



FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL
2850 Taft Vineland Rd.
Orlando, FL 32837
(407) 858-6130 FAX (407) 858-6132
freedomms.ocps.net
Robert L. Walker, Principal
Toby Hurst, Assistant Principal
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Good Day Panther Families,

My name is Robert Walker and I am honored to be your proud principal here at Freedom Middle School. I began my educational career here at Freedom 13-14 years ago and I am so very excited to return here as your principal. I am looking forward to meeting you as we navigate through the beginning of this school year.

Our vision is to ensure every student has a promising and successful future. Our mission is, with the support of families and the community, we create enriching and diverse pathways to lead our students to success. Both our vision and mission recognize the importance of every student, and the partnership we must embrace to make this happen. A successful educational program requires a joint effort among teachers, students, and parents. I ask that each of you take a single step further into the school-community partnership.

As we embark on the 2023-2024 school year, we will strive to ensure highly effective instruction tailored to each students' needs. Equally as important, we will strive to provide a safe and welcoming environment where all students, staff, and families have a sense of belonging.

Below you will find an overview of school information. I am providing this to you as an introduction to our school's general information, procedures and policies. Please take the time to review all of the information on the following pages and keep it handy as a reference. Topics can be found in alphabetical order.

We are looking forward to working with you and your child this year. Please work with us as team members to assure success and achievement. If you ever have any questions, please call the school office, and we will be glad to assist you.

Thank you so much for choosing Freedom Middle School as your community school. Our promise. Your support. Their success.

Kind Regards,

Robert L. Walker
Principal

OCPS Vision:

To ensure every student has a promising and successful future.

OCPS Mission:

With the support of families and the community, we provide enriching and diverse pathways that lead our students to success.

Attendance

Compulsory Attendance: All children who have attained the age of six years by February 1 of any school year or who are older than six years of age, but have not attained the age of 16 years, shall be required to attend school regularly during the school term. A student shall attend all school sessions unless excused by proper school authority. This rule does not apply to students exempted by Section 232.06, Florida Statutes.

Each **parent** and **guardian** of a child within compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child's school attendance.

Student Attendance:

1. **Unexcused:** On a daily basis, student absences will be recorded as **unexcused**. It is the responsibility of a student's parent or guardian to promptly report the reason for the student's absence to the school **in writing** within 5 days of absence.
2. **Excused** absences include:
 - A. Illness, injury or other insurmountable condition
 - B. Illness or death of a member of the student's immediate family
 - C. Recognized (or established) religious holidays and/or religious instruction
 - D. Medical appointments
 - E. Participation in an approved activity or class of instruction held at another school site.
 - F. **Prearranged** absences of educational value (up to 5 school days a year) with the principal's prior approval
 - G. Up to four (4) days during the school year due to head lice infestation
3. Documentation verifying an excused absence is required after 5 handwritten notes. **The school principal is given final authority to determine absences as excused or unexcused.**
4. **Tardy:** Students who are not in their classroom at 9:30 a.m. are considered tardy. Parents **must sign-in their child in** the front lobby if he/she is tardy. Tardies are excused with a doctor's note. Parents will be notified if there is a problem with tardiness. Excessive tardies will require a plan to be developed by the parent, child, and principal. Tardiness can be inclusive of **truancy proceedings** if deemed excessive.
5. **Truancy:** A student between the ages of 6 and 18 who has **5 or more unexcused** absences within a thirty-day calendar period will be considered **truant**. Days of suspension are not included in the number of absences when determining habitual truancy. Whenever a student attains 5 days of unexcused absence, the students will be referred to a **truancy intervention** program known as a **Child Study Team**. A mandatory meeting will be held in an attempt to remedy the circumstances causing the truancy. Should this effort fail to end the student's truancy or to alleviate circumstances contributing to that truancy, **legal action** can result including criminal prosecution, if appropriate.
6. **Make-Up Assignments:** Students will be given the number of days absent, plus 1 to make up any missed assignments.

7. **Present:** A student shall be deemed to be in attendance if actually present at school, or away from school on a school day and engaged in an educational activity which constitutes a part of the school-approved instructional program, for at **least one half** of the student's instructional day. Students absent beyond this time will be marked absent.
8. A student's progress report and report card shall contain the number of days absent and tardy for the grading period.
9. Schools may not exempt students from examinations, papers, or other academic performance requirements to encourage student attendance.
10. No student shall be awarded a credit **unless** the student has been in attendance for instruction for a minimum of 135 hours. The 135 hours required for attendance for instruction corresponds to twenty (20) absences in a school year. The principal may provide a student who has been in attendance less than 135 hours an opportunity to receive credit by demonstrating mastery of the student performance standards for that grade level.
11. Academic instruction that is missed shall be made up by the student in a manner acceptable to the teacher and principal and shall be in accordance with the district pupil progression plan. Students may make up work missed during a suspension within a time limit established by the school principal.

ADDitions

Parents and friends of the school can help in the instructional program as an ADDitions volunteer. This program is active, varied, and very rewarding. We welcome your services and encourage you to become involved. Visit or call the school office to contact our ADDitions coordinator. On-line applications can be completed on a computer in our front lobby. The web site to log on to is: **volunteer.ocps.net**.

- ◆ A new application must be completed every year.
- ◆ Volunteers must sign in and pick up an ADDitions volunteer sticker in the school lobby before assisting on campus.
- ◆ Volunteers **shall not be able to bring non-school age children** with them to the school when they are volunteering on campus.
- ◆ Volunteers need to dress appropriately.
- ◆ Volunteers must support and follow school and district procedures.

Arrival and Dismissal

General Procedures: For the **safety** of our students and dedication to efficient operations, please be aware of the following dismissal procedures/policies. **Safety** is very important to all of us here at Freedom Middle School. It is critical that we all do our part to keep everyone safe and secure at all times. Please comply with school routines and procedures, rules, posted signs, cooperate with our staff on campus, and follow their guidance. They are positioned in certain locations for the sole purpose of ensuring safety. Your cooperation by following the guidelines in place is greatly appreciated! ☺

Car Riders

Car rider arrival begins at 9:00am, located on the west side of the school and closest to the gymnasium. Do not release your child unsupervised prior to 9:00am for safety purposes. School staff will be present at 9:00am to begin arrival and provide supervision. For your child's safety, he/she should always exit and enter from the **passenger** side of the vehicle. Please move any car seats to the left side so that students may enter and exit on the right side. If you must drop off prior to 9:00am or pick up after 4:30pm (3:30pm on Wednesdays), please contact the front office to receive information on Boys & Girls Club. Have your child dropped off no later than 9:25am as class starts promptly at 9:30am. Dismissal begins at 4:05pm.

- ◆ Double parking is not permitted.
- ◆ Please remain in your vehicle at all times.
- ◆ Pull forward as much as safely possible.

Remember that a regular routine is very important to a child's success. Therefore, please limit changes your child's daily dismissal routine to the best of your ability.

Early pick up during instructional hours is discouraged (9:30am-4:04pm); however, **if absolutely necessary**, please communicate with the school's attendance clerk as early as possible. Students leaving early are signed out through the front lobby **only** to the parent or other authorized adult on the registration card.

Bicycle Riders

Bicycles are to be walked on the school campus. Students who ride bicycles will park them in the racks provided after 9:00am located on the south side of the school. Bike riders then enter via the gymnasium. Bike rider dismissal will occur after 4:04pm through the south breezeway doors. **ALL BICYCLES MUST BE LOCKED.** Only one rider should be on the bicycle and helmets should be worn. Skateboards may be stored in the TLC room 801. Scooters, rollerblades, hoverboards, etc. are not acceptable forms of transportation to and from school. All automobile traffic rules shall be observed. Any bicycles left on the school campus overnight will be the responsibility of the owner.

Bus Riders

See "**Bus Transportation**" section for details.

Bus Transportation

School bus transportation is provided for students living more than 2 miles from school.

Because of OCPS's continuing efforts to provide safe transportation for all students, whether for a field trip, athletic function, similar activity, or to and from home, students are expected to abide by the following standards of school bus behavior, in addition to the Code:

1. Obey the bus driver at all times.
2. Stand off the roadway while waiting for the bus.
3. Be at the bus stop five minutes prior to a scheduled stop time.
4. Cross the roadway several steps in front of the bus.
5. Ride only on the assigned bus.
6. Board and depart at the assigned bus stop.
7. Must scan their RFID Student ID or Bus Pass to enter or exit the bus, upon issuance of RFID Student ID or Bus Pass.
8. Act appropriately while waiting for the bus.
9. Give your proper name when requested by the bus operator or monitor.
10. Remain seated at all times when the bus is moving and properly wear a seat belt, as applicable.
11. Remain silent when the dome lights are on.
12. Remain silent at railroad crossings.
13. Refrain from littering on the bus.
14. Refrain from bringing reptiles, bugs, animals, or marine life (dead or alive) on the bus unrelated to school activities.
15. Refrain from displaying signs from the bus.
16. Refrain from using profane language or gestures.
17. Refrain from acts of vandalism.
18. Refrain from throwing any objects from the windows of the bus.
19. Refrain from any conduct or behavior that interferes with the orderly, safe, and expeditious transportation of yourself or other bus riders.
20. Students are permitted to use their electronic device while on OCPS/OCPS-sponsored transportation so long as the student utilizes earbuds, headphones, etc. and has at least one ear free to hear directions.
21. Skateboards are not permitted on the school bus.

Recording devices have been installed on buses. Students may be filmed at any time during their ride. The recordings may be utilized to determine violations of the Code. Violations of the aforementioned standards, or any other section of the Code, may be the basis for suspension or expulsion from the bus/school.

Florida law states that students who abuse the privilege of riding a school bus by misbehaving at the bus stop or on the bus may be denied the privilege of riding the bus. Parents may speak to representatives from OCPS Transportation Services by calling (407) 317-3800.

To locate your bus or check eligibility, visit www.ocps.net, search for Find My Bus, and enter your address.

Cell Phone and Electronic Devices Policy

A student may possess a cell phone on Board property, on school transportation and at school activities, provided that during school hours, the cell phone is silenced and concealed. Pursuant to Section 1006.07, Florida Statutes, “a student may not use a wireless communications device during instructional time, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes. A teacher shall designate an area for wireless communications devices during instructional time.” For purposes of this section, the designated area will be in the student’s backpack, or purse, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes. Violations of the cell phone policy will be handled in accordance with the Code and may result in confiscation of said device. If the cell phone is used in a criminal act (such as sexting as outlined in Florida Statutes and the Code), the cell phone will be provided to law enforcement and the student may face criminal penalties. The use of wireless communication devices are always prohibited during the school day (from the first morning bell to dismissal) unless expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes. Wireless communication devices include but are not limited to, cell phones and/or auxiliary/ancillary devices such as watches and ear buds.

At no time shall OCPS be responsible for theft, loss or damage to cell phones or other electronic devices brought onto its property.

These standards apply to all students in the public schools of Orange County.

Cell Phone Use in Vehicles while on School Property

Pursuant Florida Statutes, Section 316.306, it is unlawful to use wireless communications devices in a handheld manner in school and work zone. A person may not operate a motor vehicle while using a wireless communications device in a handheld manner in a designated school crossing, school zone or active work zone area. Repeated violation of FL Statutes may result trespassing from OCPS property.

Change of Address and/or Telephone Number

It is **imperative** that you notify us immediately of any change of address or telephone number. **It is crucial that we have a way to reach you in case of an emergency.** A change of address will require a new proof of residency as well. Please keep your contact information current by letting us know of any changes. Please contact our Registrar at (407) 858-6130 ext. 5064272, if you have any questions.

Clinic

Based on recent Florida law, parents/guardians must choose to opt-in or out of each individual clinic service and health screening by law. In the case of an emergency, the parent/guardian and appropriate emergency personnel will be

contacted. This consent form includes two areas: clinic services (such as temperature checks) and individual health screenings. Schools cannot provide these services to your child without this consent. You may complete your consent form by visiting <https://parents.classlink.com/ocps>.

The school has responsibility for **first aid only**. In case of minor injuries, first aid will be administered to the child, the parent will be immediately notified, and he/she will return to class. **Please be sure that a correct telephone number or some other way to contact the parents is available to the school.** Please keep your contact information current by letting us know of any changes.

In certain non-communicable diseases, the pupil may be under the treatment of his/her family physician and require medication during school hours. **Parents must sign a special permission form** - available in the school office - in order for prescription drugs to be administered. **In such cases, the physician must write instructions, stating the number of days the child will need to take the medication. The child will be supervised in taking his/her medicine at the stated time and in the amount prescribed by the physician.** If medication is to be continued for a period longer than the number of days originally specified, the physician must confirm the extended period in writing.

In special cases, such as epilepsy, diabetes, or other conditions where medication is required over prolonged periods, the physician must give written instructions indicating the frequency of medication and any special precautions or other instructions that would enable us to properly supervise the child in taking the medication as prescribed.

Parents must bring medication in the original container to the clinic. A school medical form must be completed by the parent in order to administer the medicine to the child. Pharmacy directions on the label will be followed and must not be altered. Under no circumstances will any over-the-counter medications be given to anyone without written consent from parents.

Please do not send the medication to school with your child. It is very important that a parent signs in the medication initially and signs it out after final dispensing.

Headache Relieving Medications

As of July 1, 2023, s. 1002.20(3)(d)(2)(p), Fla. Stat. states the following: “A student may possess and use a medication to relieve headaches while on school property or at a school-sponsored event or activity without a physician's note or prescription if the medication is regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration for over-the-counter use to treat headaches.” This is from House Bill 1537 which the Governor signed into law on May 9, 2023.

Under Florida statute, students may also possess and use topical sunscreens while on school property or at a school-sponsored event. As such, we cannot limit students from possessing and taking headache medication such as Advil, Tylenol, Aleve etc. while on campus. We may not require students to use the medication while in the clinic.

If your child has a fever or appears sick in the morning, please do not send him/her to school. You will be called to pick up your child if a fever is determined at school.

A child who contracts a contagious disease or condition such as pink eye, chicken pox, ring worm, impetigo, or pediculosis (head lice) will be sent home from school and must remain home until the condition or the disease is corrected. A doctor's note may be required to accompany the child to the clinic with proof of treatment (in the case of head lice - empty container that was used to treat the condition) prior to readmission to school.

If a student is to be confined to the home or the hospital by a licensed physician due to illness or injury, the student may be eligible for the Hospital/Homebound school program. The Hospital/Homebound school teachers provide instruction in the home, hospital, or through a teleconference class via the telephone system. Homebound application forms may be obtained from the Staffing Specialist or the Hospital/Homebound office. Applications must be signed by the parent and the doctor and returned to the Hospital/Homebound office for processing.

Code of Civility

The education of a child happens only through partnership and among partners must be the child, the school faculty and staff, the parent(s) or guardian(s), the community and district office employees. Partnership is an active state that includes sharing responsibilities, meaningful communication and welcomed participation.

When people who are working together agree, the partnership runs smoothly. But no two people will always agree and that can make partnership difficult. The partnership is most powerful – as children are educated to reach their potential – when we agree on how to disagree. We must be civil in our discourse. Civility is often described by its absence. We hear of harmful actions such as road rage, physical confrontation, ethnic stereotypes and slurs. But civility is not just an absence of harm. It is the affirmation of what is best about each of us individually and collectively. It is more than saying “please” and “thank you.” It is reflecting our respect for others in our behavior, regardless of whether we know or like them. It also is not simply being politically correct and is not to be used to stifle criticism or comment. It is being truthful and kind and is each of us taking responsibility for our own actions rather than blaming others.

As we communicate with each other, we need to remember that we are working together to benefit the children of this community. Therefore, the Orange County School Board requires that as we communicate; students, OCPS faculty and staff, parents, guardians and all other members of the community shall:

1. Treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times

This means that:

- We listen carefully and respectfully as others express opinions that may be different from ours
- We share our opinions and concerns without loud or offensive language, gestures or profanity

2. Treat each other with kindness

This means that:

- We treat each other as we would like to be treated
- We do not threaten or cause physical or bodily harm to another
- We do not threaten or cause damage to the property of another
- We do not bully, belittle or tease another and we do not allow others to do so in our presence
- We do not demean and are not abusive or obscene in any of our communications

3. Take responsibility for our own actions

This means that:

- We share information honestly
- We refrain from displays of temper
- We do not disrupt or attempt to interfere with the operation of a classroom or any other work or public area of a school or school facility

4. Cooperate with each other

This means that:

- We obey school rules for access and visitation
- We respect the legitimate obligations and time constraints we each face
- We notify each other when we have information that might help reach our common goal. This includes information about safety issues, academic progress, changes that might impact a student's work and events in the community that might impact the school.
- We respond when asked for assistance
- We understand the relevance of compromise

Conduct and Discipline

Each student is expected to behave so that he/she will not interfere with or interrupt the educational opportunities of fellow students. The Orange County Public Schools Code of Student Conduct is followed at Freedom Middle School. The Code of Student Conduct describes the rights and responsibilities and also tells about the rules each student must follow.

A copy of the Code of Student Conduct is available for viewing on the OCPS website at www.ocps.net under the Parents tab. Please take the time to review this document and discuss it with your child.

Delayed Dismissal/Lightning Safety

The Delayed Dismissal procedure is activated following an alert of severe weather conditions received by the school administrator before or during student dismissal. This alert can be received from the district's severe weather notification technology or by observing current weather conditions. Students will remain in a safe, designated area for parents/guardians arriving to pick up. Normal dismissal procedures will occur after 30 minutes of no lightning detected. Should you wish to pick up your child during a delayed dismissal, the student would need to be signed out at the front office.

Digital Devices

Digital learning is a combination of technology, digital content and instruction used to strengthen a student's learning experience. It helps our students meet the Florida Standards in order to prepare them for the 21st century workplace. Student textbooks are available in both online and offline formats. Online textbooks are accessible through [LaunchPad](#). Some specific resources you will want to be familiar with are below.

LaunchPad:

- This is how students access instructional software, textbooks, and more. The website can be accessed on any device with an Internet connection.

Canvas:

- This is how teachers and students communicate regarding school assignments. Parents can sign up for a free account and get the Canvas parent app for iOS, Android, or Windows mobile devices and see what assignments their students have.

Skyward:

- This is where teachers post student grades. Contact your student's guidance counselor for your unique parent login information.

Similar to any other instructional material, the student is responsible for their device. If loss or theft is suspected, parents should immediately notify OCPS by calling 407.317.3290. Additionally, students should immediately report a lost or stolen device to their teacher. Damaged devices will be evaluated by the school to determine whether they can be repaired and what fee if any should be assessed. Fines Schedule:

Incident	Cost
1 st Device Incident Fine	\$25
2 nd Device Incident Fine	\$50
3 rd Device Incident Fine	Depreciated value*
Accessories Incident Fine	Cost of repair or replacement/up to \$25

Depreciated value chart

Years from purchase	1	2	3	4
Repair/Replacement Cost	Cost of repair/replacement	\$400	\$250	\$100

The responsible parties will have ninety calendar days from the date of assessment. Fines can be paid using School Pay or in the media center by cash or money order made out to the student's school. Each laptop is the property of OCPS. If a student moves or changes schools during the school year, the student will need to return the device to the campus within 48 hours.

Disclosure at Time of Initial Registration

At the time of initial registration for school in any school district, each student must note previous school expulsions, arrests resulting in a charge, and juvenile justice actions taken against the student.

Dress Code

The dress and grooming of OCPS students shall contribute to the health and safety of the individual, promote a positive educational environment, and not disrupt the educational activities and processes of the school. These standards of dress and grooming apply to all students in the public schools of Orange County, unless a specific exemption is granted by the principal. Any request for an exemption shall be made to the principal.

- 1) Clothes shall be worn as they are designed. For example, suspenders should be over the shoulders, pants secured at the waist, belts buckled, no underwear as outerwear, no underwear exposed.
- 2) Clothing must cover the body from one armpit across to the other armpit and down to approximately mid-thigh (see image to the right). Tops must have straps. Undergarments must not be viewable. Rips, holes, or tears in clothing must be below mid-thigh.
- 3) **Shoes shall be worn at all times** and should be safe for the school environment. The following shoes are not acceptable for any OCPS student: cleated shoes or shoes with wheels.
- 4) Headgear shall not be worn on campus during the school day, unless the headgear is approved by the principal.
- 5) Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as sports uniforms or safety gear, and must be approved by the principal before being worn during the school day.
- 6) See-through, revealing, or mesh garments must not be worn without appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of this dress code.
- 7) Gang paraphernalia, garments and/or jewelry, tattoos, or other insignias, which display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, alcohol, or tobacco-related wording/graphics or may tend to provoke violence or disruption in school, shall not be worn.
- 8) Clothing must not state, imply, or depict hate speech or imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected class.
- 9) Clothing and accessories that endanger students or staff shall not be worn. This includes clothing that obscures the visual identification of a person (unless approved by the principal). The use of a medical mask worn for its intended purpose is permitted.
- 10) Individual schools may implement school uniforms with community input and approval of the principal's supervisor.
- 11) Individual schools are expected to use the state and district dress and grooming guidelines as minimum standards; any adjustments may be made upon approval of the principal's supervisor. The principal at each school reserves the right to determine what appropriate dress is for the school as detailed in these minimum standards.

Any student who violates this dress policy will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in Sections IV and V of the Code, Section 1006.07(2)(d), Florida Statutes, and below:

1. For a first offense, a student shall be given a verbal warning and the school principal shall call the student's parent/guardian.
2. For the second offense, a student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for a period of time not to exceed 5 days and the school principal shall meet with the student's parent/guardian.
3. For a third or subsequent offense, a student shall receive an in-school suspension pursuant to Section 1003.01(5), Florida Statutes, for a period not to exceed 3 days, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for a period not to exceed 30 days, and the school principal shall call the student's parent/guardian and send the parent/guardian a written letter regarding the dress code violation.

Emergency Plans

In the event of a natural disaster or emergency situation, students will be brought inside the main buildings or evacuated as necessary. Emergency and Active Assailant drills are held monthly to prepare our students for severe weather conditions and/or emergency situations.

According to Orange County Public Schools policy in the event of severe lightning in the area, dismissal may be delayed and the "30-30 Rule" will be followed.

ESOL

The ESOL program in Orange County Public Schools is designed specifically to improve the language proficiency of students whose native language is not English. Students have access to the grade level curriculum and all school services. Teachers are qualified to teach English for Speakers of Other Languages. The ESOL Compliance Specialist (ECS) assists in the coordination of eligibility and placement of potential English language learners (ELLs) at the school level, and ensure an efficient system of staffing for all ELL students. The school ECS provides support to teachers for improving instruction for all ELL students.

Exceptional Student Education

Exceptional education in the areas of academics, speech and language, gifted education, varying exceptionalities, and other exceptional education programs are available to provide the most appropriate learning opportunities for every child. This list may not be exhaustive. Students are staffed into these programs based on student individual needs. If you have any questions regarding eligibility, our Staffing Specialist or 504 Coordinator will be available to assist you.

Field Trips

Educational field trips are planned as part of the school program. Permission slips **must be signed and returned to school prior to each trip**. Students without signed permission slips **will not** be permitted to attend.

The intent of a field trip is to provide educational experiences for our students. It is expected that students go to and from the trip with their teacher and classmates. Should your child need to be checked out during the trip we suggest that they do not attend the trip.

Grades

Report cards and progress reports are written to inform parents of the progress of each student. Every student will receive a progress report midway through each quarter, and a report card at the end of each nine week grading period. Parents may also log on to Skyward Family Access to check the individual progress of their child. Instructions on how to download and use Skyward Family Access can be found on www.ocps.net under the *Students and Parents* tab.

Guiding Principles

Teaching. Learning. Caring.

Gum Policy

In an effort to maintain cleanliness of our facility, students are not permitted to chew gum on campus.

Homework

Students need to develop a sense of responsibility toward homework early in their academic career. These efforts are shared by the teacher, parents, and the student. The purpose of homework is to develop responsibility, self-direction and organization skills, extend learning and/or provide practice in applying concepts presented in the classroom, and to strengthen skill development and reinforcement. These assignments may include reference work, skill practice, book reports, individual drill, special projects, or content reading. Parents can help their children with homework by providing a study area that is quiet, comfortable and free from major disturbances. Research shows students that regularly complete homework and read on a daily basis tend to be more successful in school. You will find a detailed copy of the agenda/planner policy at the end of this handbook.

Students are encouraged to:

- Read each night for 30 minutes
- Practice math facts
- Discuss daily learning experiences
- Complete all homework

Meals Program

Breakfast and lunch are provided at no cost to all students. Breakfast is served from 9:00 a.m. - 9:25 a.m. No child will be refused a meal. Breakfast is a school-sponsored activity that is supervised by school employees.

Parent Leadership Council (PLC)

The purpose of the Parent Leadership Council is to encourage parental involvement and participation in the Language Enriched Pupil (LEP) programs and academic achievement initiatives. We encourage all parents who are interested to attend the PLC meetings. Please contact the school and ask for our ESOL Compliance Specialist.

Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)

The Freedom Middle School is open to all interested family members. PTSA is an integral part of our school community. The vision of the Freedom Middle School PTA is to be the bond between families, the community, and the school to ensure the success of our students and cultivate a culture of belonging. We encourage parents, teachers, and staff members to be active participating members!

Partners in Education (PIE)

Partners in Education is a national program designed to involve the business world directly with education. Area businesses are encouraged to form a partnership with a nearby school. An agreement is designed, detailing expectations of both parties. If you or your company are interested in becoming a Partner in Education, or would like to discuss the possibilities, please contact the front office.

Personal Belongings

Each child should assume responsibility for the care of his/her personal belongings. If an item is misplaced, encourage your child to check with the teachers rooms and the **Lost and Found. Items not picked up in October, January, March and June will be donated to charity.**

Problem-Solving

There is a procedure to follow for solving school-related problems and discussing needs. The steps listed below will assist you with solving problems and discussing needs. The teacher and student should try to solve the problem first. If it cannot be resolved, the parent, teacher, and student should continue until reaching the last step.

1. Teacher/Student
2. Teacher/Parent/Student
3. Teacher/Parent/Dean (student-to-student)/CRT (Instruction, Testing or MTSS)/Staffing Specialist/504Coordinator/CCT (ESOL)/Guidance Counselor (student self-advocacy)
4. Teacher/Parent/Assistant Principal
5. Teacher/Parent/Principal

Records

FERPA permits disclosure of educational records to other educational agencies or institutions in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 99.34. OCPS may disclose educational records to other educational agencies or institutions that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer. The parent/guardian may request a copy of the record that was disclosed, and/or the parent/guardian may request a hearing as outlined in this Section. In addition, pursuant to Section 1003.25, Florida Statutes, educational records transferred to another educational agency shall include: verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns, including threat assessment evaluations and intervention services; and psychological evaluations, including therapeutic treatment plans and therapy or progress notes created or maintained by OCPS, as appropriate.

School Advisory Council (SAC)

The SAC is a group consisting of parents, staff, administrators, and community members who represent the entire school community. The purpose of this group is to provide input for the development of the School Improvement Plan for Freedom Middle School.

School Colors

Royal Blue and Yellow

School Day

Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
8:00am-4:30pm

Student Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9:30am – 4:04pm
Wednesdays, 9:30am-3:04pm

Teacher Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
8:40am – 4:10pm

School Mascot

Panther

Social Media

Follow us on Facebook or Twitter to stay current with events at school.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/FreedomMiddleSchool

Twitter: @FreedomMiddle

Telephone & Voice Mail Tips

If you would like to leave a voice mail message for a teacher or staff member during or after school hours, you may dial the voicemail extension and leave a message. **During the school day our receptionist can transfer you to teacher's voicemail only as instructional time is protected from interruptions.** Please contact our main line for cases of emergencies at 407-858-6130.

Textbooks/Library Books

All textbooks and library books are on loan to students free of charge. **However, students are responsible for lost and damaged books and parents will be expected to pay for them if they are lost.** Students are expected to take good care of them, and bring them home for necessary study. Library books are to be returned to the media center on or before the due date. Additional library materials cannot be checked out until books are returned or lost/damaged items are paid for. **All lost or missing textbooks and library materials must be returned or paid for by the end of the school year in order for students to receive their final report card.**

Website

Freedom Middle School's webpage address is: <https://freedomms.ocps.net>.

OCPS EEO Non-Discrimination Statement

The School Board of Orange County, Florida, does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other reason prohibited by law. The School Board also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies, reports of alleged violations, concerns about compliance and/or the grievance procedure(s), etc.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer & Title IX:

Keshara Cowans – Staff Attorney II
Office of Legal Services
Ronald Blocker Educational Leadership Center
445 W. Amelia St. Orlando, FL 32801
(407) 317-3411

ADA Coordinator:

Jay Cardinali – ADA Compliance Officer
Office of Legal Services
Ronald Blocker Educational Leadership Center
445 W. Amelia St. Orlando, FL 32801
(407) 250-6248

Section 504:

Tajuana Lee-Wenze – Director
ESE Procedures/Compliance
Ronald Blocker Educational Leadership Center
445 W. Amelia St. Orlando, FL 32801
(407) 317-3279