

Freedom Crossing Academy  
Extended Day Program



Policies and Procedures Handbook  
2024-2025

## OUR PROGRAM

Freedom Crossing Academy is excited to open our own Extended Day for the 2024-2025 school year. This program is a community service available to FCA students and is self-funded. It does not receive any funds from any city, county, or federal agency. Student tuition is initially used to cover the costs to run the program, and all additional funds will be put back into the classrooms and the school.

Please understand, the program policies and procedures are subject to change as the program is rolled out.

Extended Day is a privilege, not a right – all students will be required to follow the FCA Way!

**Focused on Safety**  
**Committed to Responsibility**  
**Always Respectful**

## PROCEDURES

### ELIGIBILITY

Our Extended Day Program (and certain other fee-based activities) are open to FCA students that are in grades K-8. All students must be fully registered to attend school before they can be enrolled in the Extended Day program.

All students taking part in our Extended Day program **must be potty-trained and self sufficient when restroom needs arise**. Children will be admitted based upon their needs and appropriateness of the program for the child. If determined that staff training, staff to child ration, or facilities used, create an undesirable situation for your child, other children or the staff, the coordinator will advise the Principal and we will request that you choose an alternative childcare option.

### HOURS OF OPERATION, DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

- **Morning Care begins at 6:30am.** Any student not enrolled in the Extended Day Morning Care program may not enter the school prior to 7:40am. Please bring your Morning Care student into the cafeteria. Your child **MUST** be signed in by the person dropping them off every day that they attend. Due to safety concerns, you cannot drop them off at the curb and send them in. Students should be checked in for morning care before 7:30am, this time may be adjusted based on the arrival of school buses.
- **Afternoon care begins when school is dismissed.** Students must be picked up and signed out from the designated area **NO LATER THAN 6:00pm by someone on their approved pick-up list. Please inform all parties on the approved pick-up list to provide a picture ID at pickup.** Please do not plan to pick up your student from Extended Day before 3:00pm. Students will not be released to those not on the list or those who cannot provide ID. Students will not be released to walk or ride bikes home without an escort from the approved adult on the pick-up list. Please note, there are no crossing guards during extended day hours. Students are not permitted to sign themselves out. While we will get to know our families at checkout, there may be a different staff member at the checkout area who is unfamiliar with your family. Thank you for your understanding and always bringing your ID at pick-up. Changes and/or additions to your approved pick-up list must be made in writing (note or email from parent email). If an emergency arises and you are unable to send in a note/email, please contact the school (904-547-4230). Please be patient when picking up your child, it may take a few minutes to collect their belongings, clean up an activity and make their way to the dismissal area.

- **Illness** If your child arrives at Extended Day ill, you will be asked to take him/her home. If your child becomes ill while already at Extended Day, you or an authorized person will be called to pick up the child. Please note, procedures are subject to change based on the current SJCS and DOH requirements and guidelines.
- **Dismissal Changes and Schedule Changes** Should your child's schedule deviate from the norm, it is the parent's responsibility to email dismissal changes to [FCAtransportationchanges@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:FCAtransportationchanges@stjohns.k12.fl.us) before 1:30pm (12:30pm on Wednesdays). Once an Extended Day Coordinator is hired, please include them as well. This will ensure your child's safe and accurate dismissal.

All students in Extended Day must be signed out by an authorized person. If we do not get a change from a parent, we will keep your child in our care. We do not accept a child's word for dismissal changes. Their safety is our number one priority, and we will always elect to err on the side of caution.

### **LATE CHECK OUT POLICY**

Your child must be picked up and checked out by 6:00pm. Anyone picking up after 6:05pm will be asked to sign a late pick-up sheet and will be charged \$1.00 per minute per child after 6:01pm until the pick-up person's arrival. Your late fee will be determined by the clock at the checkout area. This charge will automatically be applied to your account. All fees must be paid in order to be in compliance with the Florida State Law. Non-payment of late fees can result in suspension from the Extended Day program. We understand that unforeseen things happen, such as traffic, accidents, emergencies, or just running late. PLEASE have a back up plan for such emergencies. We extend our understanding by offering you three (3) excused late pick-ups, this does not excuse the late fees. At our discretion, we may give a one-time courtesy warning and waive the late fee for a first-time offense. After three (3) late pick-ups, your services may be suspended for one week. If you continue to have late pick-ups after that, you will be asked to make other arrangements for after school care that better suits your needs. When you arrive, please do not dispute the fee charged. This is a charge we DO NOT wish to have to collect. Please be considerate of our time, as our staff also have families and personal obligations they need to get to. This is a St Johns County School District policy that is strictly enforced. Any questions regarding this policy should be addressed to the Extended Day Coordinator, not to the attendant who is caring for your child at the time of pick-up.

### **WITHDRAWING FROM THE PROGRAM**

If you are planning to remove your child for a day, week or discontinue our services, please notify the Extended Day Coordinator of your plans. If you should need to discontinue our services, please give us a two-weeks written notice (note or email). There may be other children on a waiting list for an available opening. If your child leaves with any outstanding debts, you are still responsible for paying the debts and he/she may not be re-enrolled until these have been satisfied. **Any refund requests must be made within 2 weeks of withdrawal or the amount will be forfeited. Note: If we are unaware of your plan to discontinue our services, you will be responsible for the entire month's fee.**

### **VENDOR ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

Enrichment activities are offered by vendors that are contracted with the St. Johns County School District. Our program acts as a bridge between you and the vendor offering these additional services as a convenience for our parents and students. You will need to contact them directly to register your child in their classes and pay for their services, which are completely separate from the Extended Day Registration and fees. Checks for these classes must be made payable to the vendor's business name and can be given to Extended Day to give to the activity staff the next day that they hold class. The activities are offered to all Freedom Crossing Academy students, not just those enrolled in Extended Day. Students who are not currently enrolled in Extended Day are required to pay a \$25.00 registration fee and fill out an Enrichment Only registration form to attend these

activities. This fee is an annual fee per child and covers all vendor activities for that school year. This is payable to FCA Extended Day and is completely separate from any fees charged by the vendor. This fee and the registration form need to be submitted to Extended Day **before** the student can attend any class. The activities are yet to be determined for the 24-25 school year.

### **AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

Teachers sponsor(non-vendor) after school activities and clubs at FCA (such as Drama, Running Club, Lego Club etc). If your child is attending one of those clubs, please send the Extended Day Coordinator an email to let us know. Please include the activity and what day of the week they are expected to attend. This way we will know that you have given your permission for them to be involved in the activity.

### **KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS**

Kindergarten students begin the year on a staggered start schedule. They will attend Extended Day on their assigned staggered start school day. Please notified the Extended Day Coordinator if they will not attend that day. Extended Day staff will work with the kindergarten teachers to assure that your child arrives at Extended Day on the days they attend school the first week. Kindergarten students will always be escorted to Extended Day staff as their safety is our first priority. Please ensure your kindergarten student has an extra change of clothes in addition to the outfit you back for the classroom just in case an accident occurs during Extended Day.

### **SNACKS**

The Extended Day Program will provide for each child, one snack per day and one small bottle of water per day, only if they do not have their own refillable water bottle with them. We try to offer a variety of snacks that will not pose a problem for children with allergies. However, with so many different types of allergies it is hard to cover every possibility. Therefore, it is IMPERATIVE that you let us know if your child(ren) has an allergy so we can make sure that there is a snack option they can have. Please feel free to pack additional snacks for your child, we will give them an opportunity to eat them.

### **HOMEWORK**

The Extended Day afternoon program provides approximately 30 minutes of quiet time for homework and reading on Monday through Thursdays. This time is provided for all grades (K-8). The Extended Day Aide leading each group will oversee homework time and can assist when needed to the best of their ability for their group. We cannot guarantee that your child(ren)'s assignments will be completed by pick-up. Students that are required to work on their homework in Extended day must come prepared. We do NOT allow children to go back to classrooms for safety and supervision purposes, as well as, to reinforce responsibility. All students will participate in homework/study time in a quiet environment. There is only one teacher for each group, therefore, they cannot split the group and be in more than one place at a time. Please note that we use the honor system for homework, and it is your child(ren)'s responsibility to complete their homework. As a side note, after approximately 30 minutes has elapsed or the majority of the children are done, they will move on to whatever location for the activity planned for the day. Any children still needing to finish their homework will be allowed to do so at that location come home with homework that still needs to be completed. We do not have adequate staff for one-on-one attention.

### **MOVIES**

Occasionally we will show a movie to the students. All movies are rated G or PG, if appropriate. If you do not approve, we will provide something else for your child to do during the movie.

## **LIFE CHANGES**

The FCA Extended Day would like to be a support to families and to promote positive development for our children. We recognize that many families have special circumstances such as divorce, separation, a move, a disability, etc. In order to provide the best possible care for your child/children, it is vitally important that we be able to maintain current information and positive relationships with all significant adults in your child's life. For instance, we need to be clear on the following:

- Custody arrangements
- Which parent to contact first in the event of an emergency
- Should program information be sent to both parents (incident reports, behavior issues, etc.)
- Who is responsible for payment?
- Who will or will not be authorized to pick up children (Court order and/or documents must be on file to enforce)
- If your child has a disability, is there anything that would be helpful for us to know to be able to work better with them.
- Anything else you feel is pertinent to your child's well being

## **POLICIES REGISTRATION FEE**

A non-refundable registration fee will be collected annually with registration forms. This fee helps covers costs associated with the program. Registration fees are \$85 per child. If you remove your child(ren) from the program during the school year and then decide to reenroll in the program later in the same school year, if space is available, you will not be required to pay another registration fee. Note: If your child leaves with any outstanding debts, he/she may not be re-enrolled until these debts have been satisfied.

### **• RATES & PAYMENT PROCEDURES**

The school calendar year consist of 180 days that children are in attendance. We have broken up the Extended Day fees into 10 equal installments for your convenience. Each payment covers 18 school days of child care. Florida State Law (Article VII, Section 10 of the Florida Constitution) requires that all services be paid in full prior to services being rendered. Payments are due on or before the 15th of every month. If the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday, payment must be received on the business day before the 15th. A \$5.00 late fee will be applied every for 5 days that the payment is late (late fees will be charged on the 20th, 25th, 30th, etc.). Payments not received by the day that payment coverage starts, will result in your service being suspended and your child will not be allowed to attend until your account is brought up to being current, including late fees. For example: If the payment is due Sept. 15, which covers the period of Oct. 3rd through Oct. 29th, and we have not received payment by Oct. 3rd, your child(ren) will not be allowed to attend until you have paid and brought your account current, this includes all late fees (which would be \$15.00 if you paid on Oct. 3rd). Reminder: There are two monthly payments due on or before August 15th, please remember to pay online, mail or drop them off BEFORE school starts.

### **2024-2025 Freedom Crossing Academy Extended Day Program Rates**

<b># of Children</b>	<b>AM Care Only</b>	<b>PM Care Only</b>	<b>AM &amp; PM Care</b>	<b>Wednesday only PM Care</b>
1 Child	\$125.00/month	\$295.00/month	\$350.00/month	\$120.00/month
2 Children	\$200.00/month	\$465.00/month	\$575.00/month	\$192.00/month
3 Children	\$250.00/month	\$615.00/month	\$750.00/month	\$260.00/month

\*SJCSD Employees receive a 50% discount off of the rates shown above.

\*\*Fees are subject to district approval and changes may be necessary to meet district requirements each year.

## 2024-2025 Fee Payment Schedule

Payment #	Date Due	Payment Covers Care Through
Payment #1	August 12, 2024	August 12 <sup>th</sup> -September 5 <sup>th</sup>
Payment #2	August 15, 2024	September 6 <sup>th</sup> -October 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Payment #3	September 15, 2024	October 3 <sup>rd</sup> -October 29 <sup>th</sup>
Payment #4	October 15, 2024	October 30 <sup>th</sup> -December 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Payment #5	November 15, 2024	December 3 <sup>rd</sup> -January 9 <sup>th</sup>
Payment #6	December 15, 2024	January 10 <sup>th</sup> -February 5 <sup>th</sup>
Payment #7	January 15, 2025	February 6 <sup>th</sup> -March 5 <sup>th</sup>
Payment #8	February 15, 2025	March 6 <sup>th</sup> -April 8 <sup>th</sup>
Payment #9	March 15, 2025	April 9 <sup>th</sup> -May 5 <sup>th</sup>
Payment #10	April 15, 2025	May 6 <sup>th</sup> -May 30 <sup>th</sup>

Payments can be made online at [www.schoolpay.com](http://www.schoolpay.com), by check or cash. If you pay through [www.schoolpay.com](http://www.schoolpay.com), be sure to select Extended Day. Checks should be made payable to FCA. \*Please notate FCA Ext. Day and child(ren)'s name(s) in the memo line. We cannot be held responsible for money being sent to school with your child. Cash payments can be made in the office. If paying with cash, you must have the correct amount, we cannot give change. Checks sent in with your child should be in an envelope with Extended Day and with your child's name written on it. DO NOT include any other school function fees in your Extended Day payments (cafeteria, field trips, fund raisers, etc.). If you mail your payment in, please remember to mail it in with enough time for it to arrive to us on or before the due date. Monthly invoices will NOT be sent. This is your notification that all payments are expected to be paid in a timely manner and are listed on the Extended Day Fee schedule. Statements are available upon request. At the end of the tax year, you may request an end of-year tax statement, which will reflect all payments made to Extended Day for that calendar year. If you would like it sent to you in an email, you must specifically request that. Otherwise, one will be printed out for you to pick up in the office. For tax purposes: Federal Tax ID: 59-6000824.

- RETURNED CHECK POLICY** The St. Johns County School District is an Envision Payment Solutions participant. If you should have a check returned, you will be contacted for payment by Envision. Please do not pay Extended Day. You are responsible for any additional fees that may be charged by Envision. If these checks are not cleared within a 7-day period or if we receive more than one returned check on your account, it will be mandatory to pay in cash or money order for all future transactions with the Extended Day program. Prompt communication with Envision regarding such matters is required in order to maintain your status with the Extended Day program.

### **PERSONAL ITEMS**

Extended Day is NOT responsible for any personal items lost during the program hours. Students should not remove personal items from their backpacks during Extended Day. Students are welcome to check the Lost & Found in the cafe. At no time are students allowed to use electronics, such as cell phones or iPads from home. We also do not allow personal toys to be brought to Extended Day (to include but not limited to, balls, Pokemon & other trading cards, etc.). Our program has plenty of appropriate items for use.

## DRESS CODE

Weather permitting, your child will have play time outside during the afternoon. Please keep this in mind when dressing your child in the morning. It is always best to dress your child in comfortable clothes appropriate for the weather conditions for that day. Extended Day follows the SJCS Student Dress Code. Students must wear shoes that have a back or strap on the heel. Also, you may want to have an extra change of clothes, in a large zip-lock bag labeled with your child's name, in their backpack in case of accidents, especially for younger children.

## BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING POLICIES OVER WITH YOUR CHILD(REN)!

Making you aware of the policies may prevent problems before they occur. Please keep in mind that this is more of a social environment than the classroom. Remember...It is a PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT to attend the Extended Day program.

- **BEHAVIOR** POSITIVE BEHAVIOR IS A MUST!!!

Students in FCA's Extended Day program are expected to follow the FCA way, exhibit good behavior, and follow all school rules and procedures, just as they are during the regular day. They are well versed in the Character Counts principles and know the difference between right and wrong. We feel strongly that when we have support from parents at home, we can be more effective in helping children who have made an error in judgement. Being able to work with the support of our parents will minimize the likelihood of having to repeat the process. Students must be able to follow the rules of the program in accordance with a staff to student ratio of 1 to 25.

Know that we will make you aware of minor issues to prevent potentially larger problems before they occur. You will note on our form that after the third reprimand, a child may be suspended or expelled from our program. This is a policy we hope we do not have to enforce, but sometimes is necessary to ensure a fun and safe environment for all children attending. It is a privilege, not a right to attend the Extended Day program.

- **EXPECTATIONS** - All Extended Day students are required to follow the Character Counts Pillars and the FCA Way as listed below.

### **The FCA Way- School-Wide Behavioral Expectations**

A small number of clearly defined behavioral expectations are defined in positive, simple rules known as the FCA Way.

**F**ocused on Safety      **C**ommitted to Responsibility      **A**lways Respectful

- **We are Focused on Safety**

Student and staff safety is our number one priority. Students are expected to follow all safety rules for the school and respect other people's right to be safe emotionally and physically. Examples of physical and emotional safety include, but are not limited to the following:

- Walking in the hallway
- Walking when entering and exiting the building
- Keeping hands and feet to yourself, and sitting quietly
- Playing on and around playground equipment appropriately
- Avoiding fighting and play fighting
- Using appropriate tone and volume at all times

- **We are Committed to Responsibility**

Students and staff are expected to be responsible. Examples of responsible behavior include, but are not limited to the following:

- Be on time
- Be prepared
- Complete assigned work
- Keep your area clean (lockers too)
- Follow directions
- Listen to your teachers and staff members
- Show appreciation
- Stay in assigned area
- Be motivated to do your best
- Use technology responsibly (Internet, social media)

- **We are Always Respectful**

Students and adults are expected to respect each other. Examples of respectful behavior include, but are not limited to the following:

- Listening to each other
- Talking politely and using appropriate language
- Using appropriate body language
- Using an appropriate tone and volume
- Avoiding words that are hurtful to others
- Accepting individual differences (this includes cultural, learning, appearance, and other differences)
- Touching others' property only with permission
- Being mindful of other people's space
- Treating school property with care

- **DISCIPLINE**

Students failing to follow the FCA Way and exhibit good behavior are subject to the following disciplinary procedures and consequences. Infractions will be handled as follows:

1. Informal Warning: For the first offense, depending on the severity of the offense, the student will be given a time out and/or reminder of the FCA Way expectations. This verbal warning will give the student the opportunity to correct the behavior. A parent is not asked for a conference, however, may be notified.
2. 1st Incident: Student will be removed from their group to complete a "character check" for a 1st incident. Parents will be notified of any formal warning offenses. Written documentation, signed by the parent, is required. Record of the incident will remain on file.
3. 2nd Incident: Student will be removed from their group to complete a "character check" for a 2nd incident. The student may remain with a different group or the Extended Day administrator on duty, depending on the severity of the offense. Parents will be notified by way of a formal or informal conference and written documentation, signed by the parent, is required. Record of the incident will remain on file. The child may be suspended from the Extended Day program for up to 1 week depending on the severity of the offense.



4. 3rd Incident: Parents will be notified through formal/informal parent conference. Written documentation, signed by the parent, is required. Record of the incident will remain on file. Student will be suspended from Extended Day for one week or may be expelled from the Extended day program depending on the severity of the offense.

5. 4th Incident: Parents will be notified by formal/informal parent conference. As with prior incidents, this conference is often done by verbal discussion and written documentation. The documentation will require a parent signature. At this point, the student will be disenrolled from the Extended Day program.

Note: Depending on the severity of the offense, these consequences may be escalated. The Extended Day program reserves the right to suspend and expel a child if at any point in time he/she threatens the safety of himself/herself or another child. There will not be any refunds or credits given for periods of suspension.

We sincerely hope that these steps will not be necessary, but our mission is to keep our students safe while in the care of Extended Day. These expectations will ensure a safe and happy environment for all children. Thank you for your partnership and support.

**AGREEMENTS and RELEASES GENERAL RELEASE OF LIABILITY** The undersigned agrees to release and forever discharges the Freedom Crossing Academy Extended Day Program and School, the St. Johns County School District, St. Johns County School Board, their officers, servants, agents, and employees from all claims, demands, rights and causes of action of any kind the undersigned now has or hereafter may have on account of or in any way arising from personal injuries and/or property damage known or unknown to the undersigned at the present time that results from any occurrences which may happen to the below stated child during time spent in Freedom Crossing Academy Extended Day Program, barring proven supervisory neglect.

**MEDICAL RELEASE FOR CARE & TREATMENT** In case of accident or serious illness during Extended Day hours, The Extended Day Staff will contact the legal guardian. Freedom Crossing Academy Extended Day Program may make whatever arrangements necessary to provide care and treatment for my child including contacting a physician. In case of emergency, I hereby give the Extended Day Staff permission for my child to be transported by Emergency Medical Services to the hospital and given necessary treatment. I understand I will be responsible for any and all related charges. In the case of an accident or serious illness where immediate treatment of my child is not indicated but where he/she is unable to remain at the school, the Extended Day Staff will contact the parent to arrange pick-up of my child. If Extended Day Staff is unable to reach me, I authorize them to contact one of the persons listed on the registration form and request them to come to the school and pick up my child. (Please be sure that your emergency contacts are local and can pick up your child if there is an emergency and we cannot reach you.) I understand that it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any changes in this information throughout the school year.

**VERIFICATION OF UNDERSTANDING & AGREEMENT** I have read the handbook for the Freedom Crossing Academy Extended Day Program; I accept the terms and agreements above. I agree to pay my student's fees according to the payment schedule. I am aware that delayed payment of fees will result in loss of childcare. I understand the information above and have gone over the homework, discipline policy, and program safety guidelines with my student(s).