FFCA High Schools Student Handbook
2025-2026

Welcome

If you have been a part of Foundations for the Future Charter Academy previously, we are pleased to welcome you back for another momentous year. If you are new to our school, we are thrilled that you have chosen to become part of this outstanding learning organization. We invite you to become actively involved in the education of your child. Feel free to ask questions, make suggestions, and provide feedback about your experiences at your campus. Your ideas are vital to our long-term success.

Please know that our campuses operate under the skilled leadership of dedicated staff members and that each one is committed to the distinctive characteristics of our school. Moreover, each is focused on responding appropriately to students' learning needs and developing a partnership with parents. We strongly believe that through positive connections with our staff, you will build the relationships necessary to support the development of enhanced learning opportunities for your child.

Welcome to the finest **public** school in Alberta! Enjoy the experience and have a great year!

FFCA High School Administration

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Section 1: FFCA Information

FFCA Vision
Excellence in student achievement and character development through distinctive teaching and learning.

FFCA Mission
To provide a safe and caring environment where academic excellence, character development, parental involvement and staff leadership are valued and fostered.

Academic Focus
The FFCA High School program emphasizes academic rigour and achievement. In addition to ensuring high levels of competency in core and elective course offerings, students will develop skills in critical thinking, effective communication, problem-solving, inquiry and research. Students will graduate equipped to undertake post-secondary education and responsibilities associated with the world of work.

Character and Leadership
FFCA fosters **strong, positive, respectful partnerships** among students, staff, parents, and the community.

Character education is the foundation upon which student success is built. It is the means to foster sustainable communities that are safe, caring, supportive, respectful, and inclusive. FFCA endeavors to prepare students to be strong and engaged citizens who care deeply, think critically and act courageously. Students engage in learning experiences in relation to FFCA's five-character development foundations — compassion, respect, responsibility, self-discipline, integrity.

FFCA High School seeks to develop students who demonstrate the "courage of integrity;" students who choose right over wrong, ethics over convenience, and truth over popularity; even in the face of adversity. Through an increased awareness of their abilities, influences, values, and unique talents, students will acquire a prominent level of respect and responsibility for themselves and others. Students will develop character through an integrated approach and demonstrate commitment to exemplary character through daily choices, community service, and acts of citizenship.

FFCA High School focuses on developing leadership capacity, creating a sense of empowerment and building a school community characterized by quality relationships and organizational pride. The school will equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to prepare them for living as productive members of the local, national, and global community. In addition, FFCA students will benefit from interaction with leaders in the community, from mentorship opportunities and learning founded on practical experiences.

Our History

FFCA began in September 1997 when the vision of a small group of committed parents was realized. At that time, we were a single campus with 224 students from kindergarten through grade eight. We extended to include grade nine the following year and offered our first leadership course to our grade nines in 2001. In September 2002, we offered a grade ten program for the first time. In June 2005, these students walked across the stage as the first ever FFCA grade twelve graduating class.

In 2010, our graduating class included students from our very first kindergarten class. We are now in our second decade of providing high quality education to over three thousand Calgary students. In 2021, two high schools in the North and South quadrant of the city provided education to nine hundredplus students.

More information about FFCA Charter and other distinctive features are located on the FFCA High Schools Websites. FFCA Website

Section 2: High School Information

School Calendar:
High School Calendars are located on the school's website.

Bell Schedule
It is located on the high school website.

Building/Office Hours
Monday – Friday (7:30 am-4:00 pm)

Fees
All registration, bus, and deposit fees are due at the time of online registration. Registration will be denied, unless accompanied by full payment of fees. Course fees are invoiced with the distribution of the timetable. These fees are due on the second Friday of September for all students.

Re-registration will not be accepted until any outstanding fees have been paid. Families for whom the payment of school fees constitutes a serious family hardship may apply for a subsidy. These forms are available from the administrative assistant.

Text/Library Book Deposit
Part of the registration fee is a text/library book deposit. This amount is credited upon graduation from grade 12 or when a student leaves FFCA High School if all text and library books are returned in good condition by the deadline in June. Students who fail to return all materials accordingly will forfeit their deposit. Any replacement cost more than the deposit value will be invoiced at that time. Materials returned after the deadline will not reverse the deposit forfeiture once the school has ordered replacement materials.

Contacting High School Staff Contact
All staff can be reached by email at - **firstname.lastname@ffca-calgary.com**

Email/Voicemail
Most communication from the school occurs by email. Our teachers also frequently use email to contact parents. *Please ensure that we have your current email address on file.*

To minimize disruption of classes, email is the preferred method of contacting our teachers. You may also leave our staff voicemail messages via the main school phone number. We are committed to responding to your inquiries within two working days. For urgent matters, please contact the office by phone.

Newsletters
FFCA High School publishes a monthly newsletter on the final Wednesday of every month. The newsletter is distributed by webmail and posted to our website on these dates. For those families that do not have email access or who would prefer a paper copy, please inform our office of this so that we may send these with your child.

Edsby
FFCA High School teachers utilize a communication tool called Edsby. Each class, teachers will provide students and parents with information on how to access the class Edsby page for details about the class including course outlines, homework, and other important updates.

New Student Family Orientation
A mandatory pre-year orientation is held for students and parents who are new to the high school, including all grade 9's. At this orientation, expectations for stakeholders are reviewed.

School Council Meetings
School Council meetings are held virtually on the first Wednesday of each month. The notice of the meeting is sent to all parents via email. All parents are encouraged to attend School Council meetings as they are one of the best ways to stay informed on school happenings.

Food Services
There is no cafeteria on-site at the high school. Students are responsible for ensuring they have brought food to school.

Walking Field Trips
A number of field trips may occur which involve walking to various locations within the local community. A consent form is completed as part of the online registration process each year, providing permission for students to participate in all of these activities. Other field trips will have their own consent forms.

Student Services
The FFCA High Schools have an Academic Guidance counsellor, Family Liaison Counselor, and a registered psychologist. Students and parents can avail themselves of their services by connecting with them either in person, via email, or Edsby.

Guidance Counselling Services - Academic and Personal

High school students have access to guidance counsellors for academic, post-secondary and career, and personal counselling. The guidance program aims to support students in their pursuit of success as people and students while at FFCA. Students are encouraged to use these services whenever needed.

The Academic Guidance Counsellor should be a student's first contact point for issues regarding course selection, course changes, academic requirements, graduation requirements and post-secondary/career planning.

The Family School Liaison Worker and Psychologist should be a student's contact point for personal and mental health support. When necessary, families will be referred to outside agencies.

Career and Post-Secondary Planning

In addition to offering a high-quality instructional program that focuses on preparing students for college and university education, we offer a high level of guidance and support in helping students and their parents develop a solid career and post-secondary plan to follow their high school graduation. All our students participate in formalized career assessments focusing on helping them identify and clarify their interests, values, and abilities. Every grade twelve student completes a post-secondary plan through individual and/or group consultations with our guidance counsellor during their senior year.

To continue their education after senior high school students must be aware of the courses required for their post-secondary choices. In Alberta alone, there are over thirty post-secondary institutions including universities, technical institutes, vocational colleges, public colleges, and private colleges. Students should check the websites and calendars of these institutions early so they will know what the entrance requirements are and when the registration deadlines occur. They could be expected to apply to some institutions as early as a year ahead of time. In addition, they may choose to work toward attaining a journeyman credential by becoming an apprentice in one of the fifty designated trades available in Alberta.

Although most post-secondary institutions set minimum marks average for admission, this does not mean students are guaranteed admission if they have that average. Admission to most programs is highly competitive, which often means that students with the highest averages are the ones admitted. If students are planning to attend college, university, or a technical institute after graduation, it will be helpful to be aware of the current entrance requirements for those institutions. Information about post-secondary institutions can be found on the Internet at the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) site at: http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca and on My Blueprint, which all students are given account to in CALM 20

If students want to go to a post-secondary institution but think they cannot afford to, they may be eligible for a student loan. Students can find out more from their Academic Guidance Counsellor or by contacting the Student Finance Board in Calgary, **(403) 297-6344**.

Section 3: Expectations

Bus Expectations
Stay seated, **O**bey the bus driver, **R**espect others, and **T**alk quietly **(SORT)**
MyBusStopApp: delayed bus notification program

Transportation Handbook

Student Parking
Students must register their vehicles at the office at the beginning of the year and park in designated student locations with their parking pass displayed.

General Uniform Requirements

- Students must be dressed in the appropriate uniform to attend class or field trips
- All uniform items should fit properly and be kept clean and in good repair
- All shirts are to be tucked in
- All tunics, kilts and PE shorts must be of a modest length. All socks, tights and leggings are to be plain opaque black - no semi/transparent nylons, prints or patterns
- Any undergarments should NOT be visible. This is why white shirts which do not need to be purchased by our approved supplier must be opaque and all underclothing is recommended to be white in colour, with no coloured trim, designs, or patterns.
- It is strongly recommended that families purchase more than one shirt and, if pants are chosen to be worn, more than one pair of pants for the school year to allow for proper cleaning and maintaining condition of items.
- It is strongly recommended that all uniform items should be labeled with the student's. initial and last name

Gala Uniform Requirements

All students must own the required pieces of the gala uniform and be prepared to wear them when required by school administration. The Gala Uniform will be required for all formal occasions such as school pictures, designated assemblies, concerts, and field trips off the school property and other days as deemed appropriate by the school administration.

	Grade 9-11	Grade 12
Gala Uniform Top	All of: -Plain solid all-white opaque button-down collar dress shirt or blouse (generic acceptable) -Southridge plaid tie* -Hunter Green crested vest OR cardigan*	All of: -Plain solid all-white opaque button-down collar dress shirt or blouse (generic acceptable) -Southridge plaid tie* -Black blazer* with logo pin*
Gala Uniform Bottom	One of: -Charcoal (dark) Grey 'monogrammed' pants (available in 2 styles)* o Straight dress o Fitted dress (female cut) -Southridge plaid kilt* with black modesty shorts (generic acceptable)	One of: -Charcoal (dark) Grey 'monogrammed' pants (available in 2 styles)* o Straight dress o Fitted dress (female cut) -Southridge plaid kilt* with black modesty shorts (generic acceptable)
Approved Footwear (generic acceptable for all footwear)	-Black socks {to be worn with pants} OR -Black knee-high socks, tights or leggings with socks {to be worn with kilts/tunics} AND -Plain solid black leather or leather-like dress shoe with non-marking sole and heel size less than 5cm	

Daily (non-gala) Uniform Requirements

Daily (non-Gala) uniform wear may consist of any approved top and bottom including those that form part of the gala uniform OR approved optional items. Non-Gala uniform may be worn on school days when Gala uniforms are not required by school administration providing students with some flexibility within the uniform.

	Grade 9-11	Grade 12
Daily Uniform Top	Either of: -Plain solid all-white opaque button-down collar dress shirt or blouse (generic acceptable) -Plain solid all-white golf shirt (generic acceptable) OPTIONAL: -Hunter Green crested vest OR cardigan* -Southridge plaid tie *	Either of: -Plain solid all-white opaque button-down collar dress shirt or blouse (generic acceptable) -Plain solid all-white golf shirt (generic acceptable) OPTIONAL: -Black blazer* with logo pin* -Hunter Green crested vest OR cardigan* -Southridge plaid tie*
Daily Uniform Bottom	One of: -Charcoal (dark) Grey 'monogrammed' pants (available in 2 styles)* o Straight dress o Fitted dress (female cut) -Charcoal (dark) Grey 'monogramed' shorts* -Southridge plaid kilt* with black modesty shorts (generic acceptable)	One of: -Charcoal (dark) Grey 'monogrammed' pants (available in 2 styles)* o Straight dress o Fitted dress (female cut) -Charcoal (dark) Grey 'monogramed' shorts* -Southridge plaid kilt* with black modesty shorts (generic acceptable)
Approved Footwear (generic acceptable for all footwear)	-Black socks {to be worn with pants} OR -Black knee-high socks, tights or leggings with socks {to be worn with kilts/tunics} AND -Plain solid black leather or leather-like dress shoe with non-marking sole and heel size less than 5cm	

Please note that uniform pieces identified with an asterisk (*) above are required to be purchased from the official sanctioned supplier – IN SCHOOL WEAR
InSchoolwear
Calgary Philips Park
5071 11 ST SE Calgary, AB T2H 1M7
Tel: 403-640-1032 Email: calgary@inschoolwear.com

Please note that some pieces identified as (generic acceptable) may be purchased at a store of your choice as long as they meet the requirements as described.

Physical Education Uniform
The PE clothing for all FFCA high school campuses will be identical in terms of branding utilizing the FFCA and/or Phoenix theme and a common supplier.

	Grade 9-12
Physical Education Uniform	The gym uniform includes a selection of crested shirts, shorts and pants. Athletic shoes (non-marking) are required unless specified otherwise

Casual Day Dress Expectations

While students are not compelled to wear their school uniform on designated casual days, they must still be dressed in clothing that is conducive to learning and work. Respecting the rights of parents to exercise educational and personal choices relating to their student(s), it is anticipated that parental decisions regarding casual day attire will endeavour to maintain the purpose and spirit of the uniform dress standards. These decisions will show respect for the dignity of individual students regardless of sex, gender, culture and religion. The following guidelines are in place to reflect a positive learning environment, while allowing for casual wear:

- Undergarments must be completely covered by outer clothing.
- All clothing must be free of inappropriate language or imagery.
- On themed days:
  - No masks
  - No swimsuits on Beach Day
  - No play weapons
- On casual days, the students in Middle and High School will still be required to wear school physical education clothing for physical education classes.

School Administration will have final determination as to appropriate casual day wear, based on the guidelines. In cases where the attire is considered inappropriate, a student may be asked to change into their gym strip or arrange for alternate clothing to be brought to school.

These uniform requirements will be strictly enforced, so please take the time to familiarize yourself with them. If you have questions about the requirements or a suggestion for improving the uniform code, please contact your Campus Administration. They will ensure your questions are answered - or that your suggestions are passed on to the Board.

Student Code of Conduct

Student Code of Conduct is established to guide students to be in compliance with the FFCA Policy 19.

Attendance

Regular attendance is required of all students at FFCA. The only acceptable reasons for being absent are:
1) sickness, medical or dental appointments,
2) a religious holiday recognized by the religious denomination to which the student belongs,
3) the principal of the school has suspended the student from school and the suspension is still in effect,
4) the student has been expelled from our school and has not been given permission to enroll in another school,
or 5) the board excuses the student from attending school for a prescribed period of time.

For courses where assessment is based largely on in-class participation and performance, marks can be seriously impacted by attendance issues. FFCA does not grant leave to students for anything other than school-approved activities. FFCA has a Practices and Procedures document outlining the steps taken in an extended leave. Detailed information can be found on our website :
https://www.ffca-calgary.com/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=13691051

Neither a school nor a parent can give permission for a student to be absent beyond those five reasons. Please be aware of this as we will consider any absence not attributable to one of those reasons as unexcused or skipping. All student absences will be considered unexcused UNLESS we receive a parental notification that the absence meets one of the acceptable reasons. Unexcused absences may result in a conversation with the teacher or school administration.

Absence Reporting

Regular attendance is required of all students at FFCA. Parents are asked to report all absences by phoning the office by 9:00AM on the morning of the absence. All student absences will be considered unexcused UNLESS we receive a parental notification that the absence meets one of the acceptable reasons. Unexcused absences may result in a conversation with the teacher or school administration.

Punctuality (Being on Time)

It is the responsibility of each student to arrive for class on-time or early. Problems with punctuality will be addressed by the classroom teacher in accordance with FFCA character and academic expectations. Severe problems will be addressed to school Administration.

Final Exam Attendance Expectations

Attendance for all examinations in Jan & June is mandatory. The arrangements to write the alternative exam outside of the exam schedule must be made by contacting the principal in writing. Students may be allowed to write their exam on an alternate date only during the month of January and June or during the exam period. Students will only be allowed to write exams before the schedule under extenuating circumstances.
Students must present photo ID at all scheduled final exams.

Diploma Exam Attendance Expectations and Scheduling

Alberta Education sets all expectations and schedules connected to diploma examinations. Information can be found here: https://www.alberta.ca/diploma-exams.aspx

Lockers/Security

All students are assigned a half locker for the school year. Students are responsible for purchasing their own locks. Students must always keep their belongings securely locked in their lockers. The locker remains the school's property, and the administration may access it at any time if deemed necessary. *All students are discouraged from bringing valuable items to school.*

Phone

There is a phone for student use by the main office. There is no charge for the use of this phone. It is only to be used outside of scheduled class times or with the explicit permission of their teacher.

Community Expectations

Students will interact safely and respectfully when in the local community and visiting surrounding businesses.

Visitors Expectations

1. All guests must enter through the main doors and sign in at the office immediately upon arriving at the school.
2. Guests must wear a visitor lanyard and are expected to follow all FFCA school expectations – at all times - while on campus.

Expectations of Parents

Ongoing communication between home and school helps to set students up for success in learning. We will keep parents informed of student progress through learning conferences, report cards, e-reporting, phone calls, notes, Edsby, e-mail. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the "Being Heard" policy available on the website.

Mandatory Parent Meetings

Several of our courses and co-curricular activities (e.g. sr. basketball, drama one-act festival) have mandatory or optional overnight trips. Participation on all overnight trips requires parental attendance at an information meeting. Failure to attend will result in your child not being allowed to participate.

FFCA Parent/Guardian Partnership Commitment

Foundations for the Future Charter Academy (FFCA) is a school where parents and staff build strong relationships that support the academic achievement of students. When parents engage as partners, students learn more, classrooms are enriched, the school improves, and the entire community benefits.

Parent partnerships are the cornerstone of the culture at FFCA. FFCA expects that 100% of families will engage in various forms of parental involvement. To this end, each FFCA campus will offer opportunities through which parents can share their time, talents, and abilities at home, at the campus, and in our FFCA community. FFCA challenges parents yearly to demonstrate this commitment in support of their child's learning experience.

Ultimately, parent partnership at FFCA is characterized by the support and participation of parents at home, at the campus, and in our 'one school' community. FFCA requires parents to take seriously their responsibility for being effective partners in their child's formal education. As partners, everyone shares in supporting FFCA learners in their pursuit of personal excellence within our community. This is the commitment that is expected when parents choose FFCA as their school.

As a parent of a student attending Foundations for the Future Charter Academy, you gave your commitment to actively seeking every opportunity to engage as partners when you registered your child/children at FFCA this year.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

FFCA recognizes that portable technologies can play an important role in learning for students. However, many devices that provide this advantage also provide significant means of distraction from a focused learning experience. As such, we believe that responsible digital citizenship can be promoted through the appropriate use of student-supplied technology within the school as defined by the following guidelines:

1. All wireless communication/electronic entertainment devices are to be turned off and are not to be seen or heard during class time (including assemblies & field trips/bussing) unless explicit permission of the teacher is given. They are permitted before/after school, during class changes, and at lunch (if used appropriately).
2. No use of electronic recording devices (audio, video or pictures) is permitted within school at any time unless explicit permission of the teacher is given. It is a FOIP violation to record other students and staff while at school or school activities.
3. Use of Airpods or other similar devices should not occur during class time including assemblies and field trips unless a teacher has given explicit permission.

FFCA accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to such items brought to school.

Expectations for Technology Use at School

Digital Citizenship is defined as the norms of appropriate responsible ethical behavior with regard to technology use. In 2012, Alberta Education released a Digital Citizenship Policy Guide, which outlines key areas and expectations and conduct for all students in Alberta.

At FFCA, Digital Citizenship is an essential skill that we seek to model and develop so that students can create a digital identity and footprint that will demonstrate their character in an online environment. We foster the character of our students as global digital citizens by focusing on the FFCA Technology Student Acceptable Use Protocol and the intentional teaching of the nine elements of Digital Citizenship embedded in the FFCA Character Education Program.

The nine elements of Digital Citizenship can be organized into three key themes:

- Respect and protect yourself: Digital Wellbeing;
- Respect and protect others: Digital Interactions;
- Respect and protect intellectual property and others property: Digital Preparedness

Inherent in these themes is the student's responsibility to use technology while at school and for any work connected to school consistent with the FFCA Student Acceptable Use Protocol and the nine elements of digital citizenship. In the event a student acts in a way that is contrary to the elements of digital citizenship, FFCA will work with the student involved and their parents/guardians with the intention of remedying any damage done and preventing future occurrences.

FFCA reserves all rights to limit student access to all digital environments and devices. FFCA expects students to take full responsibility for their personal digital devices while they are present at school.

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE CHARTER ACADEMY

The Nine Elements of Digital Citizenship

As members of a digital society, it is our responsibility to create digital citizens who can use technology responsibly.

RESPECT AND PROTECT YOURSELF: DIGITAL WELLNESS

Digital Wellness

I understand that technology can impact my health and relationships.

Digital Rights and Responsibilities

I understand that everyone has the responsibility to use technology with integrity.

Digital Security

I understand how to keep myself and others safe when using technology.

RESPECT AND PROTECT OTHERS: DIGITAL INTERACTIONS

Digital Communication

I understand how to choose appropriate digital tools to communicate responsibly.

Digital Etiquette

I demonstrate strong character when accessing technology and know that my actions impact others.

Digital Access

I know where and how I can access technology.

RESPECT AND PROTECT INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND OTHERS PROPERTY: DIGITAL PREPARDNESS

Digital Law

I am responsible for my digital actions and deeds

Digital Literacy

I understand the digital basics such as browsers, search engines, uploads, downloads, email and text.

Digital Commerce

I know how to buy and sell safely in a digital world.

Adapted From:

Alberta.Alberta Education. (2012). Digital citizenship policy development guide. Edmonton, AB: Government of Alberta.

Ribble.M. (2011) Digital citizenship in schools. Eugene, OR. International Society for Technology in Education.

Section 4: Academics at FFCA

Full-time FFCA Student:

The full-time high school student will have a specific course load:

1. All grade 9 and 10 students must be enrolled in a full course load at FFCA. Spares are not permitted for grade 9 or 10 students.
2. All grade 11–students must be enrolled in a minimum of seven blocks of in-person classes at FFCA during the four block school day. Students are permitted one spare in the year.
3. All grade 12 students must be enrolled in a minimum of seven blocks of in-person classes at FFCA during the four block school day. Students are permitted one spare in the year; however, a second spare will be considered by administration, upon request, in the following circumstances:
    1. Enrollment in Block 5 credited courses
    2. Student is assured of having all required credits by semester 2 of their grade 12 year
    3. Any other special circumstances as approved by administration.

Program and Course Descriptions

The high school program at FFCA meets, and exceeds, the graduation requirements as outlined by the Province of Alberta. A senior high school diploma does not guarantee admission to ANY post-secondary institution. The requirements for a high school diploma are not always the same as the admission requirements to post-secondary institutions. For more information on our academic program, graduation requirements, and descriptions of courses offered, please refer to the ***FFCA High School Planning Guide*** available on our website at http://campus.ffca-calgary.com/hsc/default.aspx or from the academic guidance counsellor.

High School Planning Guide

A comprehensive course planning guide is available on the high school websites. This document is an essential tool for program planning and course selections as it outlines all of the programs at FFCA High School.

Post-secondary Preparation

FFCA offers an academic program designed to provide all students with the maximum number of post-secondary options. We recognize that university is only one of many legitimate options for students following high school. We also offer some program alternatives that allow students to be more successful in high school while meeting the entrance requirements of most Canadian colleges. Students considering post-secondary opportunities in technical (trades), second language, or arts programs should check the entrance requirements of these programs before choosing their high school program.

Program Sequences and Prerequisites

In Alberta, gr. 10-12 courses are assigned credits based on the number of instructional hours. One credit is awarded per 25 hours of instruction. Courses are usually 3 or 5 credits in value, with most being 5. CTS modules are all 1 credit each.

Courses numbered in the teens are grade ten level courses, courses numbered in the 20s are grade eleven level courses and courses numbered in the 30s are grade twelve level courses. Typically, all courses must be taken in sequence, but students can take courses in an accelerated fashion, if scheduling permits (e.g. 20-level courses in grade ten or 30-level course in grade eleven). FFCA's core high school program is structured in such a way that this rarely occurs. Previous student performance has shown that students writing diploma exams do significantly better in grade 12 than in grade 11.

Alberta Education requires a student mark of 50% or higher in a course to earn credits in a course. *In some cases, FFCA requires a significantly higher mark to be eligible to take the next course in the sequence. These prerequisites are given in the descriptions of each course.* This is extremely important. We strongly believe that student success in any course can be predicted based upon their level of achievement on the prerequisite course. Please consider this when registering and selecting courses.

FFCA offers a combination of full-year and semester (half-year) courses. We attempt to provide a full academic program that provides the greatest opportunity to be successful in a given course and avoids long gaps between sequential courses whenever possible.

Leadership with Character Program

The school, as an extension of society, has a responsibility to arm our students with the skills and knowledge to prepare them for successful lives and careers as productive members of the local, national, and global community. To this end, the FFCA High School program attempts to provide students with a wide variety of opportunities to develop lifelong habits for learning and living. In addition to the rigorous academic program designed to prepare students for university, FFCA also desires to prepare students for life through its leadership program. Our "Leadership with Character" program focuses on developing effective independent and interdependent people with a strong sense of character and purpose.

This program seeks to extend students' sense of community and the positive influence they can have on it. It helps students learn about themselves, their capabilities, and growth. They are encouraged to grow in areas of personal effectiveness such as value clarification, habit forming, goal setting, accelerated learning, creative thinking, decision making, time management, and life balance. They are also exposed to growth opportunities in areas of team effectiveness such as communication, presentation, assertiveness, negotiation, and mediation. They work to develop leadership skills including visioning, planning, delegation, and project management.

The provision of leadership and character development for all students creates a learning community in which students assume a higher level of respect and responsibility for both themselves and others. It will enable FFCA students to become more aware of their own abilities, influences, and unique talents, enhance their self-confidence and broaden their social perspective. Students will be provided opportunities to develop their leadership capacity and demonstrate commitment to modelling exemplary character, creating a sense of empowerment, and promoting a school community that is characterized by quality relationships and organizational pride.

Work Experience: Teaching Assistants

FFCA offers a limited number of teaching assistant positions each semester that qualify for Work Experience credits. These positions demand that students have demonstrated a high level of passion and skill in the selected area as well as strong character and leadership skills. These positions are advertised at the beginning of each semester, are offered on a competitive basis, and all applications are made through the Academic Guidance Counsellor.

Timetables

Timetables for all students are to be accessed on Edsby or PowerSchool.

Registration and Course Selection
FFCA has a wait list managed by the FFCA Central Office (403-520-3206). The registration process begins in the spring of each year. The following dates are approximate:

- Student Handbook revisions published to website ..... January
- Grade 8 parent orientation & registration information session ..... February
- Grade 8 student orientation & electives selection ..... February
- Online re-registration begins for gr. 8-11 students .....February
- Grade 9-11 online course selection .....March/April
- Registration consultations with gr. 9-11 students .....March
- Re-registration deadline..... March
  (Online registration must be complete including fee payment)
- New student registration (from wait list) begins.....April

Course Withdrawal
FFCA strives to help our students develop perseverance. As such, withdrawal from courses is done under exceptional circumstances as a last resort. Please refer to our Student Program Planning & Changes document for details.

Course Changes
All requests for course changes must be made using the Course Change Request Form available on our website at the start of each semester. All changes are subject to administrative approval.

Homework
FFCA's demanding academic programs require regular homework by students. Regular reading is also expected of students in addition to assigned homework. Students are expected to complete all homework on time and to the best of their ability. Students in grade 9 and 10 should expect 20-30 minutes of homework and students in grades 11 and 12 should expect 30-40 minutes of homework on average per day of instruction. These amounts are for an average student. Proactive management of larger assignments and projects will help to minimize significant loads above these levels. Extra homework will not be assigned over holidays or long weekends.

Assessment and Reporting

At FFCA, communicating student learning is ongoing and embodies comprehensive reporting. Some examples of how learning is communicated may include, but are not restricted to:

- Report Cards
- Anecdotal comments
- Qualitative feedback
- Learning conferences
- Character Reporting
- ESL Benchmarks

Underlying all these reporting mechanisms is a foundation of quality assessment practices that are designed to inform instruction and improve student learning. Assessment, as the basis for communicating individual student achievement, is intended to reduce confusion and support the professional responsibilities of teachers to provide clear communication in describing student progress.

Student Evaluation and Reporting

At the beginning of each course, students will be provided with a course outline that includes assessment policies and procedures. Students will be evaluated according to these policies and the FFCA Assessment and Reporting Framework. Students should discuss their progress with their teachers early and regularly throughout the year to maintain an understanding of their marks and achievement. Progress reports are distributed during each semester in October and in May. Learning Conferences are held in November, February, and April. Final report cards for each semester's work are issued in February and June.

Student Reporting and Term Averages

The school year is divided into two academic semesters. Most courses run for a single semester, but some, including ELA, Social Studies, Math, Science, Physical Education, and Leadership 9 run all year long. For semester and year-end averages, all course weightings are based on their credit value or equivalent time value.

Report Cards

Report cards are sent home electronically twice during each semester. These are provided mid-way through the semester (October and April) and at the end of each semester (February and June). These report cards are sent home via parent's emails.

E-reporting

The high school is e-reporting student's progress through Power School Parent Portal. The frequency of mark updates is indicated in each course outline by the teacher.

Learning Conferences

Learning Conferences are held each semester. All parents are expected to attend at least one Learning Conference during the school year. All students are expected to attend conferences with their parents. For these dates, please see the school calendar.

Class Mark Appeal Process

- A student should speak directly to the teacher as soon as possible after receiving the mark.
- Appeals for the class marks must be made within three school days to the teacher.
- If the appeal has not been resolved by conversation between the student and teacher, parents or guardians are invited to speak with the teacher.
- If the student, parents, and teacher cannot agree, a review of the decision may be requested of the Principal.
- The Principal Educator will decide the process.

Final Marks Appeal Process

Final marks appeals must be done within 24 hours of report cards released at the end of each semester. For Diploma Examinations, the appeal is of the school mark (worth 70%) and occurs before the end of classes each semester.

Provincial Achievement Tests (Gr. 9)

Grade 9 students participate in the Provincial Achievement Testing (PAT) program at the end of specific semester courses in each May and June. The testing dates are posted on the Alberta Education website at *www.education.gov.ab.ca*.

Provincial Diploma Examinations

Students write Alberta Diploma examinations at the end of specific 30-level courses in January and June. The testing dates are posted on the Alberta Learning website at: http://mypass.alberta.ca

School Final Examinations

School scheduled final exams for grade 9-12 students will be written during the last two weeks of January and June.

Summer School

FFCA encourages completion of all courses to be in person.

FFCA does not offer a summer school program or online courses. Some students elect to complete some of their courses in programs elsewhere. FFCA recommends that summer school or online courses be used ONLY for upgrading courses previously taken. These courses are typically offered over 80 hours compared to the standard 125 which limits their ability to adequately prepare students for subsequent coursework. Courses taken at other schools may impact the attainment of the major FFCA awards and scholarships. As well, CALM 20 must be taken at FFCA as it is integrated with our Leadership 15 program and includes elements of our post-secondary and career planning program.

Students intending on taking summer school or online courses to **upgrade prerequisites** should let the Academic Guidance Counselor know to increase the probability that there will be space in their desired course(s) after the prerequisite performance is met. Proof of completion of the course must be submitted to Alberta Learning prior to a course change request being met.

Online Courses

FFCA strongly discourages students from taking an online course for which they are already registered with FFCA. If done, then it should be to supplement and enhance the in-class learning. Students will be expected to attend the course with us, and this may impact their online course registration.

Section 5: Co-Curricular Programming

Athletics

FFCA High School offers co-curricular activities in a number of areas. Phoenix athletes have competed interscholastically in the sports of golf, cross-country running, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, badminton, soccer, rugby, and track & field.

Mascot

The mascot for each high school campus will be the Phoenix with a specific colour identifier as follows:

1. North High School campus – Phoenix Green
2. South High School campus – Phoenix Black

Performing Arts

Phoenix performing artists can participate in our choir, competitive one-act drama troupe, and student musical theatre performances.

Student Union

The student union is the part-elected, part-appointed student government that provides student leadership relating to school programs, academic development, character and leadership development, and social events.

Clubs

FFCA provides several club opportunities. These clubs typically run at lunch and are based on student and staff interests. Students with club ideas are encouraged to connect with staff about providing new options.

Section 6: Celebration of Student Success

Graduation Ceremony and Banquet

1. Ceremony Participation
    a. An FFCA commencement ceremony for graduating grade 12 students from both north and south campuses will take place in May or June. Campuses may elect to hold a combined ceremony, if desired.
        i. All grade 12 students may participate in the ceremony as long as they are in a position to meet all provincial & FFCA programs requirements at the time of the ceremonies.
        ii. Exceptions to these requirements where circumstances warrant may be granted with the approval of the Principal Educator or designate.
2. Valedictorian Selection
    a. A Valedictorian will be selected at each high school campus by a committee of peers, teachers and administration from all applicants. Applicants must have a minimum of an 80% average at the time of selection, satisfactory attendance and behavioural record, as determined by the campus administration. Specific criteria and application process will be available on the campus website. To determine the academic average of all valedictorian candidates:
        i. Qualifying average will be credit-weighted using final marks from all completed grade 12 courses and interim marks (term 3) for all courses in-progress at the time of application.
        ii. Qualifying average will only include course marks achieved through courses taken at FFCA and must include:
            1. All Leadership with Character 35 courses (CTS modules)
            2. Physical Education 30
            3. At least one of English Language Arts 30-1 or Social Studies 30-1
            4. At least two of Mathematics 30-1, Science 30, Biology 30, Chemistry 30, or Physics 30 courses at the relevant grade level
            5. A minimum of 30-credits at the 30-level
            6. Qualifying course marks in diploma courses will be the FFCA school-assigned marks only (not the combined mark for diploma courses)
            7. Exceptions to these requirements where circumstances warrant may be granted with the approval of the Principal Educator or designate.

    b. Banquet Speakers and Other Graduation Leadership Roles
        1. All graduation leadership roles other than the valedictorians (banquet MC, toasts, class historians, etc.) are selected by class election vote from those applicants who are eligible.
        2. Eligible students must have satisfactory academic standing, attendance record, and behavioural record as determined by the campus administration.

Night of the Phoenix

FFCA hosts an annual *'Night of the Phoenix'* awards night which celebrates success and achievement in Academics, Arts, Athletics, and Character & Leadership in October of the following school year.

Awards

The awards and their qualifying criteria (Appendix A) will be consistent across all high school campuses. These may include, but are not limited to:

i. Subject proficiency awards
ii. Improvement awards
iii. Character awards
iv. School Service awards
v. Leadership awards

FFCA Scholarships

FFCA High School scholarships are offered to graduating students to:

-Recognize and reward excellence in the areas established by the criteria designated by each scholarship.

-Develop appreciation of, and commitment to, all the various areas of programming and character development that are promoted by the school.

-Value the pursuit of post-secondary education.

These scholarships are sponsored by the School Councils and School Societies of various FFCA campuses. The list of all scholarships is published on the High School website at the beginning of the second semester.

Alexander Rutherford Scholarships

Alexander Rutherford Scholarships are available to all graduating students in Alberta entering a post-secondary institution. Students are eligible to earn scholarship money in Grade 10, Grade 11 and Grade 12 provided they meet the eligibility criteria. Application for the Alexander Rutherford Scholarship is done by the student once all Grade 12 courses are completed, and final grades are reported. The details of the scholarship can be found on the Alberta Student Aid website (https://studentaid.alberta.ca/). Students may contact the Academic Guidance Counsellor if they have any questions.

Other Scholarships

There are numerous other external scholarships and bursaries available for high school students. Students are encouraged to investigate the scholarships and awards available at the specific post-secondary institutions they are considering, as well as scholarships available on sites such as www.studentawards.com or www.scholarshipscanada.com. The academic guidance counsellor will post these on Edsby.

Visual and Performing Arts Certificate

This certificate recognizes graduating students who have demonstrated outstanding commitment and performance in the visual and performing arts while at FFCA High School.

Students are required to:

1) complete a minimum of 30 credits with an average of 75% or above from Art 10-20-30, Choral Music 10-20-30, Drama 10-20-30, Musical Theatre 10-20-30, Technical Theatre 10-20-30, Advanced Acting 10-20-30, Design Studies 15-25-35
2) complete a minimum of 20 hours of supervised volunteering in any visual and performing arts-related area
3) present a portfolio or performance which displays satisfactory skill in at least one of the core visual and performing arts areas. More information is available through the school office.

Athletic Performance Awards

FFCA hosts an annual "Athletics Awards Ceremony" which celebrates success and achievement in our competitive athletics program Fine Arts in the spring of the current school year.

Fine Arts Performance Awards

FFCA hosts an annual 'Fine Arts Awards Gala' which celebrates success and achievement in Fine Arts in the spring of the current school year.

Appendix A: Night of the Phoenix Awards

Academic Achievement Awards-Core Courses

Highest Academic Achievement in English Language Arts (9, 10-1, 10-2, 20-1, 20-1, 30-1, 30-2)
Improvement in the Study of English (grades 9-12-not by course, one per grade)
Highest Academic Achievement in Mathematics (9, 10C, 15, 20-1, 20-2, 30-1, 30-2, 31)
Improvement in the Study of Mathematics (grades 9-12-not by course, one per grade)
Highest Academic Achievement in Sciences (9, 10, Biology 20, Chemistry 20, Science 20, Physics 20, Biology 30, Chemistry 30, Science 30, Physics 30)
Improvement in the Study of Sciences (grades 9-12-not by course, one per grade)
Highest Academic Achievement in Social Studies (9, 10-1, 10-2, 20-1, 20-2, 30-1, 30-2)
Improvement in the Study of Social Studies (grades 9-12-not by course, one per

Achievement Awards-Elective Courses

Highest Achievement in Physical Education (9, 10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Leadership (9, 10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in CALM 20
Highest Achievement in Advanced Acting (10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Art (9, 10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Business Education (10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Design Studies (9, 10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Drama (9, 10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Legal Forensics 9
Highest Achievement in New Media (9, 10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Outdoor Education (9, 10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Psychology 20
Highest Achievement in Robotics (9, 10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in Sociology 20/30
Highest Achievement in Technical Theatre (10, 20, 30)
Highest Achievement in World Religions 20/30
Highest Achievement in Sports Performance (1, 2, 3)
Highest Achievement in Film and Media Studies (9, 10, 20, 30)

Character Awards

Outstanding Parental Leadership
Outstanding Parental Service
Outstanding Alumni Leadership
Outstanding Alumni Service
Outstanding School Service (grades 9-11 Grade 12 is a scholarship)
Dedication and Growth Mindset Award (grades 9-11 Grade 12 is a scholarship)
Outstanding Character (grades 9-11 Grade 12 is a scholarship)
Outstanding Leadership (grades 9-11 Grade 12 is a scholarship)

Overall Academic Averages Awards

Governor General's Medal