speaking to limit background noise.
- Participants will be a positive contributor during the online environment.
- Participants should dress appropriately during the session i.e. no revealing or obscene clothing.
- Participants may not use personalized backgrounds; they may distract from learning.
- The chat feature in Zoom should be used appropriately and be focused on academic conversations. The teacher may disable this feature at their discretion.
- Participants will not be allowed to screen share unless given permission by Freire staff.
- Participants may not edit the shared screen of any zoom participant.

Please be advised that Zoom sessions may serve as a virtual classroom at times. All rules from your physical classroom inside of our FCHS building still apply to the virtual, at home classroom. Inappropriate language, defiance, disruption, and disrespect will and can result in removal from the Zoom learning experience. The Code of Conduct applies to students any time during the Zoom call, whether it be on video or in the 'chat'. If a student is removed from the Zoom learning space, they will be required to meet virtually with either a Dean or a

member from the Admin Team before reintegrating into the Zoom. If the behavior continues, the student will be removed from the Zoom session for the remainder of the day and will have a follow-up conversation with their parents and guardians. At that time, it will be determined how the student can be best supported moving forward and reintegrated into future Zoom Session.

We are fully confident that our students will continue to breathe FIRE and uphold the Freire way in this new virtual setting. Please remember that we are a community that supports and lifts one another. Maintaining a safe and productive Zoom classroom is paramount to student success.

Please be aware that as with most software and websites, you are agreeing to Zoom's terms of use, including their privacy and data sharing provisions.

RECORDING OF STUDENTS

By having your student participate in audio/visual virtual learning or in-classroom learning where a teacher may be recording for virtual learning students, you give consent for their likeness, voice, and statements to be recorded as needed for educational purposes. Participation constitutes your consent under any applicable privacy laws, including the Pennsylvania Wiretap Act (18 Pa.C.S. 5703).

BOARD POLICY 208B: STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONICS

Freire recognizes the importance of communication and collaboration and provides devices for students to be productive in the classroom. To keep the focus on academics and to reduce unnecessary distractions, the Head of School is authorized to develop a system of procedures and consequences related to topics including, but not limited to cell phone use. See below for the School's Cell Phone & Electronics Procedures.

Phones and **personal electronics are not to be used during school. This includes but is not limited to cellphones, smart watches, personal laptops, Meta Glasses, headphones, cameras.** Every student is assigned a personal Yondr Pouch. While the **Yondr Pouch is considered school property**, it is each student's responsibility to bring their assigned Pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good condition (no damages, including bent pin). **Any items put in the pouch other than their working electronics, those items will be confiscated and not returned.** Students may be subject to Probationary Contract for Electronics Infractions.

PROCEDURE 208B: STUDENT CELL PHONES & ELECTRONICS

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DAILY PROCESS

As students Arrive to School and before proceeding to classrooms they will:

1. Turn their personal electronics off.
2. Place their phone (and smartwatches) inside their Pouch and secure it in front of school staff.
3. Store their Pouch in their backpack for the day.

At the end of the day, or if a student is permitted to leave campus for lunch, students will open their Pouch, remove their phone, close their Pouch and put it in their backpack. Students must bring their Pouch to school with them each day. Upon reentering the school building, the cell phone must again be pouch.

*Students arriving late or leaving early will pouch/unpouch their phones in the Main Office.

LEAVING CAMPUS AT LUNCH

If a student is eligible to leave campus for lunch, they are able to unlock their pouch and retrieve their phone (s) and/or SmartWatch for use outside of the building only. Upon return from lunch, students have to “repouch” their phone (s) and/or SmartWatch in the presence of a staff member, similar to the process of arriving to school at the beginning of the day.

POUCH DAMAGE / LOST POUCH / USING PHONE DURING SCHOOL

If a student damages their Pouch or is caught on their phone, Administration will collect the phone/Pouch and call home for:

- The Parent to come to the school and Pick Up their student’s phone or the phone may be confiscated overnight
- Additional Consequences may include: Community Service / In-School Suspension / Detention

Examples of damage:

- Ripped
- Cut
- Torn
- Pen/pencil marks
- Bent/cut pin
- Signs of force to black button on flap

FORGOTTEN POUCH

If a student forgets their Pouch, their phone will be collected and Admin will call home to remind the Parent of the policy. The phone will be returned to the student at dismissal. If a student reports to school without a pouch for consecutive days (3 or more), they will automatically be charged for a pouch (\$30) and may lose lunch privileges.

If a student consistently forgets their Pouch, it is considered lost and the student will need to purchase another pouch for \$30.

If a student loses or damages the pouch the student will need to purchase another pouch for \$30.

VIOLATIONS

If any type of electronic device (phone, smart watch, headphones, etc.) is being used without authorization during the school day, the following consequences will be issues:

- **First Offense:** The staff member will take the phone and it will be returned at the end of the day. The incident will be written up as a CONSEQUENCE - detention will be issued. If the student does not comply or is defiant, there will be additional consequences such as suspension.
- **Second Offense:** The staff member will take the phone and a parent or guardian will need to retrieve the phone. The incident will be written up as a CONSEQUENCE - detention will be issued, loss of lunch privilege for a week. If the student does not comply or is defiant, there will be additional consequences such as suspension.
- **Third Offense:** The staff member will take the phone and a parent or guardian will need to retrieve the phone. The incident will be written up as a CONSEQUENCE - The student is put on a phone contract.

The length of a phone contract can vary. Students will need to turn in their phone(s) to a Dean at the start of the day and can only get it back after dismissal. If the student does not comply or is defiant, there will be additional consequences such as suspension.

- **Fourth Offense:** Violation of their Electronics Contract- Suspension issued. The phone will be confiscated and will not be returned to anyone other than a parent/guardian at the informal hearing. Recommendation for expulsion.

Refusal to surrender a requested cell phone or removing the SIM chip from the phone will be considered an act of extreme defiance and will result in the following actions:

- The student's parent will be contacted immediately
- The student will be suspended
- A mandatory informal hearing will be held the next school day
- During this hearing the parent and student will be warned future behaviors like this may lead to more severe consequences
- One (or more) of the following consequences will be assigned:
 - Contract
 - Loss of school privileges
 - Loss of student trips/events
 - Community service

Freire Charter School is not financially responsible for property that a student voluntarily brings to school, including cell phones and other electronic devices, including in the event that property is lost, misplaced, or stolen. Although the school takes every precaution to store confiscated student electronic devices safely and securely, **Freire is not financially responsible for student electronic devices whether they are in the student's or the school's possession.**

BOARD POLICY 222: STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The Board of Directors ("Board") of Freire Charter School ("School") recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other students. The Board shall make reasonable efforts to identify students experiencing homelessness, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act and other federal and state law regulations.

The Board may waive policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation, and success in charter schools of homeless students, based on the recommendation of a Head of School.

DEFINITIONS

HOMELESS STUDENTS

Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular, and night-time residence, which include the following conditions:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Living in emergency, transitional, or domestic violence shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.

- Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations, or similar settings.
- Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.
- Living as run-away children.
- Abandoned or forced out of homes by parents or caretakers.
- Living as school age unwed mothers in houses for unwed mothers if they have no other living accommodations.

MIGRATORY CHILDREN

The term “migratory children” means children who are, or whose parent or spouse are, migratory agricultural workers, including migratory dairy workers, or migratory fishermen, and who have moved from one school district to another in the preceding 36 months, in order to obtain or accompany such parent or spouse, in order to obtain, temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural or fishing work.

STUDENT AND FAMILY RIGHTS

Under McKinney-Vento, eligible students have the right to the following:

- Receive a free, appropriate public education
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents
- Enroll in a local school or continue attending the School (school of origin), if that is your preference and is feasible
- If it is determined that the school selected is not in the student’s best interest, the Charter School will provide a written explanation of its position and inform you of your right to appeal the Charter School’s decision
- Receive transportation to and from the Charter School, if requested
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to your needs as a student

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Board designates the Head of School or their designee to serve as the Charter School’s Liaison for homeless students and families.

The School’s liaison shall coordinate with:

- Local service agencies that provide services to homeless children, youth and families.
- School districts on issues of records transfer, per pupil allocation, transportation and special education programs to ensure that homeless children who are in need of special education and related services are located, identified, and evaluated.
- State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

The School Liaison has the following responsibilities:

- Identify homeless children and youth;
- Inform parents or guardians of educational rights and related opportunities available to their children, and provide them with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- Disseminate public notice of the educational rights of homeless students where children and youth receive services under the Act and forms to such places as schools, family shelters, and food pantries;

- Mediate enrollment disputes in accordance with the Enrollment Dispute section and ensure immediate enrollment pending resolution of disputes;
- Inform the parent/guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, of all transportation options, including to the school of origin, and assist in accessing these transportation services;
- Assist children and youth who do not have immunizations or immunization or medical records to obtain necessary immunizations or immunization or medical records;
- Understand the Pennsylvania Department of Education guidance issued for the education of homeless students in order to distribute information on the subject as well as to present workshops for school personnel, including office staff.

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION

The School ensures that the best interests of students and families experiencing homelessness are in mind. This means that homeless students shall remain at the School (school of origin), unless it is determined that it is not in their best interest. If remaining at the School is not in their best interest, the necessary transfer of school records shall be carried out by the School to ensure the student's immediate enrollment in a new school.

BOARD POLICY 223: FOSTER CARE

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Foster Care Provisions establish, enhance and formalize collaborative working relationships between child welfare and local educational agencies.

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION

Freire ensures that foster students' best interests are in mind. This means that foster students shall remain at the School (school of origin), unless it is determined that it is not in their best interest. If remaining at Freire is not in their best interest, immediate enrollment in a new school and the transfer of school records shall be carried out by Freire.

TRANSPORTATION

In collaboration with local child welfare agencies, Freire will develop written procedures for how transportation will be provided, arranged and funded for the duration of a child's time in foster care.

FOSTER CARE POINT OF CONTACT (POC)

The Community Outreach Coordinator is Freire's Foster Care Point of Contact (POC). The Foster Care POC shall coordinate with state and local child welfare agencies, the State's Foster Care POC, and other school administrators on regarding the following responsibilities:

- Facilitation of professional development and staff training of Title I foster care provisions and needs of foster students, as needed;
- Best Interest Determination and documentation
- Transfer of student records, including immunizations, medical records, IEPs and Section 504 plans to ensure immediate enrollment
- Facilitation of data sharing and reporting, consistent with FERPA
- Development, implementation, and coordination of local transportation procedures
- Special education programming
- Ensuring the educational stability and safety of all foster students.

BOARD POLICY 126: CODE OF CIVILITY

PURPOSE

Freire Charter School (the “School”) believes that maintaining an environment supportive of learning and free of disruptive conduct is important to the success of our student’s education. To further this goal, it is the intent of the School to promote, through this policy, mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct between and among Board members, school staff and administrators, parents/guardians, students, volunteers, coaches, and members of the public. It is also the intent of this policy to encourage positive communication and to discourage disruptive, volatile, hostile or aggressive communication or actions. Furthermore, this policy is intended to maintain, to the extent possible, a safe, harassment-free workplace for teachers, students, administrators, other staff, parents/guardians and the public.

The Board of Directors encourages its members, school staff and administrators, parents/guardians, students, volunteers, coaches, and members of the public to participate in maintaining a clear expectation of civil conduct and problem-solving throughout the School. The School is committed to support this expectation and will not condone or accept uncivil conduct (see definition) on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or in verbal, written or electronic communications whether by Board members, school staff and administrators, parents/guardians, volunteers, coaches, or members of the public.

While this policy may apply to incidents involving students, this policy is not intended to supplant the Charter School’s Student Code of Conduct, and nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit the Charter School’s response to student behaviors. The Student Code of Conduct, and the procedures thereunder, shall be used by the Charter School to investigate and/or impose disciplinary consequences for students engaging in behavior that would otherwise constitute a violation of this policy.

DEFINITIONS:

A person will be deemed to have engaged in “Uncivil Conduct” when the person threatens the health, safety or welfare of any members of the school community, places another person in reasonable fear of imminent harm, disrupts the orderly operations of the School or in cases where the conduct affects a substantial Charter School interest or has continuing effects on Charter School Property or at a Charter School sponsored or related activity/event.

By way of example, “Uncivil Conduct” includes, but is not limited to, behaviors such as:

- directing vulgar, obscene or profane gestures or words at another individual;
- taunting, jeering, inciting others to taunt or jeer at an individual;
- repeatedly interrupting another individual who is speaking at an appropriate time and place or raising one’s voice in anger at another person;
- imposing personal demands at times or in settings where they conflict with assigned duties and cannot reasonably be met;
- using derogatory and/or personal epithets or slurs; gesturing in a manner that puts another in fear for their personal safety; or
- invading someone’s personal space after being directed to move away, physically blocking an individual’s exit from a room or location, remaining in a classroom or school area after a teacher or administrator in authority has directed one to leave.

It is not the intent of this policy to deprive any member of the school community of the right to free expression of ideas or the exercise of a right to which they are entitled. “Uncivil Conduct” does not include the expression of controversial or differing viewpoints that may be offensive to some persons, so long as: 1) the ideas are presented in a respectful manner and at a time and place that are appropriate, and 2) such expression does not materially disrupt, and may not be reasonably anticipated to disrupt, the educational process.

GUIDELINES

Individuals who perceive that they are being treated in a way that violates this policy are urged to resolve their concerns promptly through direct communication by respectfully (a) requesting that the person cease engaging in the Uncivil Conduct; and/or (b) notifying the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and/or Freire School Network Office Administrator that the Uncivil Conduct is occurring.

Individuals reporting alleged violations of this policy may be asked to submit the report in writing to the Head of School.

Individuals who violate this policy may have restrictions imposed on their access to School including restrictions on their right to be present in the School building, on School property or to attend School events. Restrictions may also be imposed on interactions with school staff member(s).

Severe or persistent acts of Uncivil Conduct may violate other School rules or policies such as the policies against Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, Bullying, and Student Code of Conduct. Violation of such policies may result in further action as applicable. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with the ability of school administration to maintain order and discipline in the schools or to enforce school rules and applicable policies and laws.

DELEGATION

The Head of School or designee shall establish procedures consistent with the provisions of policy.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND TITLE I

Freire invites parents to attend an annual Titles I, II, and IV informational meeting, held in conjunction with back to school night. At this meeting, we explain the purpose and requirements of Title I programs, describe how the School participates in the program, and detail how the school is spending its Title I funding in the current school year. School representatives review parents' right to be involved, provide the complaint procedure, and identify the School's federal programs coordinator. At this time, we solicit feedback from parents on topics including how the School is spending Title I funds, the quality of the Student-School-Parent Compact, and this Family Involvement Policy. School administrators consider any feedback received when seeking to make improvements at the next relevant annual opportunity (e.g. policy updates, budgeting, program planning, etc.).

As the School creates, improves, and implements its Title I Schoolwide Program, the planning team takes into account parent feedback received at the annual Title I informational meeting, comments from regular monthly parent association meetings, survey results, and relevant informal suggestions made by parents.

School events that provide opportunities for parent involvement throughout the year are held at a variety of times, both during the school day and in the evening.

Title I funds may be used to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent involvement activities, including transportation, childcare, or home visit expenses to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.

PARENT RIGHTS UNDER TITLE I

Under Title I, Part A, Freire parents have the right to:

- Be involved in our Title I, Part A programs – Freire, with the help of its parents, will develop and implement a Title I Family Involvement Policy and a School-Parent Compact
- Request regular meetings – Requests for meetings to discuss Title I programs should be put in writing and submitted to the Federal Programs Coordinator.
- Know teacher and paraprofessional qualifications – Parents may request, and Freire then will provide, certain information on the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and

paraprofessionals providing services to their student. Requests should be put in writing and submitted to the Federal Programs Coordinator.

BOARD POLICY 252: PARENT FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Freire Charter School is fully committed to finding meaningful and mutually enriching ways for parents to participate in our school to serve as partners in improving the quality of teaching and learning for all of our students and at every level. As a recipient of Title I funds, the School abides by a Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. The policy is updated annually, with input from parents and students, distributed at parent meetings, delivered through our website, and is included in the student handbook. The policy describes the means for carrying out Title I Parent and Family Engagement Requirements [Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)].

This policy states how Freire involves parents and family members in the joint development of the Title I Plan and be partners in their student's education.

- An annual parent survey to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of the School. This survey also asks parents to provide feedback on the following:
 - Barriers to greater participation in activities,
 - The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including with school personnel and teachers,
 - Strategies to support successful family interactions.
- A minimum of two meetings annually where parents are invited to help develop the Title I Plan and revise Parent Engagement Policy. These meetings include time to:
 - Review parent survey results
 - Review performance data
 - Provide input into development of Title I plan including performance measures, spending plan/budget, and strategies for improving parent engagement.
 - Evaluate and amend Student-School-Parent Compact
- Numerous opportunities for parents to be involved in the activities of the school including:
 - New Parent Clinic
 - Back to School Night
 - Student-Parent-Teacher conferences
 - Exhibition Nights
 - Family meetings/info sessions where a member of the Freire staff presents on relevant topics such as college application process and Act 158 graduation requirements
- Strategies to engage families and communicate with them:
 - Family meetings for all students identified as needing additional supports, held either at the home of the student or at the school.
 - Each grade level has a dedicated academic advisor. This individual reaches out to the family of any student failing one or more classes at the conclusion of the first semester so that a family meeting can be scheduled and appropriate measures taken to support the student.

- Freire's student report cards also offer information beyond the traditional content of grades, teacher comments, and attendance information. Our report cards provide parents with their student's progress on standardized tests, a record of their behavior, and information on their student's participation in extracurricular activities.
- Support programs that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school, including sessions on financial literacy and FAFSA completion.
- Title I coordinator/network office federal programs manager attend conferences and trainings, meet annually with the school's academic leaders to plan and monitor implementation of parent engagement activities
- Freire coordinates and integrates parent and family engagement strategies under Title I, Part A with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs including IDEA/Special Education parent training, annual notices for English learners, information sessions to support Pennsylvania's Act 158, the use of ESSER funds, and the development of our schoolwide and comprehensive plans.

PARENT ASSOCIATION

Freire High School's parent association, Paulo's Parents, set goals for their work, which have included aims such as teacher appreciation, fundraising, and partnership building for school-community culture. Meeting dates and times are announced in our email newsletters. Parents should contact the Head of School for more information.

UNDERSTANDABLE COMMUNICATION

Freire has an accurate perception of the number of our parents for whom English is not their first language as a result of input provided on a Home Language Survey that parents are required to complete when a student first enrolls in the school. As a result, we are able to support these parents directly with a variety of resources including telephonic translation services provided by LanguageLine. Additionally, as part of a quarterly phone call held with parents of any ESL student the school, Freire is able to regularly check in with these parents to ensure that they fully understand communications from the school and provide additional support as needed. The school also maintains a relationship with a company called LanguageLine. This company provides translation services in approximately 170 languages and the school utilizes them when appropriate to ensure that the content of essential school communications can be understood by all parents.

PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION

It is essential that parents keep their contact information on file with the school up to date at all times. The school may need to reach parents in emergencies, to notify them of incidents involving their student at school, or for other important reasons. Parents must therefore contact the school any time there is a change to their address, phone number, or email address.

PARENT CONCERNS

When parents/guardians have a concern about something going on in a classroom or at the school, the best thing to do is first contact their student's Academic Advisor or classroom teacher to discuss the matter. After that, if the situation still has not been resolved, the parent needs to contact either the Co-Heads of Academics (for any matters relating to teaching and learning in the school) or the Head of School (for any matters in the school not directly related to teaching and learning). If the concern is not resolved at the school level, or if a community member wishes to make a specific complaint to the Board, they can provide notice to the Head of School who can relay their concern to the Board and set aside time on a meeting agenda when appropriate. Parents and community members may attend any board meeting and present a statement during the public comment period, but are encouraged to share any specific concerns beforehand so that the board can best address them. The Board will review the complaint and come to a final decision as quickly as possible.

CONTRACT FOR EXCELLENCE

From the students themselves to their parents/guardians, teachers, and support staff – each and every member of the school community has a critical role to play in supporting success for our learners. To make sure each individual knows their role in the process, all community members must agree to and sign the Freire Contract for Excellence which was developed jointly with parents. This can be found on our website [HERE](#).

MATERIALS AND TRAINING AVAILABLE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

POWERSCHOOL TRAINING

Freire is committed to doing everything possible to help parents have the tools they need to support their students in school. To that end, Freire holds trainings and/or provides written instructions so that parents feel adept at using our student database (PowerSchool) from their homes and offices. Parents can log into PowerSchool at any time and receive up-to-date information about their individual student. From PowerSchool they can see a current reflection of their student's performance in each class, including specific information on how a student performed on every class assignment and assessment. Parents also have access to their student's daily attendance, current overall grades as well as test and quiz grades, homework performance, and in-school behavior.

Training for PowerSchool usually occurs in September as part of our Back to School Night but is also offered through individual tutorials. Parents receive a username and password in order to enter their account on PowerSchool. As part of that training, parents learn the capabilities of the program and how to tailor those capabilities to meet their individual needs and access the information they want to see about their student's progress. For any parents who miss Back to School Night and still want to learn how to access their student's progress online, our Academic Advisors are available by appointment throughout the year to help parents access this very important feature.

ACADEMIC ADVISORS

Each student has an Academic Advisor at Freire. The job of the academic advisor is to support students in their academic growth by following student progress on a regular basis, communicating with a student's parent/guardian in times of concern, helping to link students to the extra help and support centers Freire has available to all students, and helping to ensure that the staff at school and parents at home are doing all we can to support our students' academic success. When requested by parents, academic advisors will also facilitate regular meetings that provide parents with an opportunity to formulate suggestions and participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their student.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

Another fundamental way that we support parents in helping their child's achievement and potential soar is through our emotional support team. The School's emotional support team serves all students in need of therapy on a regular basis. Students meet with either our in-house certified family therapist or one of the handful of graduate school interns studying the science of emotional support and working closely at our family therapist's direction. Any and all family members of a currently enrolled student are also welcome to participate in emotional support therapy sessions. In accordance with PA Act 147 of 2004, students who are 14 years of age or older can request counseling and are entitled to confidentiality, subject to legal restrictions (for example, counselors must report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect and may be required to report a suspicion that the student has been a victim of a crime).

21ST CENTURY CCLC PARENT PROGRAMMING

Lastly, thanks to the Pennsylvania Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant, Freire provides parent programming throughout the year. If you are interested in being a part of Freire's 21st Century CCLC parent programming, please contact the Director of Student Activities.

EDUCATION FOR OUR EDUCATORS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENTS IN STUDENT SUCCESS

Every Freire staff member participates in at least two trainings per school year on effectively partnering with parents to maximize student achievement. One of these trainings is held during our start of the year staff orientation, and the second at one of our regularly scheduled staff professional development sessions. Issues about differences in culture, expectation, communication styles, etc. are addressed.

Additionally, administrative personnel and school leaders participate in ongoing informal conversations regarding how to support parents and their students most effectively. One of the primary roles of our Academic Advisors is to serve as a liaison to and for parents with the school and to make sure to give voice to parent concerns, feedback, and positive experiences.

TITLE I COMPLAINT PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS

A parent who feels that the school is not meeting its Title I or other responsibilities as outlined in this policy, should first discuss the problem with the school Federal Programs Coordinator. Examples of violations would be such things as:

- An annual meeting was not convened to explain Title I offerings to parents
- Parents were refused information on the professional qualifications of their student's classroom teacher.

If the concern was not resolved at the school level, a parent should begin a formal Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) complaint procedure as outlined below. A complaint is defined by Freire Charter School as a written, signed statement. It must include the following:

- A statement that PDE or Freire has violated a requirement of federal statute or regulations which apply to programs under the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Information on any discussions, meetings or correspondence with PDE or Freire regarding the complaint

FEDERAL PROGRAMS COORDINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Tanza Pugliese, Compliance Manager, Freire Schools Collaborative
1617 JFK Blvd Ste 580
Philadelphia PA 19103
(267) 583-4465
tanza@freireschools.org

OTHER IMPORTANT PARENT INVOLVEMENT INFORMATION

We are always working to form stronger, better partnerships with parents. Some of the ways in which we further this goal that have not been mentioned specifically above are:

- One parent from the Middle School and one from the High School each serve on the School's Board of Directors.
- Parents are surveyed yearly for input on the quality of their children's teachers and staff.
- Parents receive bi-weekly communications updating them on school activities, events, issues, etc.
- Parents receive mailings frequently through the regular mail.
- Utilization of School Messenger service which allows the School to communicate information to parents via automated phone calls, text messages, and emails.
- Teachers are required to respond to every communication from a student's parents within a reasonable period of time.
- Teachers take the time to write comments on report cards thereby giving parents more specific information than just a grade.
- The interview process for hiring staff includes parent input when possible, and in particular when hiring

senior administrative staff members.

IV. ACADEMIC POLICIES

GENERAL PROMOTION GUIDELINES

- Students receive academic credit for each class passed with a grade of 75% or higher. Any final year grade under 75% earns no credit.
- Any student failing one or two classes in an academic year will be required to attend summer school at the School for each class failed. Summer school attendance is mandatory.
- Students will be retained (i.e. required to repeat a grade) in the following situations:
 - Any student who fails three or more classes in an academic year will be retained. The student will be required to repeat the grade level in its entirety (i.e. take all 6 classes over again). At the discretion of the Head of School or designee, a student who receives above a 90% in any class may be enrolled in the next grade level of that class.
 - Any student missing a total of three or more credits cumulatively by the end of the school year will be automatically retained. For example, a student who failed one class in 9th grade, did not earn that credit during summer school, then failed 2 more classes in 10th grade would be three credits short and would be retained in 10th grade, taking a mix of 9th and 10th grade classes to make up the credits.
- In order to enter 12th grade at the School, each student must have earned 18 credits.

POLICY ON GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- Students must have twenty-four (24) credits, have completed all requirements for Senior Project, and completed one of Pennsylvania's Act 158 approved pathways to graduate.
- All credits must be earned in the following manner:
 - 4 English credits
 - 4 Math credits
 - 4 Science credits
 - 4 Social Studies credits
 - 2 Foreign Language credits
 - 6 Elective credits (including the course aligned with the Senior Project)
- The Act 158 pathways available to students are the following:
 - **Keystone Proficiency Pathway:** Score Proficient on all three Keystone exams: Algebra, Literature, and Biology.
 - **Keystone Composite Pathway:** Earn a composite score of 4452 on the Keystones, with at least one score of Proficient and no scores of Below Basic.
 - **Alternative Assessment Pathway:** Students can qualify by achieving a certain score on standardized assessments other than Keystones, for example scoring a 3 or higher on AP exams, or by getting accepted to a 4-year college and maintaining a high school GPA of 85% and an average daily attendance rate of 85% during 11th and 12th grade.
 - **Evidence Based Pathway:** Students must collect three pieces of evidence from a defined list that includes acceptance to a 2-year college, completion of a service learning project, and maintaining a high school GPA of 75% and an average daily attendance rate of 80%.
- Only students who have earned all 24 credits as well as passed all requirements for Senior Project and Pennsylvania's Act 158 will be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies.

- Students who have severely violated the Code of Conduct may be prohibited from participating in graduation ceremonies at the administration's discretion. The receipt of a diploma may be delayed until discipline matters have been settled.
- All outstanding student fees must be paid in full to receive a diploma.
- Any other graduation requirements set by Pennsylvania law. For students graduating in 2025-26 or later, this will include a new requirement to demonstrate proficiency on the Keystone Exams or satisfy alternate requirements.

All students have until September 30th of their graduation year to complete all graduation requirements. A student is no longer eligible to earn a diploma from Freire Charter School after September 30th.

GRADING POLICY

Quarterly grades reflect 60% Mastery and 40% Effort. Every assignment in a teacher's grade book is coded for either Mastery or Effort and is clearly labeled for parents and students.

MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS

Teachers will give midterms at the end of the first semester and final exams at the end of the second semester. Freire will follow amended schedules during these testing days. There will be one exam make-up day for absent students. Students are expected to report to each exam on time. **No extra time will be given for late students.**

MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAM WEIGHTING

Midterm and final exams will count as a percentage of the semester grade. The percentages increase by grade and are shown below:

- 9th grade – 10%
- 10th grade – 15%
- 11th grade – 15%
- 12th grade – 20%

SENIOR EXEMPTION

Any Senior holding a 93% average in a class as of the last grade check prior to final exams will be exempt from taking the final exam for that class. **(12th grade ONLY or 11th graders in courses with 12th grade students.)** Additionally, students in AP or certification classes who take the AP or certification examinations may also be exempt from finals.

PARENT-STUDENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences are held each year so that students can use their teachers' feedback in order to directly impact their grade for the remainder of the year. All parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to meet with every teacher, regardless of how successful their student's performance may be.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to create their own original work at all times. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty (i.e. plagiarism, copying, cheating, utilizing AI tools) will not receive credit for that work. Severe cases of academic dishonesty or repeat offenses may be brought to the Board for expulsion. Academic dishonesty offenses carry over from class to class and grade level to grade level. Consequences for academic dishonesty can be found in our Behavior Matrix and are as follows:

First Offense: Consequence Log Entry in PowerSchool, Phone Call From Teacher, Teacher will state this policy to parent via phone, Student meeting with Academic Head. Zero for Effort. Can redo Mastery.

2nd Offense: Consequence Log Entry in PowerSchool, Phone Call From Teacher, Teacher will state this policy to parent via phone and communicate that this is their second offense. Student meeting with the Academic Head. Zero for Effort. Zero for Mastery.

3rd Offense: Suspension, Informal Hearing and recommendation for Expulsion.

USE OF AI TOOLS

The School recognizes the value of artificial intelligence (AI) tools like Grammarly, ChatGPT, and more. If used appropriately, these AI tools can enhance student learning. However, if used inappropriately, these tools can fall under our Academic Integrity/Academic Dishonesty Policy. Teachers will make every effort to clarify when it might be appropriate to use AI tools to enhance student work. However, if teachers do not explicitly offer this clarity for a given effort or mastery assignment, it is the responsibility of the student to ask for that clarity. If students choose not to ask for that clarity and use AI tools without teacher permission or if students disregard teacher clarification, the Academic Integrity/Academic Dishonesty Policy takes effect.

MAKE-UP PROCEDURES

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Dragons are expected to immediately communicate the reason any major assignment is missed to their teacher and academic advisor via email, proactively if possible. The assignment will be scored a zero and flagged as missing until completed and turned in. Staff will communicate next action steps via a comment in powerschool next to placeholder.

- All classes will have a combination of mastery and effort assessments. For each mastery assessment's total point value available, there will be an equal number of effort points available (though these may be spread out over multiple effort assignments).
- Major assignments are determined by the teacher and indicated by gradebook weight.
- Major assignments must connect to an I Can (student-friendly version of a major standard(s) or collection of standards).
- Students may not turn in missed assignments after a designated period of time, as outlined in their class's syllabus.
- There will be a 10% point deduction from the assignments effort grade for each day the assignment is late.
 - This deduction can be paused if an action plan is initiated with a teacher or academic advisor in writing.

To receive an extension on an assignment's deadline, Dragons must submit a written request via email within three school days prior to the original due date. An extension will be up to the teacher's discretion with the approval of the team leader.

- Verbal agreements will not be enforced.
- Dragons experiencing any hardship that prohibits timely submission of assignments should communicate this to their teacher, case manager and/or academic advisor.
- Grade-level teams may impose additional policies.

LATENESS TO CLASS

Any student arriving late to class without an excused absence will not be permitted to make up missed work or receive credit for homework. Any major assignments handed in at that time may be counted as late at the teacher's discretion. Any student late for class without an excused absence during a test or quiz will not receive extra time.

Students who are late to class will be issued a detention (lunch or after school).

ABSENCES

Please see the Student Attendance Policy for procedures concerning make-up work related to absences.

PROCEDURE FOR POWER SCHOOL AND GRADES

Parent access to a student's grades through PowerSchool will provide an opportunity for ongoing conversations regarding academic progress. PowerSchool allows parents to see their student's progress, assignment grades, write-ups, comments and recent attendance.

Families each get a username and password to login to see their student's grades. Grades are updated often but can only be considered truly accurate and up-to-date on the 15th and 30th of every month (the last time grades were updated for each class is shown at the bottom of the screen in PowerSchool). If there are academic questions or concerns, parents are encouraged to reach out to teachers by email. Teachers will respond within 2 business days. More serious or general concerns can be addressed to Academic Advisors, Director of Academic Affairs, or the Assistant Head of Academics.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

For many students, selection as a member of the National Honor Society (NHS) is the pinnacle of their achievements in school. This honor, recognized throughout the nation, is both the public recognition of accomplishment and the private commitment to continued excellence on the part of the new member.

SELECTION PROCEDURES

One must remember, however, that selection to the National Honor Society is a privilege and not a right. In an effort to clarify how students are selected to the NHS, the steps of the selection process are outlined below.

- The Director of Academic Affairs reviews the transcripts of the members of the Sophomore, Junior and Senior classes. Any student who has a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 88.00 and higher is placed on a list of potential members, and this list is given to the NHS advisor.
- The NHS advisor distributes an application to each student on the above list. Students must complete this form by the stated deadline if they wish to be considered for membership.
- The NHS advisor forwards all returned applications to a 5-member Faculty Council. The advisor also reviews discipline history from the Log Entries section in PowerSchool. This information is forwarded to the Faculty Council.
- The Faculty Council meets to review each student's completed form and the Dean's remarks. The council examines each student in terms of their character, leadership, and service.
- After assessing the data, the members of the Faculty Council take a vote on each student to decide whether they will become a member of the NHS. A student who wins a majority of the votes is approved for membership to the NHS.
- Students are notified in writing about their selection to the National Honor Society.

MEMBERSHIP

In order to maintain membership in the National Honor Society, students must:

- Maintain their 88.00 overall GPA at the conclusion of the school year
- Complete 20 community service hours by the conclusion of the school year

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Every National Honor Society member should remember that they must be the embodiment of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. These four pillars are what earned them the honor of becoming an NHS member in the first place. At times, a member may fail to maintain the expected high standards, and it will become necessary to formally warn this member.

The following actions will result in a formal warning:

- Failing to attend a scheduled meeting without informing advisor in person of their absence in advance
- Accumulating more than 5 write-ups in any quarter
- Failing to complete an assigned responsibility (e.g. not showing up at an activity they are scheduled to do)
- G.P.A. drops below 88.00
- Severe violations of the Code of Conduct

The Faculty Council will meet once every three months—unless an emergency meeting is called—to review the records of each NHS member. If, as a body, the Faculty Council decides the member has not fulfilled their duty as a National Honor Society member, the honor of being a member of this society may be revoked. Members have the right to a pre-dismissal hearing and to be notified in writing of the actions being taken against them, the reasons for such actions, and the time and date of the hearing. Members have the right to respond either in writing or orally.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

A student who participates in interscholastic athletics at Freire Charter School, which is a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (PIAA), must adhere to the PIAA eligibility rules for student athletes.

To be eligible to participate in a sport, you must follow the guidelines below.

ACADEMIC/BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATION

- Must be passing 5 of their 6 classes.
- Must attend school the day of the event.
- Must submit a doctor's note to return to school and to participate in sports if absent for three days or more.
- Must not be suspended or have any serious* discipline issues for the reporting period.

*Serious is defined as a write-up for defiance, disrespect, or disruption.

NOTE: Any student who is suspended will lose their eligibility for a 5-day period that will begin on the first day of reinstatement.

ASSESSMENT OF ELIGIBILITY

Athletic participation lists will be generated on the 15th and the 30th/31st of each month. All students who do not meet the expectations outlined above will not be able to participate for a 5-day period. After 5 days the ineligible student's academic record will be checked again. If they meet the eligibility requirements, they will be cleared to play until the next eligibility period. **There will be no exceptions.**

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

- Must be a leader inside and outside of the school.
- Must get all work covered and missed while away from school due to a game.
- Must have a physical completed before joining the team.
- Must have a parent permission form completed.

A student who has reached their 19th birthday by June 30th immediately preceding the current school year, may not participate in Freire athletic teams.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

If a student-athlete receives a bump, blow or jolt to the head, he/she will be removed from play immediately. If the student-athlete is determined by a game official, school staff member or present healthcare professional to exhibit signs or symptoms of a concussion, the student-athlete will not be allowed to return to participation that day. The School staff member will notify the parent/guardian or relevant emergency contact.

If the student-athlete was not allowed to return to play the day of the bump, blow or jolt to the head, the student-athlete cannot return to participation/play at all until they have been evaluated and cleared by an outside healthcare professional and presents signed documentation stating such.

CHILD FIND AND PUBLIC AWARENESS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Freire Charter School is committed to the identification of students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Chapter 711. The school shall maintain a system to protect the confidentiality of student information and records – see policies 502 and 503 for more information.

PUBLIC NOTICE

- The School participates in the annual Charter School Public Awareness Notice in the Philadelphia newspapers and public radio.
- The School's awareness and outreach activities include information regarding potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities. These activities are designed to reach parents/guardians of students experiencing homelessness, wards of the state, students with disabilities attending private schools, and highly mobile students, including migrant student.
- The School provides access to informational brochures detailing the special education process in Pennsylvania Charter Schools at all parent meetings and in the main office.
- The School publishes an annual notice regarding special education on the School's website and in the parent and student handbook.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Director of Student Services, Nyaka Kimp (215-557-8555, extension 3913).

ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR CHILD FIND PROCESS

The School has created a multi-disciplinary team to determine the need for further evaluation. The process is as follows:

- Every quarter, Academic Advisors as well as teachers compile curriculum-based performance reports for each student assigned to their caseload. This may take the form of a report card, a progress note, or some other format.
- Teachers screen these reports to determine which students are struggling academically. Any students appearing to need extra support are referred to the Head of Academics for either informal instructional support or some level of our response to intervention program, depending upon the needs of each student.
- Parents and students are notified and invited to an informal meeting to discuss student needs and teacher/parent concerns. A determination is made to refer students for response to intervention remediation and support, and/or a multi-disciplinary evaluation.

- Midway through the following quarter, Academic Advisors check on the grades and progress of these students using three-pronged criteria:
 - Is the student coming for extra help?
 - Is the student completing homework assignments?
 - Is the student passing?
- Teachers are then asked to determine whether the student appears to need further evaluations and/or supports. This may lead to an eventual full evaluation, conducted by a school psychologist. In the case of a full evaluation, parents, teachers and the student meet to discuss the results and potential outcomes of the evaluation process. NOTE: In order for a student to go through a full evaluation with a school psychologist, the parent must give consent on the School's Permission to Evaluate form.
- A student is referred for a full evaluation only after reasonable regular education and response to intervention options have been exhausted and/or the student's needs have demonstrated significant resistance to intervention within the regular education classroom.

SUMMER CHILD FIND PROCESS

In an effort to most efficiently and proactively identify students with disabilities the School extends its Child Find process to encompass the summer school program; as it is likely that unidentified students with disabilities will experience a degree of academic difficulty that requires the attendance of summer school.

The administrators and teachers at the School will review the academic histories and transcripts of the students attending the summer school program. School officials may identify students who have experienced chronic educational difficulties to be referred for a formal educational screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by the school psychologist (MDE). The following guidelines will be utilized to determine which students require assessment as a component of the school-wide Child Find process:

- If a student is enrolled in summer school for the second consecutive year or more, such students may be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by the school psychologist.
- If the student is enrolled in summer school for the areas of science, social studies, and language arts, such students may be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by the school psychologist.
- Students who present evidence of underachievement and/or whose educational difficulties are related to factors other than a disability may not be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by the school psychologist. However, efforts will be made to identify other resources and supports to assist in meeting the educational needs of such a student. Further, the School strongly encourages the parents of such students to actively engage in working with their child to address the barriers to their educational success.

V. GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

COMMUNICATION DURING A HEALTH EMERGENCY

It is crucial that the School is able to get in contact with all students and parents/guardians. It is critical that students and parents/guardians check and read their emails regularly and answer any texts or phone calls from the School. It is imperative that you do not block the School's phone numbers used to communicate with you as that will prevent the School from alerting you to an emergency in addition to missing important information.

VIRTUAL PARENT MEETINGS

Parents/guardians are able to participate in virtual parent meetings when necessary. We ask that parents/guardians make every effort to attend and engage in virtual parent meetings in the same manner as a meeting in which they previously would have met in-person.

ID CARD PROCEDURE

Identification pictures will be taken at orientation and then again on a make-up day. A student's first ID card is provided free of charge. If the card is lost there will be a \$5 charge to replace it, but IDs that are in poor condition will be replaced free of charge.

LOCKER PROCEDURES

All lockers are assigned at the discretion of the Deans' Office for the convenience of each student and remain the property of Freire. All students who receive permission to use a locker must sign an agreement stating the terms and conditions for its use. Only school-issued locks may be put on a locker and non-school-issued locks will be immediately removed. Students are permitted to decline a school-issued lock, but will still be held accountable for any items found in or damage to the locker assigned to them. Students may request a lock in the future if they desire. Students are to only use the locker assigned to them. Sharing lockers is not permitted. The school reserves the right to periodically and randomly open and inspect lockers at any time and without notifying the student. All items found in lockers not assigned to that specific student, or those that do not have a school-issued lock on them, will be removed.

LUNCH PROGRAM & PROCEDURES

All students are eligible for free lunch for the entire school year. There is no sign-up process required. Students simply have to present their school ID or student ID number to the lunch staff each day prior to receiving their lunch.

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURE

Students who reside in Philadelphia and meet eligibility requirements will receive a SEPTA Key Student Fare Card from the School District of Philadelphia. Although the School is responsible for distributing the SEPTA cards, the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) is responsible for determining eligibility and then issuing cards to the School for distribution. Although the School does not determine eligibility nor do we have any authority over SEPTA cards, parents are still encouraged to contact the School with any questions and concerns. If a student DOES NOT reside in the SDP, parents need to contact the student's district of residence.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SEPTA KEY STUDENT FARE CARDS

A student must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for a SEPTA card:

- Reside in the SDP (Residents outside the SDP please refer to the "Out of District Residents" section)
- Live **MORE** than 1.5 miles from the School (The SDP determines this through addresses and zip codes)

PROCESS FOR DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

- At the beginning of the year, the SDP will process the addresses of all students registered at the School.
- The students who are deemed eligible (see eligibility requirements) will be placed on an electronic list, accessed via Compass, the District's online transportation portal.
- The District will provide the School with one SEPTA card for EACH student listed on Compass as

eligible to receive a card. Please note: The School ONLY receives a card for the students whose names appear on the eligibility list.

- The SDP's process for determining a student's eligibility status can unfortunately sometimes take more than a month from the first day of school. During this period the School relies on parents to ensure that students have transportation to and from school.

Please note: All paperwork is submitted to the SDP in a very timely fashion. Once that paperwork is submitted, the School (and parents) have to wait until the SDP determines eligibility and then issues a card.

The school reserves the right to withhold any key card if it is deemed necessary by administration.

OUT OF DISTRICT RESIDENTS

Students who reside **outside** of the SDP must contact their district of residence directly in order to receive transportation.

According to Pennsylvania state law, districts are not required to provide transportation to students who attend a school that is more than 10 miles away from their district of residence.

The School is not responsible for lost or stolen cards. If a student loses their card or it is stolen, the student and their parent or guardian will be responsible for the student's transportation until a replacement can be issued.

Please Note: The District provides one card per student. There are no "extra" cards.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

All school closings (whether a closure or delayed start made prior to opening or an early dismissal closure during the school day) will be listed on the School's website. In addition, information will be distributed through the School Messenger system (automated phone calls and text alerts). School closing information may be available on local TV news outlets and on the radio at KYW 1060 AM.

Freire's KYW school closing number is 192.

TELEPHONE CALLS

OUTGOING CALLS FROM STUDENTS

Students will not be allowed to use the school phones for any reason. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, but this emergency use will be left up to the determination of the Dean of Students. Students who need to use the phone should approach the Head of School.

INCOMING CALLS TO STUDENTS

Students often receive emergency phone calls from parents with messages. **We will not interrupt a class with these messages unless it is a dire emergency.** A school administrator will determine the severity of the emergency; therefore, the receptionist will forward all calls to the Head of School. The Head of School will assess the situation. If the situation is not deemed an emergency, then a message will be taken and given to the student after class has ended.

VISITOR PROCEDURE

All visitors to the School, including parents, mentors, vendors, contractors, etc. should first sign in with the greeter. Visitors will be given a name tag, which they must wear at all times while in the building. The name tag will say "VISITOR" and the date of the visit. **Any visitor who fails to adhere to this policy will be considered a trespasser. The administration will deal with trespassing by contacting the police.**

All Visitors are required to follow the School's current health and safety plan. Any visitor who violates these health guidelines will be asked to leave the building.

PARENT VISITATION

The School considers parents/guardians as our partners in the educational journey of the students who attend the School. In order to make parent visits more profitable to all parties, and safe for all students, the School requires the following:

- Schedule your visit in advance by contacting the School via telephone. Walk-in visits can unfortunately not be accommodated.
- Classroom visits must be approved by either the Head of Academics or the Head of School Culture and scheduled in advance.
- Meetings with teachers can be scheduled through the Head of Academics.

VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

All volunteers (parents, grandparents, community members) must have all clearances required under Pennsylvania law on file with the School. All duties and arrangements will be made by the appropriate school administrator.

If you would like to volunteer at the School (including parents chaperoning a field trip), please notify Katie Pollard (katie@freireschools.org), Director of People Operations at Freire Schools Network Office, who tracks all clearances.

Volunteers are required to obtain the following clearances:

- Child Abuse History Clearance from PA DHS
- Criminal Record Check from PA State Police
- FBI Fingerprint Background Check (if the volunteer has not been a continuous resident of PA for the last 10 years)

Effective 7/25/15, the fees for child abuse clearance and PA criminal background check have been waived for volunteers. Volunteers should obtain their clearances online and when prompted to select the reason for the clearance, they should select "VOLUNTEER." This will ensure that they are not charged a fee. The fee for the fingerprint clearance still applies.

For more information, please visit <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/clearances/index.htm>.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an essential part of learning. At Freire, students are strongly encouraged to participate in field trips unless a parent gives notice that a student is not permitted to participate. In order to ensure student safety, the school requires that a student's parent/guardian complete a permission slip for field trips. Freire offers the option for parents/guardians to give consent for any and all field trips or educational activities that may occur outside the school building which are held during regular school hours and within the city of Philadelphia. There will be a parent communication prior to any field trip and parents will have the option to request that their student remain at school rather than participate in that field trip. Separate permission slips will be required for trips outside of Philadelphia or which start before or end after regular school hours. The

appropriate permission slip must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the School by the deadline, either on paper or through the school's online permission slip platform. **The school cannot accept verbal consent or any other form of parent/guardian authorization besides the fully completed and signed permission slip.** The School reserves the right to deny participation in field trips or activities at the discretion of school administration.

LOST AND DAMAGED PROPERTY

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for taking care of and returning school property provided for their use – including but not limited to books, locks, lockers, lab equipment, laptops, sports uniforms, sports equipment, etc. Families will be billed for lost or damaged items and may be followed by disciplinary action. Students will be required to pay off all account balances prior to receiving their transcript or diploma.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Freire Charter School is not responsible for students' or community members' personal property brought onto the school's campus or to any school activities regardless of location. Students and visitors are responsible for ensuring that their personal property is secured against theft or loss at all times. Valuables such as wallets and phones should be kept with you or locked at all times, never left unsecured and unattended. In the rare instances when that is not possible and the cellphone is left with a staff member, the staff member is not responsible for any damage to a phone NOT in a Yondr pouch.

INAPPROPRIATE PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Romantic physical contact is prohibited at all times. Students who engage in inappropriate public displays of affection may be subject to disciplinary measures. Inappropriate public displays of affection distract from the college preparatory environment that is expected at Freire Charter School at all times. Age and circumstance will be taken into consideration when applying discipline measures for inappropriate public displays of affection.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION POLICY

The Constitutions of the United States and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania guarantee a student's right to freedom of speech. This right is guaranteed in school unless the right to express themselves causes one or more of the following consequences:

1. Materially and substantially interferes with the education process
2. Threatens harm to the school or community
3. Encourages unlawful activity
4. Interferes with another individual's rights.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION PROCEDURES

In these circumstances the school will take action necessary to protect the educational environment. Student publications, handbills, announcements, assemblies, group meetings, buttons, and other means of communication must conform to the following condition:

1. All posted, distributed or printed material must be presented to the Head of School or their designee for approval prior to distribution or posting
2. Identify at least one student who is interested in posting or distributing the information
3. The students must obey laws governing libel and obscenity
4. Be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and give others a fair opportunity to express their views

SUMMARY OF STUDENT HEALTH POLICIES

The School's health policies are summarized below. Copies of the complete policies are available upon request and on the school website [HERE](#).

ILLNESS PROCEDURES

When the nurse is on site:

When the nurse is on site, s/he is the person who will determine whether or not the student is able to return to class. If the nurse determines that a student needs to leave, then s/he will contact the parents and request that they pick up their student. The nurse is the only person who has the authority to determine a student must leave for the day.

When the nurse is NOT on site:

On days that the nurse is not at the High School, the school will honor the wishes of the parents/guardians as to whether the student should stay in school for the day. In the event the nurse is not available and the school and parent do not agree about the resolution, a Head of School will have the authority to determine whether the student is too ill to stay in school. In the event a student is too ill to remain in school a parent/guardian should sign the student out and pick them up for an Early Dismissal. In instances where this is not feasible, the school may release the student after the parent/guardian completes the Early Dismissal Survey (listed above).

Note: When the school determines that a student must be sent home due to illness, their absence for the remainder of the day shall be excused.

Medical Emergencies & Accidents

In the event your student has a medical emergency (defined as an incident that requires immediate medical attention), we will make him/her comfortable and begin appropriate first aid procedures. If your student needs to be transported to a hospital, an ambulance will be called. A school staff member may or may not accompany your student to the hospital and may or may not stay with him/her until you arrive. If you cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact the emergency numbers you have listed as emergency contacts.

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND SCREENINGS

MEDICAL AND DENTAL EXAMINATIONS

Physical examinations are required upon entry to Freire and in 11th grade. Dental examinations are required upon entry. Students without adequate health records who are transferring from other schools are required to be examined as soon as possible upon entry to Freire. These examinations may be completed no more than one year prior to a student's entry into the grade where an exam is required. Entry is considered to occur on July 1.

HEALTH SCREENING TESTS

The following screening tests shall be conducted by a nurse or medical technician following Department of Health requirements and guidelines:

- **Vision:** Near and far visual acuity tests are conducted annually for all students.
- **Hearing:** Initial hearing screenings are conducted in eleventh grade.
- **Growth:** Height and weight measurements are taken annually.

PPRA NOTICE AND CONSENT/OPT-OUT FOR SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, requires Freire Charter School to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your student out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas (“protected information surveys”):

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family
- Sexual behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes (“marketing surveys”), and certain physical exams and screenings.

Freire Charter School will provide parents, within a reasonable period of time prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, notification of the surveys and activities. Parents will be provided an opportunity to opt their student out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys. (Please note that this notice and consent/opt-out transfers from parents to any student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.)

ANNUAL FERPA NOTIFICATION

Annual Notification of Rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for the 2025-26 School Year/Notice to Parents and Guardians Regarding the Disclosure of Student “Directory Information”

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law, affords parents, legally emancipated students, and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records.

These rights are briefly summarized below and are explained more fully in the Board’s Student Records Policy which is on file at the school and is available upon request. You are encouraged to review the School’s Student Records Policy for a full explanation of privacy rights:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School CEO a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the School CEO, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of the right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One

exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official may include a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); contractors, consultants, volunteers, and other outside service providers used by the school; or a parent or student serving on official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school, school district, school system, or institution of higher learning in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Directory information includes information contained in the educational record of a student, which is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, so that it may be disclosed without prior parental consent, unless the parent or guardian has advised the School to the contrary in accordance with school procedures.

Directory information includes the following:

- Schools attended;
- Student's name;
- Address;
- Telephone listing;
- Student electronic mail address;
- Photograph;
- Date of birth;
- Major field of study;
- Dates of enrollment;
- Grade level;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- Degrees, honors, and awards received; and
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this type of information from a student's education records in certain school publications, including: a playbill, showing a student's role in a drama production; school newsletters, the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs; and sports activity sheets, such as for basketball, showing weight and height of team members. This information may also be made available to qualified outside organizations upon request.

If a parent or guardian chooses to refuse the inclusion of this type of information, they should mail a written objection on or before **September 1, 2025**, or two weeks after their child's start date, to the Head of School at:

Freire Charter School
2027 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Please note that an opt-out of directory information disclosures does not prevent the School from identifying a student by name or from disclosing a student's electronic identifier or institutional email address in class. The right to opt out of directory information disclosures does not include a right to remain anonymous in class, and may not be used to impede routine classroom communications and interactions, whether class is held in a specified physical location or virtually through electronic communications. **If a parent/guardian does not submit a written refusal on or before September 1, 2025 then the School may disclose directory information without prior consent.**

VI. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

What the School needs from Parents/Guardians in an emergency:

- In the event of an emergency, please remain calm and understand that the school is prepared to respond to any type of emergency situation.
- Do not call the school, as an influx of phone calls may inhibit our ability to respond to an emergency. The school understands that communicating with parents during an emergency is a priority and will do so as soon as possible.
- If you DO NOT want your student dismissed to SEPTA should the school need to dismiss students from an evacuation site, make sure that the reunification request is filed with the school. Contact the Head of School: (215) 557-8555 x1916.
- Please realize that if your student is dismissed to use public transportation they MOST likely will not have their personal belongings with them. This includes coats, book bags, purses etc.
- The school will provide emergency SEPTA tokens for students who do not have their SEPTA card with them when the school building is evacuated.
- Please review this entire plan and ask questions. Make sure that you understand exactly what will happen and the steps the school will take in response to an emergency.
- An emergency can happen at any time, so we need you to make sure that the following information is always up to date in our system:
 - Guardian/Parent phone numbers:
 - Cell
 - Work
 - Home
 - Emergency Contacts:
 - Name/relationship and contact numbers
 - Reunification paperwork up to date and submitted

EMERGENCY DRILL PROCEDURE

If a drill takes place either during or after school hours, students or parents/guardians are not permitted to leave the premises until the drill is complete.

PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION

Parents will be informed of school emergencies as soon as possible. The following communication tools will be used during an emergency:

- School Messenger Automated System
 - Calls and/or messages will be sent out periodically so that parents and guardians can have up to date information.
- Text Alert and/or Remind App
 - Please note that only students or parents who have signed up for this service will receive these messages. Contact the Head of School to sign up.
- Website Postings
 - Please refer to the school's website for in-depth information: freirecharterschool.org

APPLICABILITY

These procedures will be followed at all times (including after regular school hours) and in all facilities that Freire Charter School occupies to the degree that they are relevant and prudent.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES SUMMARY

The School utilizes the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) method to respond to emergencies within the building. SRP includes Evacuation, Lockdown, Secure, and Hold with a reunification process available if necessary.

Evacuation	When is this protocol activated? Fire, bomb threat, or other situation that requires exiting the building in a quick yet orderly manner. What should you do if this protocol is activated? All members of the school community will leave the building immediately and make way to their primary evacuation site. Each grade has a primary evacuation site. Students and staff are trained on the location of these evacuation sites and the Evacuation procedure regularly throughout the school year. If an Evacuation is triggered, parents will be alerted that an Evacuation was triggered at the school and more information will be provided as it becomes available. Once at the evacuation site, staff will take attendance to ensure all students are accounted for. At this time, additional parent communications will be shared if available.
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	If the Evacuation is cleared and it is safe to return to the building, students will return to school and resume regular programming. If returning to the building is not possible, students will be dismissed directly from the primary evacuation site. Students will not be able to retrieve personal items from the building while an Evacuation is active. There may be scenarios where students must be reunified directly with their parent/guardian(s) or where dismissal from the primary evacuation site is not possible. (See <i>Reunification</i>)
Lockdown	When is this protocol activated? Severe security threat inside the building e.g. armed assailant, gun found in building. What should you do if this protocol is activated? All members of the school community should run out of the building if near an exit and able, otherwise hide in silence and out of sight within a locked room. Students and staff are trained on Lockdown procedure regularly throughout the school year. A Lockdown will be lifted after the severe security threat has been neutralized or deemed the threat has passed. If the Lockdown has been cleared and it is safe to resume regular programming, students and staff will resume regular programming. If the Lockdown is not able to be cleared or law enforcement becomes involved, the school will follow a police-led evacuation to the Reunification Site. In a scenario where the Reunification Site is activated, students must be reunified directly with their parent/guardian(s). (See <i>Reunification</i>)
Secure	When is this protocol activated? Threat outside the building e.g. extreme weather, hazmat outside, neighborhood gun violence. Can be also used when there is a potential threat that needs to be investigated, including a potential threat outside the building. What should you do if this protocol is activated? Possible actions include: no one in or out of the building; shut off hvac; move away from windows; move off first floor. No one needs to be hiding in silence as in a lockdown.
Hold	When is this protocol activated? A situation inside the building that requires students and staff to temporarily remain within their classroom/office. eg if EMT needs empty hallways to assist with a medical emergency, if staff need to clean a spill or other unsafe condition in one wing of the school, or if staff receive information about a potential safety issue that needs to be investigated. What should you do if this protocol is activated? Staff and students stay in the room they are in or to move to a space they are directed to. No one needs to be hiding in silence as in a lockdown.

Reunification**When is this protocol activated?**

Used immediately following a lockdown or evacuation if necessary.

What should you do if this protocol is activated?

Proceed to the reunification site after being directed by police or other public safety officials. After the school community reaches the reunification site, staff will take student attendance and parent/guardian(s) will be notified of the reunification location and be able to pick up their child.