

August 2023

FCA Parent Newsletter



Dear Falcon Families,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year! We have been so excited anticipating the new school year and here it is! It has been great meeting so many of you at our Teacher Meet and Greet and I hope your children are getting acquainted with their new teachers and classmates.

I will be sending FCA Newsletters home once a month via our School Messenger System. Our goal is to keep you informed of activities and events happening on campus. I hope your family is getting back into the routines that a new school year brings!

Please find attached district required letters/documents that are part of our back-to-school student communications.

Attached:

- Programs of Choice Letter from Superintendent Forson, **Elementary** specific
- Required Instruction Letter- **Elementary** specific.
- School Safety Letter
- Superintendent's Code of Conduct Letter
- Economic Security Report Summary
- Sheriff Hardwick's Back-to-School Letter

About us

Freedom Crossing Academy works hard to create a safe, supportive, and positive school culture by aligning PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports) school-wide behavior expectations, known as the FCA Way, with **Capturing Kids Hearts** best practices and the **Character Counts** education program. Capturing Kids Hearts is a school-wide relationship building approach for students to feel connected, supported, and valued every day. Every morning, teachers greet students when they enter the classroom. Students share **"good news"** at the beginning of each class and begin each day with a launch of the school's vision and mission statement. ***Our school culture has been recognized the last two years as a National Show Case for Capturing Kids Hearts***

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In every classroom, teachers and students create **Social Contracts** to promote a self-managing, highly effective learning environment of productive relationships, teamwork, and leadership. Freedom Crossing Academy also implements the **Six Pillars of Character Counts**, a county wide character education program that instills positive character traits.

Freedom Crossing Academy is dedicated towards increasing positive student behavioral outcomes and fostering positive relationships. I am asking parents to talk to their students about our **FCA School Culture**. Inquire about **Good News** shared and the **Class Social Contract**. I also implore parents to talk about appropriate behavior including how students treat and talk to each other, especially when in non-structured environments like lunch and recess.

It is expected that students understand that any conduct or behavior that demeans, degrades, antagonizes, humiliates or embarrasses a person or group of persons, including racial slurs or derogatory comments is unacceptable and our outlined in our student code of conduct as a Level II and Level III offense. FCA does not take this lightly and will follow the [SJCS Student Code of Conduct 23-24](#)



Happy 23-24 School Year!!



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FCA Important New

Expectations Meetings

Middle School Expectations Meetings were held in English and Social Studies classrooms in a classroom environment to allow for clear expectations and allow for dialog between the students and administration. Elementary administration will planning to meet with their grade level students over the next few weeks to review school expectations.

Additionally, our admin team will be following up next week with ALL students in age-appropriate Safety Meetings with Deputy Fornash.

Cell Phone/Technology Policy

Please note new changes to this policy as noted in the SJCS Student Code of Conduct (page 27)

Students may possess cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at school, on and at school functions. However, they must be turned off, **stored in student's backpack, purse, locker.** The device shall not be used during the school day without administrative approval or on school buses.

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to and from school. Students may not use a wireless communication device during instructional time except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes. Failure to comply may result in the device being confiscated. Repeated failure to comply will be considered defiance of school. Please see the student code of conduct for more detailed information. For medical conditions, you can reach out to Nurse Lauri Frost at lauri.frost@stjohns.k12.fl.us

[SJCS Student Code of Conduct 23-24](#)

Progress Monitoring

The Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) is a progress monitoring system that is administered three times per year to track your student's progress in learning the Benchmarks of Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards throughout this school year. Progress Monitoring will happen 3 times per year. Parents should have received a detailed notice form your child's home room teacher. Please reach out to our Testing Coordinator if you have any questions at Melissa.dillard@stjohns.k12.fl.us

- Grades K-1 will take the Renaissance Star Early Literacy Assessment
- Grade 2 will take the Renaissance Star Reading Assessment
- Grades 3 -8 will take the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST)

JACKSONVILLE JAGUAR HONOR ROW GAME

Are you ready for some football? This year's Jacksonville Jaguar Honor Row Game is on September 24th and FCA has 125 tickets to award to our amazing 4th-8th graders who are demonstrating "The FCA Way." Please see below for more details. Students have been notified by their teachers.

Who:

- 4th Graders (20 students)
- 5th Graders (20 students)
- 6th Graders (20 students)
- 7th Graders (20 students)
- 8th Graders (20 students)
- FCA Teachers/Staff (25)

LiveSchool Launch Date- August 21st-August 25th

Homeroom classes (4th-8th grade) will receive raffle tickets & a zip lock bag before August 21st. Homeroom teachers will manage their homeroom tickets throughout the week. Students can purchase a raffle ticket for 25 LiveSchool points from their Homeroom teacher. Please ask the students to write their name on the back of the ticket and put the ticket in the zip lock bag. Admin will stop by your classrooms on Friday, August 25th to collect your tickets and draw the winning students.

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Winners Announced- Monday, August 28th and permission forms will be given to students .

Last day to submit Permission Forms- September 1st

This is a hard deadline per Jacksonville Jaguars

Transportation is provided to and from the game (St. Johns County School Buses)

All students and chaperones attending the Jaguar Game must ride to and from the stadium together.

- Students arrive at FCA at 10:30am.
- Depart from FCA at 11:15am.
- Students return to FCA at 5:30pm

Shetland Drive PAVING NOTICE

JEA would like to inform you about an upcoming road resurfacing project in your area, which will be conducted by Warren's Asphalt on behalf of JEA following a recent construction project.

The construction activity will involve resurfacing sections of Shetland Drive near Gaelic Way.

To ensure the safety of our crews and the general public, temporary road closures and detours will be implemented around the work area during the paving process. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact JEA Project Outreach at (904) 665-7500 or projectoutreach@jea.com

PAVING DATES – TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE(S):

Anticipated Paving Date: Friday, August 25, 2023*

Time: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.*

Safety -Arrival and Dismissal

School start time is 8:00AM.

Our morning and afternoon traffic seems to be settling and becoming more efficient. Thank you for your patience as we work through the first few weeks of school. We appreciate your help in getting your students to school on time. Please be mindful that students that arrive after 8:00AM are tardy and missing valuable class time. Additionally, we are so thankful to have our amazing **Patrols** on duty each morning and afternoon. Please know that patrols and staff members will begin unloading students at **7:40AM**.

A few things that can help us move the car lines and keep everyone safe.

In the morning:

- For safety, always exist on the right passenger side of the vehicle.

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- Remind students to walk on the right side of the sidewalk.
- Students backpacks and items should be ready to grab upon exit.
- Staff and patrols will assist with younger students exiting the vehicles.
- Please pull all the way up and follow the directions of staff directing cars.
- Please be mindful of cell phone use during this time.
- No cars should pull into the bus loop for any reason. Drop Off and Pickup should be in the Parent/Pickup and Drop Off location in the front of the school.

In afternoon: **PLEASE NOTE THE SAFETY CONCERN BELOW**

- School Crossing Guards will be posted at Longleaf and Shetland Dr. from **7:25AM to 8:00AM** and in the afternoon **2:23PM to 2:53PM**. It has been brought to our attention that students are crossing to the school before the PSAs/Crossing Guards take their posts and not making use of the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon.
- Kindergarten and 1st grade Biker/Walkers must be picked up by a parents, guardian or sibling and should have a red lanyard to show staff members.
- Biker and Walkers should **ONLY** cross where there is a Crossing Guard. Please talk to your older children about this safety concern.
- Bikers should always wear a helmet for safety.
- When in the Parent Pickup line, please pull all the way up even if the cone number called does not match up. This is improving the efficiency of our lines.

Safety – Required Drills

Below is a list of required drills to be held throughout the school year for the safety of our students, we do not advertise the dates and times of the drills. Teachers are notified to help prepare students. I generally walk students through the 1st set of drills. If you happen to get caught in a drill when arriving or picking up, we will be sure to include you in the safety protocols and ask for your patience during this time.

Required Drills:

1 fire drill with in the 1st 10 days of school

1 fire drill per month w/ 2 occurring within the first 30 days of school

1 active assailant drill per month

1 bomb/evacuation drill per semester

1 tornado/weather drill per semester

2 bus evacuation drills

Fortify Florida:

FortifyFL is a website and app developed at the direction of the Florida Legislature. Any student, educator, parent or member of the public can report school safety concerns directly to law enforcement and school administrators anonymously and easily through the FortifyFL app or getfortifyfl.com.

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Transportation Changes

Please email transportation changes to FCATransportationChanges@stjohns.k12.fl.us

**Freedom
Crossing
Academy**

Vision

- F- Focus
- L- Leadership
- I-Imagination
- G-Grit
- H-Heart
- T-Team

Mission

- Break Barriers



*Here is to a great school year!
Gina R. Fonseca, Principal
Take Flight and Break Barriers*