



Student & Parent Handbook

2026 EDITION

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Welcome to Forest Trail Academy



**A WORD FROM
OUR DIRECTOR**

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

Thank you in advance for reading the Student Handbook. Our policies and procedures are detailed in the handbook, and many of your questions and/or concerns will be answered and addressed here.

We expect our students to follow these policies from their first day, so it is extremely important that these are read and understood. This handbook contains important information regarding our policies on Artificial Intelligence (AI), plagiarism, tips for students to be successful in a virtual school environment, graduation requirements, different paths towards getting a diploma, and many more.

We want all of our students to have a successful experience at Forest Trail Academy. Please make sure both you and your student have reviewed our rules of conduct and Internet safety, in addition to all other information. Once you have read through the Student Handbook, please print and mail, fax or email the parent student handbook form:
http://www.foresttrailacademy.com/images/fta_handbook-Online.pdf

This is required to your student's file. Additionally, if you have not mailed, fax or emailed the enrollment application documents:
<http://www.foresttrailacademy.com/images/FTA-RequiredDocs.pdf>, please do so now. We appreciate your understanding that the file has to be completed within seven (7) days of enrollment in order for your student to continue in our program without any disruptions.

We are excited about the opportunity to share our learning community with you! If you have any questions, please contact the school office Monday - Friday, 9:00 am to 6:00 pm eastern standard time. Our office number is 800.890.6269.

Sincerely,



Dr. Gifty Chung



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Board of Directors



Mission Statement

FOREST TRAIL ACADEMY delivers a quality, national curriculum that empowers life-long learners and future leaders via an online learning environment. We are committed to alternative solutions that meet the needs of students with various life circumstances.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to provide a learner-focused alternative to traditional education.

Philosophy

Quality education should be available and accessible to all students, even those in non-traditional circumstances.

I. Course Policies

A. Honor Code

Forest Trail Academy seeks to create an environment in which students, teachers, parents, and administration can work together, interact, and learn from one another in ways that protect both personal freedom and community standards. For such a community to succeed, its members must learn to accept differences, which is only possible if all involved seek mutual understanding by means of respectful communication. The Honor Code serves as an educational tool to hold you accountable for engaging each other in dialogues that yield greater awareness for all parties involved. By demonstrating respectful conduct, we will create an atmosphere conducive to learning and growing. Students at Forest Trail Academy agree to follow each of the following statements.

1. Respect For Academic Honesty in all my efforts. Not only will I not cheat, represent the work of others as my own, allow others to copy my work or plagiarize, but I will also at all times use my best efforts to accomplish the highest academic achievement of which I am capable.
2. Respect For Others in all my words, expressions and actions. I will be respectful to everyone participating in The Virtual School community, and will refrain from hurtful remarks about appearance, race, religion, family, intelligence, and sexuality. I will respect people's privacy. I will not deprive them of their right to be happy and successful in the school community. I will uphold the policies of The Virtual School in all my actions.
3. Respect For Myself in everything I do. I understand that my work, my conduct with others, my personal honor, and the honor of my school community are my personal responsibility. I will uphold this code by observing it myself and helping the school community observe it too. I understand that if I observe violations of this Honor Code and do not stand up and uphold it, I have violated the code and my community. I accept my responsibility not to passively participate in a violation by allowing it to continue even though I know it to be wrong.

The sharing of student work in any way and/or making it available to others is strictly prohibited and in direct violation of the honor code.



B. Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity at Forest Trail Academy means that students submit only their own original thoughts and work on all assignments at all times. The most common types of academic dishonesty include cheating, copying part or all of an assignment from another source (either from other students and/or from other sources), failing to appropriately cite sources used during research, and making their work available for other students to use or submit as their own.

When students fail to have academic integrity in all their submissions, they are plagiarizing their work or aiding others in plagiarism. According to Merriam-Webster, the definition of plagiarism is *to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own : use (another's production) without crediting the source*. Specific examples of plagiarism that will not be tolerated are:

- Copying or rephrasing another student's work.
- Having someone else (including AI) write an assignment or rephrase any part of an assignment (not just proofread it).
- Directly copying student aids (for example, Course Hero), critical sources, or reference materials in part or in whole without acknowledgment.
- Indirect reproduction of student aids, such as Quizlet, Shmoop, critical sources, or reference materials by rephrasing ideas borrowed from them without acknowledgment.
- Sharing or making work available to other students will be penalized as well.
- Posting your work on file sharing sites, study sites, or making it available to other students in any way.

Teachers cite plagiarism through a variety of methods. All teachers and students have access to the plagiarism software within the Forest Trail Academy system, which provides educators and students with a report of any material that appears to be copied from another source, including the student's past submitted work. This detailed report is very useful to both students and teachers. Students are encouraged to submit ALL possible assessments to the plagiarism software before submitting them to teachers in order to avoid any possible infractions. Teachers also use search engines, such as Google, Course Hero, and the like to find instances of plagiarism.

No form of plagiarism will be tolerated at Forest Trail Academy.

The following table explains the steps taken for each plagiarism offense.



First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
The assignment will receive a grade of 0.	The assignment will receive a grade of 0.	The student will face expulsion from the school.
The instructor will indicate that the submission is plagiarized and will block all further submissions to that course.	The instructor will email the student and notify him/her of the citation and that it is the second offense in that course.	
The instructor will email the student and provide information about the plagiarism citation and will provide a research report that the student must complete.	The student must compose a letter of apology to the instructor, a letter to the school, and a letter to the source from which the material was taken. The criteria of these three letters will be at the discretion of the instructor.	
The instructor will notify the administration for a citation in the student's file.	The instructor will delete <i>all</i> assignments submitted to the course and the student will have to re-submit all new and authentic assignments in the course.	
Only upon satisfactory completion of the assigned research report will the student be released to continue submitting assignments for the course.	The instructor will notify the administration for a citation in the student's file. The student/parent will have to pay for the individual course as reflected on the tuition page on the main website.	
The student will resubmit the plagiarized assignment, but will only receive ½ credit for the assignment.	Only upon satisfactory completion of the letters will the student be released to continue submitting assignments for the course.	



Course Policies

What can you do to avoid this issue? Our teachers have come up with some information that you may find helpful in avoiding plagiarism issues.

1. **Remember, teachers want to see students' own original work:** It is NEVER acceptable to go to an AI website, Wikipedia, Course Hero, Book Rags, or any other website, copy information, and submit the assignment. As well, it is not enough to simply put a link at the bottom of the page to "cite" the source. *If students are using words that are not 100% completely their own, put the citation not only at the end of the paper but at the end of the quoted or paraphrased material in accordance with MLA style.* In addition, teachers at Forest Trail Academy will NEVER ask students to copy and paste information and submit it. That is not learning. We want students to do research and demonstrate their learning in their own words.
2. **Work on your course(s) daily:** To stay on track, work on your courses daily. Students who rush to finish a course—especially one that is about to expire—tend to submit subpar work. When students take shortcuts, it creates a headache for them in the end.
3. **Demonstrate your own understanding:** Teachers want to see evidence that students are critical thinkers. Show that you are a critical thinker by demonstrating an understanding of the content in every assignment. You can do this by always submitting your own, original work.
4. **Sharing work from other students is also plagiarism:** Some students are in the same course as other students they know (such as siblings in the same house or students participating in our partner programs). These students can be tempted to share assignments. Teachers are submitting work regularly to Unplag, and this program will catch this type of plagiarism as well.
5. **Since changing only a few words is still plagiarism, it is helpful to use more than one source when completing a research assignment.** This way students do not have just one explanation or description when writing answers.
6. **Making work available to others is also forbidden.** Sharing your work is not precisely plagiarism, but it can lead to plagiarism. It is also in violation of the Honor Code. Never share your work with anyone or post it online for others to find.



C. Sharing Work Policy

1 Document

A plagiarism lock is placed on the shared assignment. The student must complete the Academic Integrity report and have the file removed from the file sharing website. Once those have been completed, the student may redo the original assignment for a max score of 50%.

2 Documents

The student must redo the current course(s) the files come from and is subject to individual course(s) fees. The student must complete the Academic Integrity report and have the files removed from the file sharing website. Once the student has completed the report, the files are removed from the file sharing website, and the course has been registered for again, the student may begin again.

3 of more files:

Expulsion. The student must remove files from the file sharing website in order to receive transcripts for already completed courses.

D. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

What is Artificial Intelligence (AI) ?

According to IBM, "Artificial intelligence, or AI, is technology that enables computers and machines to simulate human intelligence and problem-solving capabilities."

Artificial intelligence is a simulation that mimics human intelligence in machines. There are various types of AI in use.

What types of AI are there?



Course Policies

Generative AI

Examples of generative AI are ChatGPT, Gemini, CoPilot, Grok, Claude.

How does it work? Users type a query and the tool provides a comprehensive answer.

Generative AI can be found on its own website, like ChatGPT, where users have to go to a specific URL to access it. It can be embedded in a browser, like CoPilot Or Gemini. Users type in the search bar and Generative AI gives a response.

Language Processing

Examples are Grammarly, Quillbot.

How does it work? The program corrects grammar, punctuation, and offers suggestions to revise and improve writing.

Language Processing is often embedded in another program, like Google Docs or Microsoft Word. It can be found at its own unique URL, like Grammarly. It also can be downloaded as an extension on a web browser.

Machine Learning

Examples are widespread in Word Processors, email systems, and search engine fields.

How does it work? The program makes predictions based on past behavior and suggests ways to complete your thoughts. For example, if you type the word *Good*, Machine Learning might suggest the word *Morning* come next.

How Can I Use AI Responsibly and Without Violating Academic Integrity Rules?

Spell Check

Students can use AI tools for spelling and grammar help. Language Processing tools can correct spelling, grammar and more. This is a slippery slope. Spelling and grammar help are acceptable. "And more" could quickly escalate into generative AI suggestions. A suggestion to delete a double negative is an acceptable use of AI. It is not the same as a suggestion to rewrite a sentence in a different style, which would be too much assistance and the result would not be a student's own original work.

Students should be cautious to verify grammar suggestions and not just copy what AI suggests. It is important that the student's style and voice is evident in their submission.



Course Policies

Research Starting Point

AI tools may be useful to give a general idea about a topic. They are an adequate place to start a search. Use an initial inquiry to find valid sources to begin research. Be careful! Generative AI may produce some sources that are not useful at all.

Conclusion

AI is a new and evolving tool that students should be aware of. It can be exciting and useful to begin or improve your learning.

AI must not replace your originality, creativity, critical thinking, or voice.

Consequences for AI Usage

Excessive offenses of AI-usage may result in expulsion from Forest Trail Academy.

First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
<p>The assignment will be marked REDO with a warning.</p> <p>The instructor will notify administration for a citation in the student's file.</p>	<p>The assignment will receive a grade of 0.</p> <p>The instructor will email the student and inform the student about the AI citation and will provide a research report that the student must complete.</p> <p>The instructor will notify the administration for a citation in the student's file.</p> <p>Only upon satisfactory completion of the assigned research report will the student be released to continue submitting assignments for the course.</p> <p>The student will resubmit the AI assignment, but will only receive a maximum score of 50% on the assignment.</p>	<p>The instructor will email the student and notify him/her of the citation and that it is the third offense in that Course.</p> <p>The student must compose a letter of apology to the instructor and school. The criteria of the letter will be at the discretion of the instructor.</p> <p>The instructor will delete all assignments submitted to the course and the student will have to re-submit all new and authentic assignments in the course</p> <p>The instructor will notify the administration for a citation in the student's file.</p> <p>The student/parent will have to pay for the individual course as reflected on the tuition page on the main website.</p> <p>Only upon satisfactory completion of the letters will the student be released to continue submitting assignments for the course.</p>



E. Individualized Education Plan (IEP)/504 Plan

Upon approval of enrollment, Forest Trail Academy follows the accommodations of the submitted 504 Plan/IEP/EP within the parameters of our online learning environment. We do not write or modify them. Upon receipt of the student's 504 Plan, IEP, or EP documentation, they are sent to each of the student's teachers. The teachers verify in the student's account profile that they have received, reviewed, and agreed to the documentation and will implement the accommodations as applicable in their courses.

F. Assignments

In some ways, submitting assignments virtually is just like submitting them at a traditional school. However, in some ways, it is very different. While each assignment, course, and teacher varies, there are some general rules of thumb to remember when submitting assignments.

All submissions are considered to be formal, academic submissions. Whether students are submitting work for Algebra or History, all instructors expect that basic grammar conventions are followed. It is important for students to remember that all academic writing contains a few elements:

1. **Capitalization:** Words that would be capitalized in an essay for an English class should be capitalized in all other classes as well. This includes proper nouns (America, Civil War, General Washington) and the first word of a sentence.
2. **Punctuation:** Basic punctuation is required for a reader to understand a piece of writing. Periods, question marks, quotation marks, exclamation points, colons, semicolons, and commas should be a part of every submission. Not using punctuation, again, is sometimes appropriate in emails, texts, chats, and other informal writing, but is never appropriate in formal submissions.
3. **Structure:** It is also important to use basic essay structure. This includes clearly written sentences, proper word choice (no text speak), and correctly formatted paragraphs of at least four sentences long. An essay should have a strong central idea (thesis) that is supported by facts in the essay. Essays should also have a clear introduction and conclusion paragraph.



While grammar is not the focus of all courses, it is expected that students use these basic points of grammar in their formal submissions. If students have questions, they should never hesitate to ask their teacher.

One of the keys to receiving full credit for any assignment is to demonstrate an understanding of the assignment.

Why do teachers require students to write, take quizzes, or complete projects? Is it just to give a grade? No! The reason students write, take quizzes, and complete projects is to demonstrate that they understand the material. At the end of the day, teachers want students to learn about the subject. A Social Studies teacher wants students to understand the causes and consequences of the Civil War, the impact the Industrial Revolution had on urban America, the advances made during the Progressive Era, etc. Your English teacher, Spanish teacher, Algebra teacher and others want students to learn things specifically for that subject. The assignments students submit are the way in which they demonstrate that they are learning.

Before students submit an assignment, they should always take a moment to think, “Have I demonstrated to my teacher how much I have learned?” Taking a moment to consider this will go a long way in ensuring students receive full credit for their work!

G. Attendance

Forest Trail Academy is an academic environment that allows students flexibility in submitting assignments and attending class. There are no set requirements for student attendance. However, it is strongly recommended that students work for 3-5 hours a day and/or a minimum of 20 hours per week.

Minimally, it is strongly recommended that students attend school at least 3 times per week. This can ensure that students are updated on emails and announcements from teachers, are responding to feedback from teachers, and are focusing on their schoolwork.

H. Bullying and Harassment

Forest Trail Academy expects that all students attending Forest Trail Academy and all personnel employed by Forest Trail Academy not engage in bullying or harassment. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated and shall be cause for disciplinary action.

Forest Trail Academy defines bullying as systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted, purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior including but not limited to any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture by an adult or student that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause long term damage.



Course Policies

Bullying is further defined as causing discomfort, humiliation, or interference with the individual's school performance or participation, is an act carried out repeatedly, and is often characterized by an imbalance of power. Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:

- Unwanted teasing
- Threatening
- Intimidating
- Cyber stalking
- Cyber bullying
- Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
- Public humiliation
- Social exclusion including incitement and/or coercion
- Rumor or spreading of falsehoods

Forest Trail Academy defines harassment as any verbal threatening insult by dehumanizing gesture as well as the use of technology, computer software, or written, verbal or physical misconduct directed against students or school personnel that:

- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, and the virtual school personnel work performance or either's opportunities or benefits;
- Has the effect of substantially negatively impacting a student's or personnel's emotional or mental well-being;
- Or has the effect of disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Forest Trail Academy defines cyber stalking as engaging in a course of conduct to communicate or to cause to be communicated words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication directed at or about a specific person and causing substantial emotional distress to that person while serving no legitimate purpose.

Further, Forest Trail Academy defines cyber bullying as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technologies including, but not limited to, email, blogs, social websites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram), chat rooms, and instant messaging.



The student consequences for behaviors and actions that violate Forest Trail Academy's policy on bullying and harassment will be determined by the administration and may include:

- Student/teacher/parent conferences
- Suspension or expulsion from Forest Trail Academy

I. Communication

When a student has a question or issue with an assignment, the teacher needs certain information to address the issue or answer the question. When sending a message via the message center asking a teacher about a particular issue, make sure your message has the following:

1. The specific course name that the student is in (Algebra 1, English 2, LA6, etc...). This helps teachers quickly identify the class that students are enrolled in.
2. The unit number, chapter number, and specific name of the assignment. Each teacher facilitates multiple courses with multiple assignments and no way to memorize them all! When students send a message, it is important that they provide the specific name of the assignment so that the teacher can pinpoint the lesson and/or assignment.
3. A specific question. Before students ask a question or ask about an issue, they should consider the result that they are looking for and make sure teachers understand this clearly in the message. This can be accomplished by asking teachers very specific questions to answer.

Forest Trail Academy is an asynchronous learning environment. Teachers respond to messages within 24-48 hours.

J. Corrections

Forest Trail Academy provides students with the opportunity to respond to the feedback provided by their teachers. Please see the list below for how corrections are handled by type of assignment:

Quizzes: If a student scores below 70% on a quiz, he or she may automatically retake the quiz. Because of this, students are not shown the answers. If a student still fails to achieve a 70% on a quiz after the second attempt, it is at the teacher's discretion to re-open the quiz. However, this is not done frequently and only for extraordinary circumstances. Students must take their time and be prepared. Students are welcome to ask their teacher about the correct answers once they have taken their last attempt on a quiz.



Course Policies

Assignments, Essays, and Worksheets: If a student scores below 70% on an assignment, essay, or worksheet, he or she may automatically re-take the assignment. If a student still fails to achieve a 70% on an assignment, essay, or worksheet after the second attempt, it is at the teacher's discretion to re-open the assignment, essay, or worksheet. However, this is not done frequently and only for extraordinary circumstances.

K. Redos

The redo function allows a teacher to reject a student's assignment submission without using up an assignment attempt. This function is designed to be used when a student submits work that is incomplete and/or does not follow instructions. Teachers expect to always see a student's best work; they should not submit anything other than that. When an assignment is marked redo, students must fix the errors before they resubmit it. Submitting the same file again and/or any inappropriate submissions of any kind may result in the course being locked and the student being unable to move on until the assignment is correctly completed.

L. Course Completion

Full Time Students

Full time students have a maximum of one year (365 days/ 12 months) from enrollment date to complete their course work.

Full time students have a minimum of 180 days /6 months) to complete their course work. Reenrollment and credit award (for transcripts) may not occur before 6 months.

Semester Students

Students who are enrolled part time have a maximum of 180 days/ 6 months to complete their course work.

Students who are enrolled in the part time program have a minimum of 90 days/ 3 months to complete their course work. Re-enrollment and credit award (for transcripts) may not occur before 3 months.

Individual Course Students

Students who are enrolled in the individual course(s) program have a maximum of 180 days/6 months to complete their course work. Students who are enrolled in the individual course(s) program have a minimum of 45 days/ approximately a month and a half to complete their course work. Re-enrollment and credit award (for transcripts) may not occur before 45 days.



Course Policies

If the student is unable to complete requirements for a course due to hardship circumstances in that timeframe she/ he or she will receive an incomplete grade. Courses with Incomplete Grades may be re-taken for an additional fee.

Note: No records of any kind will be generated, produced or submitted before the minimal timeframe.

Exemptions

There is no option to take a final or comprehensive exam to be exempt from taking a course. It is also not an option for students to complete a course without completing all the assignments.

Students are expected to complete all coursework before a course will be marked as completed, and attain grades and or credits. Per our policy, students must complete ALL assessments (assignments, worksheets, quizzes, tests, essays, projects, etc.,) in all courses in order to attain grades and or credits from Forest Trail Academy.

Course Access

Course content and assignments are designed to be completed in order. Student access to a course is limited to the current chapter and all previously completed chapters. Once all assignments are submitted in a chapter, the next chapter becomes accessible. For example, all courses begin in Chapter 1. To start, students will only have access to Chapter 1. Once all Chapter 1 assignments are submitted, Chapter 2 becomes accessible, and so on. Previously completed chapters remain accessible throughout a course.

M. Grading

Quizzes/tests are graded automatically by the system. Teachers will grade all other assignments, essays, and worksheets in 48-72 hours. When one student submits more than 5 assignments at a time for a single class, the grading time is extended 24 hours for each additional assignment. For example, if a student submits 7 assignments in one day, the teacher has 96-120 hours (4-5 days) to grade all of the work.

N. Internet Safety

All students and personnel at Forest Trail Academy should appreciate the availability of the Internet to fulfill the educational needs of students. While Forest Trail Academy understands that some internet sites contain illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or offensive information, it is the responsibility of the user to utilize critical thinking skills to determine the validity, accuracy, and suitability of the content for educational purposes.

Additionally, students and personnel shall not send information that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or offensive via the Internet.



Course Policies

Students of Forest Trail Academy should not reveal any personal information (description, telephone numbers, address, etc.) about themselves or others over the Internet, and they should not attempt to contact anyone they have met using Internet resources. Everyone accessing Forest Trail Academy's network must keep his or her password private and must not share it with anyone.

Should anyone have cause to suspect that the school network has been compromised or that there is a security concern, the student or personnel involved must notify Forest Trail Academy's administration immediately.

O. Netiquette

The term "netiquette" refers to the set of guidelines for interacting and communicating with others online (e-mail, message boards, social networking sites, etc.). Just as "etiquette" encourages polite, respectful behavior in real life, netiquette emphasizes the same in the digital world.

Students are expected to abide by the following standards:

- Avoid sarcasm, jargon, and slang. Swear words are unacceptable.
- Never use derogatory comments, including those regarding race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental health, or access issues.
- Don't shout! Writing in all caps is considered SHOUTING. A word or two here and there to emphasize a point may occasionally be acceptable, but avoid sending messages in all capital letters.
- Focus your responses on the questions or issues being discussed, not on the individuals involved.
- Be constructive with your criticism, not hurtful.
- Review your messages before sending them. Remove easily misinterpreted language and proofread for typos.
- Respect other people's privacy.
- Don't broadcast online discussions, and never reveal other people's email addresses. Remember: Treat others as you want to be treated!
- Don't send messages while angry. Wait 24 hours then write a calm reply.



P. Office Hours

To assist student learning, Forest Trail Academy offers live chats for students. Each teacher holds at least 2 thirty-minute chats each week. Each teacher creates his or her own schedule, so contact your teacher about his/her schedule. However, these chat times are not designed to limit the student's access to teachers. All teachers are happy to work with a student at any time to set up a chat that is convenient for both the teacher and the student. Remember, though, that students and teachers live across the world. Time zones will have to be considered in the chat scheduling process.

Q. Orientation

Upon enrollment at Forest Trail Academy for the first time, each student is *required* to complete an orientation course. This orientation course must be completed before the student can proceed in the other courses in which s/he is registered. Parents are also encouraged to view the orientation as well.

R. Progress Reports

Students can access current grades and attendance under their log in anytime to see how they are progressing throughout their courses. If questions arise about their progress, students are encouraged to contact their teachers.

Teachers will also follow a student's progress. If it appears that the student's ability to complete the course with a passing grade by the time the course expires is in jeopardy, the teacher may notify the parent through the Forest Trail Academy message center.

S. Technology Requirements

Parents/Students enrolled in the online program are expected to understand that a computer with internet access, scanner, and a printer is required.

Our system is a Windows-based platform and is compatible with all Microsoft products (Internet Explorer/Edge, Microsoft Office, Excel, etc.) If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can use WordPad. In addition, there are many FREE solutions that are compatible or can be used in place of Microsoft Office. One FREE product we have tested is Libre Office <http://www.libreoffice.org>. It works with both PCs and MACs.

Our system is compatible with most browsers.



Administration

II. Administration

A. Child Abuse Reporting

Forest Trail Academy recognizes the serious problem of child abuse, neglect, and abandonment, and the crucial role of school personnel in regard to this issue. Any Forest Trail Academy personnel with cause to suspect any child is an abused, neglected, or abandoned child must report the case of such immediately to administration.

Teachers will work with district administrators to meet all state and federal reporting requirements.

B. Confidentiality

It is the policy of Forest Trail Academy that student and personnel records and other records identifying the names of students and personnel are confidential. Such records shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal, or local government or any individual except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigative power.

Forest Trail Academy personnel shall not disclose student records and their contents as pertaining to individual students, the students' records and their contents, or any other identifiable information to any other individual, corporation, institution, government agent, or agency.



Administration

C. Media Release

I hereby give permission to Forest Trail Academy to use my photograph, video image, and name, for marketing purposes that will be shared on the school website, social media sites, etc. and/or similar school sponsored publications. I hereby unconditionally and irrevocably consent to Forest Trail Academy's use of such materials for any legal purpose Forest Trail Academy deems appropriate for the benefit of Forest Trail Academy, including commercial or advertising purpose also, I hereby forever waive (i) any right to require payment from Forest Trail Academy for the use of these materials by it or those acting pursuant to Forest Trail Academy's authority and (ii) the right to object to the use of such materials for any purpose permitted by this Consent and Release, including without limitation, the license or sale of such materials by Forest Trail Academy and those acting pursuant to its authority who publish, print, display, exhibit, distribute or otherwise publicly use any such materials for legal purposes. I understand the foregoing consent and release grants Forest Trail Academy the right to edit, crop, retouch, or otherwise reasonably alter such materials, at its discretion, and, at its option, to reveal my name and identity in such materials or by descriptive text or commentary. I understand and agree that any intellectual property rights associated with such materials are the sole property of Forest Trail Academy. Furthermore, I agree that this release shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida and if any term or provision of this release shall be held illegal, unenforceable, or in conflict with any law governing this release, the validity or enforceability of the remaining portions shall not in any way be affected or impaired thereby.

Parent/guardian signature will be completed on the Parent Student Handbook Form.



Administration

D. Discipline

Teaching and learning occur most efficiently in a climate of order. Courteous, considerate behavior is required at all times for all students attending Forest Trail Academy. The administration and teaching staff at Forest Trail Academy will use the necessary means to ensure that an environment conducive to learning and safety is maintained. Disciplinary action will be taken against those who disrupt this environment or break school rules.

Possible action includes restrictions to remove access to certain permissions (like Big Blue Button, chat, etc), long-term suspension, and/or expulsion from Forest Trail Academy.

A student who is an accessory to a serious offense is guilty of misconduct and can be punished just as if s/he had committed the offense. This means that a student is not to do anything that might cause, encourage, or assist a serious violation to take place.

E. Grade Level Placements

Forest Trail Academy uses the Florida educational model. In high school, each class ranges from half (.5) to one regular academic credit. A student typically earns four to six (4-6) high school credits in a grade level (including summer school). The total number of credits earned and core courses taken by a student at the beginning of the academic year determines grade level placement/classification for that year. In the K-8 setting, students may take 4-6 courses per grade level (when and if applicable). The total number of courses (minimally the four core courses-math, science, language arts, and social studies) taken by a student at the beginning of the academic year and satisfactorily passing each course determines grade level placement/classification for that year.

F. Grading Scale

A - 90-100

B - 80-89 C - 70-79 D - 60-69

F - 59 & below

I - Incomplete

W - Withdrawn

P - Pass



G. Grievance Policy

Forest Trail Academy seeks to provide a learning environment that suits each student's learning pace. Forest Trail Academy believes that each student is distinctive, so learning should be dynamic, flexible, and engaging; academic offerings should be integrated rather than isolated; students, parents, and community members share responsibility for learning; students should have choices in how they learn and how they present the information they have learned in class; and that assessments should be used *for* student learning.

Although Forest Trail Academy personnel strive to provide the most engaging academic experience for students possible, there may be times when a student, parent, or stakeholder may have a concern. When a dispute arises, the student, parent or guardian, or other stakeholder is encouraged to first discuss the issue or problem with the person or persons involved. The student may seek the assistance of an Academic Advisor or other faculty members to mediate the dispute.

Should speaking with the person or persons involved not resolve the concern, a grievance may be filed with the administration. The written grievance should contain the name of the student, the instructor or staff member, date of grievance, dispute, or dissatisfaction, detailed description of the grievance, and the desired outcome. The administration will respond in writing within three school days of receipt of the written grievance.

H. Honor Roll

Students are eligible for the honor roll when they earn As and Bs in all of their classes. These students may also be eligible to join the National Honor Society or National Junior Honor Society with our school.

I. Paths to Graduation

In order to receive a diploma from Forest Trail Academy, 25% of a student's credit hours (approximately one year's worth of credits) must be completed at Forest Trail Academy. There are two paths to graduation at Forest Trail Academy: College Prep and General Ed. It is important for each student to consider which path is best suited for his or her academic and professional goals.

It is the responsibility of all students to make sure they have completed all the requirements for graduation. For further assistance, please contact your Academic Advisor.



College Prep Diploma (24) Credits

This program takes the traditional four years to complete high school and requires students to take at least 24 credits in core content areas. Foreign language is required for this program. Students must earn at least 14 of the 24 required credits in specified rigorous level courses.

English (4) Credits:	Major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature.
Mathematics (4) Credits:	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and any 1 credit higher level mathematics course.
Science (4) Credits:	Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, and any 1 credit Science course.
History (4) Credits:	World History, American History, American Government, Economics, and any 1 credit.
Foreign Language:	2 credits
Fine Arts:	1 credit
Health:	½ credit
Personal Fitness:	½ credit
Electives:	4 or more credits

General Diploma (21) Credits

The requirements of this program are designed to prepare students for entering a postsecondary institution of education. This accelerated graduation program requires fewer credits than a college preparatory diploma. Students must earn at least 11 of the 21 required credits in specified rigorous-level courses. Foreign language is not a requirement in this program.



English (4) Credits:	Major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature.
Mathematics (4) Credits:	Any four mathematical courses, one of which must be Algebra I or its equivalent, one of which must be in Geometry or its equivalent, and any 2 credit higher-level mathematics or practical life skills mathematics course
Science (3) Credits:	Any three science courses, two of which must have a laboratory component
History (4) Credits:	World History, American History, Economics, and any 1 credit.
Fine Arts	1 credit
Health	½ credit
Personal Fitness	½ credit
Electives	4 or more credits

J. Progress Report

Upon request, students will receive a progress report bearing current grades in each course. The progress report will be a computer-generated document that will be sent per the submitted request form. To request a progress report, please complete and submit the General Request Form:

<https://www.foresttrailacademy.com/images/FTA-GeneralRequestForm-Online.pdf>.

Progress report requests are processed in a 3-5 business day window.

The final grade is the only grade that appears on the student's permanent academic records and is the grade that determines whether or not the student passes the course. The transcript is the student's official record, not the progress report. To order a transcript, please visit: <https://www.foresttrailacademy.com/transcript-request.html> and complete your transcript request via Parchment.

K. Recommendation Requests & Student Guidelines

To request a letter of recommendation from your teacher, please abide by the following steps:

First, contact the teacher to request a letter of recommendation from them. If they say yes, please send a message to Student Services regarding your request. Remember, a teacher does not have to write a letter of recommendation if they do not feel comfortable doing so. Be respectful of the decision your teacher makes and remain courteous. Be prepared to ask 2-3 teachers for a recommendation in the event a teacher declines to write a letter of recommendation.

Common App and/or Coalition Requests

For Common App and/or Coalition requests (for high school students only), you do not need to submit a General Request Form; however, you must notify the office that the recommendation request will be completed via Common App and/or Coalition.

Other Requests

For all other request types, complete and submit a General Request Form. Please indicate in your message, when you submit the General Request Form, the type of request you are seeking.



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Timeline

For all recommendation requests from teachers and/or the guidance department, please allow up to *14 days* for your request to be processed. Keep your deadlines in mind and do not wait until the last minute to submit a request as late submission of a request will not come with a guarantee of submission by the deadline.

Note: For NJHS/NHS recommendations, you do not need to submit a request through the office. This is an internal recommendation that does not require a request form.

If you have not yet taken the time to reach out to your teacher or academic advisor, please do so. As you continue in your academic career, establishing relationships with a mentor, advisor, or teacher will become vital not only for your academic success but your professional success as well. Applying to a job requires references. Applying to college or university requires a letter of recommendation. Continuing on to postgraduate studies also requires references and recommendations. The earlier you take the time to establish a rapport with the academic professionals around you, the more you learn and the more comfortable you become with requesting a recommendation. It is important to us, the recommenders, to know who you are and to feel comfortable in writing a recommendation for you. It is important for us to know you as a well-rounded student. Beyond your grades, we should know the extracurricular activities you participate in, your community involvement, your future academic goals, and your future career goals. We want to get to know you and we want you to grow professionally and academically!

L. Transfer from Non-Accredited School

Forest Trail Academy reserves the right to accept or not accept credits from any school. If a student is accepted and transfers to Forest Trail Academy from a non-accredited school, he or she may be enrolled provisionally and must pass all course work the first academic year to receive credit for previous work. If all grades are not satisfactory or passing, the student will have to repeat the course(s) for an additional fee. Forest Trail Academy reserves the right to assess/evaluate students at any time.

M. NCAA Approved Courses

Forest Trail Academy is NCAA Approved Curriculum School Code 102800. The NCAA does not endorse or affiliate with the services of Forest Trail Academy. The parent/guardian of a prospective student-athlete should ensure that programs are in compliance with NCAA bylaws.



The NCAA Web site <http://www.ncaa.org/> is the only place to receive the most current and accurate information about NCAA rules and regulations.

N. Transcripts

A student may request a photocopy of his or her academic record from the Registrar's office. Students who owe money and/or materials will be denied a copy of any transcript until balance is paid and/or materials are returned (if applicable). Transcript requests are processed in a 3-5 business day window.

O. Account Updates

In order to keep student accounts current, please notify the registrar's department, *in writing*, of any changes in demographic, biographical, and/or contact information on the student and/or parent accounts. These changes may be submitted through your parent account to Parent Services or via email to registrar@foresttrailacademy.com.

Forest Trail Academy reserves the right to request any proof of documentation at any time.

P. Withdrawals/Drop-Outs

A student who withdraws from school for any reason must obtain a withdrawal form <https://foresttrailacademy.com//images/FTA-WithdrawalForm7262011.pdf>. It must be properly filled out and returned. In addition, students who are withdrawing or dropping out must fill out an exit survey, which is required of all students. Students who withdraw or drop out of school must pay all school debts. Students who do not clear all debts will not be allowed to re-enter school until this is corrected. See the entire policy: refund/withdrawal (<http://www.foresttrailacademy.com/terms-and-conditions.html>).



Terms and Conditions

III. Terms and Conditions

A. Tuition

Forest Trail Academy has both public and private sections of this web site. Access to these private sections requires a username and password that are created during the application process. Forest Trail Academy offers installment payment plans to make it easier for parents and guardians to budget their financial obligations. Upon enrollment, the student's parent or guardian is agreeing to pay the total tuition for the then-current school year either in full or according to an installment plan. Students on a payment plan that withdraw are responsible for the tuition balance. No records will be issued for students who withdraw with a tuition balance. Tuition includes access to up to six (6) credits. Families who wish to enroll in additional courses may seek permission from our academic counselor. If approved, there will be additional fees for these additional courses. Students must complete ALL work in order to attain grades and or credits.

B. Withdrawal/Refund Policy

Due to proprietary software, content, intellectual property, we offer a 5 day refund policy. Families have 5 days to determine if the Academy's programs suit the needs of their student(s). Refunds will be granted according to the following policies as long as the family withdraws from the Academy via written notice as specified. The only written notice we will accept is our [Student Withdrawal Form](#). Please download and complete the Withdrawal Form with appropriate signature (s) and fax to our office. We will not accept verbal withdrawals or any other means of withdrawals. Refunds are issued minus the non-refundable registration fee. There are no—absolutely no—refunds after 5 days; however, a student can withdraw at any time. Students must complete ALL work in order to attain grades and/or credits.



C. Financial Responsibility

Forest Trail Academy offers installment payment plans to make it easier for parents or guardians to budget yearly tuition costs. These plans are offered interest free as long as invoice payments are not late. For accounts that are not current, a finance charge of 1.5% (subject to State and National regulations) is added on a monthly basis and will accumulate until the account is paid. Returned checks are subject to a \$30.00 Return Check Fee.

Accounts that are placed in collection because of non-payment are subject to additional fees as permitted by law. The account holder is responsible for all collection costs associated with collection activities for accounts that are cancelled for non-payment. Accounts cancelled or suspended for non-payment are subject to reporting to credit agencies and collection services. Parents/Guardian/Students on a payment plan that withdraw are responsible for the tuition balance. No records will be issued for students who withdraw with a tuition balance.

D. Suspension, Expulsion and Withdrawal

Suspension is a temporary discontinuance of access to Forest Trail Academy private sections. Students remain enrolled during a suspension and all financial responsibilities remain in effect during a suspension. If a student is expelled for any reason, the financial responsibility still lies on the parent/guardian/student. Parents must pay the remaining balance immediately. Suspension or expulsion may occur for a variety of reasons, including abuse.

Please be cognizant that you will find the most up to date policies on the school's main website (www.foresttrailacademy.com). The main website will always supersede the student handbook policy, as we reserve the right to update and amend at any time without notice. We encourage you to check the website periodically. Thank you for reading the Parent Student Handbook.

