



CENTER ACADEMY – St. Johns Bluff

2026-2027 STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

We are pleased to have you as a member of our Center Academy family! This handbook informs students and parents about the programs, policies, and procedures at Center Academy. While this handbook has been carefully prepared to provide you with the basic guidelines of your school, it is not possible to provide all the information that exists, so please contact the school office with any questions or concerns.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of Center Academy is to provide students with a learning environment that facilitates the development of self-confidence, motivation, and academic skills, and gives students the opportunity to achieve success in life. To accomplish this mission, Center Academy is guided by the following principles and goals:

1. Center Academy will improve its students' self-esteem, self-concept, and self-confidence.
2. Center Academy will improve student motivation levels and inspire students to give their best efforts in all tasks they undertake.
3. Center Academy will provide a "third place" for the student. A place beyond both home and school, it will provide a community of support for the young person. This community relationship will promote student, parent, and staff cohesiveness.
4. Center Academy will teach the basic skills of reading, spelling, and mathematics and assist students to work up to their full potential.
5. Center Academy will remediate specific learning disabilities and other neuropsychological weaknesses and at the same time teach compensatory strategies so that students can be successful as adults.
6. Center Academy will develop staff loyalty by ensuring that all staff members, part-time and full-time, understand the significance of their work and share the goals and values of the Company.
7. Protect its unique values and share these values with students and parents.

Center Academy believes that students need to be provided with a consistent behavior management system so that maximum time can be spent on time-on-task and learning. Inappropriate behaviors that interfere with the learning process can be reduced and extinguished through consistent, best-practice behavior management techniques. Behavior management based on a positive reward system will be in place in all classrooms.

This Code of Student Conduct sets forth the expectations for student behavior and the shar

OUR EXPECTATIONS:

For effective instruction to occur, there must be cooperation between students, parents, and school. This relationship may be described as follows:

Parents who:

- keep in regular communication with the school concerning their child's progress and conduct.
- ensure that their child attends daily and promptly reports and explains an absence or tardiness to school.
- provide their child with resources needed to complete class work.
- assist their child in being healthy, neat, and clean.
- bring to the attention of the Director any problem or condition which affects their child or other children in the school.
- discuss report cards and work assignments with their child.
- maintain up to date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers at the school, including doctor and hospital preferences, and report any changes in medication.
- fully cooperate with the school to maintain a safe, drug-free learning environment.

Students who:

- attend all classes daily and are punctual.
- are prepared with appropriate working materials.
- are respectful to all individuals and property.
- refrain from profane or inflammatory statements or words.
- conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner.
- are clean and neat.
- are responsible for their own work.
- abide by the rules and regulations of the school and each classroom teacher.

Schools that:

- maintain an atmosphere conducive to good behavior.
- exhibit an attitude of respect for students.
- plan a flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all students.
- promote effective training or discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students.
- develop a good working relationship between staff and students.
- encourage parents to communicate regularly with the school.
- encourage parental participation in school affairs.
- maintain a safe, drug free learning environment.

CIVILITY POLICY

In order to provide a safe, caring, and orderly environment, Center Academy expects civility from ALL who engage in school activities. Mutual respect and common courtesy are essential qualities that all need to demonstrate in promoting an educational environment free from disruptions, harassment, bullying, and aggressive actions.

A positive and constructive working relationship between the school and parents/guardians is essential. If the behavior, communication or interactions of parents/guardians or their representatives or other family members on or off campus is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence or serious disagreement with the school's policies, methods of instruction or discipline, or otherwise interferes with the school's safety procedures, responsibilities, or educational program, the school reserves the right to dismiss the family from the Center Academy community. In

addition, the school reserves the right to place restrictions on parent/guardian/family member's involvement or activity at school, on school property, or at school-related events if the individual engages in behavior or has a status (such as criminal conviction) that would reasonably suggest that such restrictions are appropriate. There will be NO refund of tuition where such forced withdrawal occurs, and any unpaid balance is payable in full according to the terms of this contract. Based on the above policy, the school also reserves the right to withdraw an offer of enrollment or reenrollment at any time, and to nullify an executed enrollment contract.

SPECIFIC GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Each classroom teacher will attempt to deal with general classroom disruption by taking in-class disciplinary action. Only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective, or the disruption is sufficiently severe, should the student be referred to the Director. In dealing with the following violations of the Conduct Code, the Director shall hear the students' explanation, and consult further with the teacher, if necessary, before determining disciplinary action. If the immediate suspension of a student is necessary due to a serious breach of conduct, the necessary notice and conference will follow as soon as practical.

The following categories of misconduct are violations of Center Academy policy and are subject to disciplinary action or dismissal from the school. These categories are not all inclusive.

- ❖ Violent acts or threats of violent acts
- ❖ Disruption in any way of school procedures
- ❖ Using loud, offensive language or profanity
- ❖ Intimidating, harassing, bullying, and inappropriate display of temper
- ❖ Threatening, abusive, or obscene telephone, written or electronic communications
- ❖ Defiance or an insubordinate attitude toward any school employee
- ❖ Theft, vandalism, or destruction of property
- ❖ Possession or use of any drugs, tobacco, or alcohol
- ❖ Obscene or sexually inappropriate acts or harassment towards any student or staff
- ❖ Possession of a weapon

Progressive Disciplinary Actions for Inappropriate Behavior

- ❖ Time out
- ❖ Silent lunch
- ❖ Isolated lunch
- ❖ Loss of activity period
- ❖ In-school suspension
- ❖ Out of school suspension
- ❖ Behavior contract
- ❖ Dismissal

SEXUAL AND VERBAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Center Academy is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. Accordingly, the school prohibits such conduct by its students on school premises and off school premises at school-sponsored activities, including transportation to and from such activities.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. physical contacts of a sexual nature including, but not limited to; touching, patting, grabbing, poking, or brushing up against another individual;
2. sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes, comments, or propositions;
3. display of sexually oriented pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, or publications; and
4. any other conduct that is inappropriate.

Verbal harassment consists of unwelcome verbal communication that includes, but not limited to the following:

1. Name-calling
2. Humiliation
3. Offensive jokes
4. Yelling and screaming
5. Threats
6. Slurs

Any student who believes that he or she has been the subject of sexual or verbal harassment should immediately report the incident to the administration.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The use or possession of the following items are not allowed on school grounds or while attending/ participating in any school sponsored activity. Items include e-hookah, e-cigarette or any type of vapor pipe, with or without nicotine, illegal drugs or illegal mood-altering substances, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, tobacco products, or the abuse of prescription/over the counter drugs. Violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action, which may include expulsion from the school, even for a first offense.

The school is committed to a drug-free environment. This commitment may, under some circumstances, prompt a need for testing of students for evidence of substance abuse. Refusal to participate in such a test may result in expulsion from the school. The school may contact the local authorities at the school's discretion.

Any student selling drugs or other inappropriate items on school property or at school functions may be immediately expelled.

Smoking/Vaping Policy

Center Academy has a zero-tolerance policy regarding smoking/vaping. If a student is seen smoking/vaping on school property or during a school sponsored event, they will be suspended for a minimum of three days and an administrative meeting with a parent and Director will be required.

BULLYING POLICY

The school is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, and respectful learning environment for all its students. As such, bullying is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Therefore, this policy prohibits any unwelcome verbal or written conduct, or gestures directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

1. physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student.
2. damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property.
3. placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm.
4. placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
5. creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

Definition of Bullying

May involve but is not limited to teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyber-bullying or other verbal or written conduct. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or website postings (including blogs and social network sites). This definition includes students who either directly engage in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

Reporting Complaints

Each student and parent have a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the Director.

Disciplinary Action

Any student found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the Director's discretion.

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitute a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate disciplinary action.

STATE OF FLORIDA REQUIRED BATHROOM POLICIES

Students may not willfully enter a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex (as defined in Florida Statue 553.865) and must depart when asked to do so by school staff.

Exceptions:

A student may only enter a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex under the following circumstances:

- (a) For the purpose of rendering of emergency medical assistance or to intervene in any other emergency situation where the health or safety of another person is at risk;
- (b) If the appropriate designated restroom or changing facility is out of order or under repair and the restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex contains no person of the opposite sex

DRESS CODE (All Students)

A higher standard of dress has been proven to encourage greater respect for oneself and others and results in a higher standard of behavior. These dress code guidelines indicate the appropriate school dress for normal school days. The administration reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes during the year. Students are expected to follow the letter and the spirit of these guidelines. The guidelines are:

SHIRT: Navy, Royal Blue, Red, or White polo with Center Academy logo

These may be purchased through [Jacksonville - St. Johns Bluff centeracademy.com](http://Jacksonville-St.JohnsBluffcenteracademy.com)

PANTS: Navy blue or khaki uniform style pants

SHORTS/SKIRTS/CAPRIS: Navy blue or khaki uniform style shorts

BELTS: Black, brown, or navy blue

SHOES: Sneakers/athletic or walking shoes only

Clothing Standards

- ❖ All clothing must be in clean serviceable condition, no holes, rips, or tears.
- ❖ Sandals, flip flops, bedroom slippers, crocs, wedges, backless shoes, boots, or soft sole moccasins are not acceptable on campus.
- ❖ All clothing must be to size; not baggy or too tight.
- ❖ Pants, shorts must be of sufficient length to fit (i.e., no sagging pants).
- ❖ No revealing or "skintight" sizes.
- ❖ Walking shorts and skirts / skorts may not be more than three inches above the knee.
- ❖ Cargo style pants and shorts are not permitted.
- ❖ Red, White, Navy or Royal Blue sweatshirts or sweaters with the Center Academy logo may be worn indoors. *These may be purchased through* [Jacksonville - St. Johns Bluff centeracademy.com](http://Jacksonville-St.JohnsBluffcenteracademy.com)
- ❖ Solid colored, long sleeves may be worn under Center Academy shirts.
- ❖ Jackets, hoods, caps, warm-ups, and other outdoor apparel may not be worn indoors.
- ❖ Suspenders are not permitted.
- ❖ No sunglasses indoors.
- ❖ No "costume" items: fishnet stockings, odd/unnatural color wigs, face or body paint, glitter, etc.
- ❖ No wearing of clothing that creates a significant distraction from learning or disruption of class activities.

Jewelry Standards

- ❖ Earrings must be in the ear and not distracting or dangerous for the student.
- ❖ No distracting or offensive permanent or temporary tattoos or other writing on skin or clothing.
- ❖ Jewelry items must not be excessive in length, number, or size.
- ❖ No wallet chains; no chains of any kind larger than 1/8" in diameter.
- ❖ Nose rings must be replaced with a clear stud while at school.

Hair Standards

- ❖ Hair may not be an odd/non-natural color. Hair should not impede vision and not cause a disruption of the educational process. (Must be styled out of eyes).
- ❖ All facial hair must be kept neat and clean.
- ❖ Hair styles deemed extreme by school administration are not acceptable.
- ❖ Satin/Silk hair bonnets are not permitted.

Makeup Standards

- ❖ Only light, subtle, and neutral-colored makeup is permitted.

Book Bags and Purse Standards

Backpacks and book bags are **not** necessary at school. Do not bring backpacks, book bags or nylon drawstring bags to school as there is no storage or locker space for these items. Backpacks/book bags are not allowed in the classrooms. If you must bring a backpack/book bag to school, it must be approved by the Director and kept in the office area until the student is released from school at the end of the day. Girls may have **SMALL** (no larger than 6" x 8") purses for personal use.

Center Academy reserves the right to search any student backpack/purse and require students to empty pockets for security purposes.

Dress Down/Casual Dress Standards

- ❖ From time to time, Center Academy may establish a special dress up or dress down day which will be clearly outlined and defined by the school director.
- ❖ At the discretion of the school director, there may be occasions when the students may wear jeans with a Center Academy t-shirt.
- ❖ Jeans must be free of any rips, tears or holes. Jeggings or denim leggings are not permitted.

ANY STUDENT WHO DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE DRESS CODE POLICY WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONSEQUENCES:

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|---------------------------------|---|
| 1st Violation | Student informed of inappropriate dress and given the opportunity to change into clothing provided by the school or call parent to bring a change of clothes. This will be documented in Gradelink. |
| 2nd Violation | Parent called and informed of dress code violation. The student will remain in the office until the parent brings appropriate clothing. Student will lose break and this will be documented in Gradelink. |
| 3rd Violation | Parent called and informed of dress code violation. The student will remain in the office until the parent brings appropriate clothing. Student will be required to bring a change of clothing that will be kept in the office for future violations. Student will lose break and this will be documented in Gradelink. |

Excessive dress code violations will require the student to miss break and be put on a behavioral contract.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Arrival/Attendance/Absences

School hours are 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The school year is 176 days for the 2026-2027 school year.

Attendance is taken daily at 8:30 a.m. and reported to the office. Attendance notifications to parents will be sent out after 8:45 a.m. daily.

Parents must notify the school before 9:00 a.m. that their child will be ABSENT. Examples of excused absences include illness, doctor's appointments, and religious holidays. Excessive absences, as well as excessive tardiness, will be reviewed by the director and may impact student's grades, as well as the student not being able to participate in daily break and/or other school activities and field trips.

Any student with more than 10 excused or unexcused absences will be placed on an attendance contract.

Special Exemption

Center Academy may, at its discretion, on a case-by-case basis, allow for extended absences when a student is under the care of a licensed medical provider. The medical provider must provide the school in written form, the medical necessity for the prolonged absence. Center Academy will at its discretion provide ongoing educational support at the home or hospital when the student is absent. Center Academy reserves the right to determine the limits of this exemption. All exemptions must be approved by a member of the management team.

Tardy Policy

We expect punctuality and want to instill the importance of being in school on time every day.

Any student arriving after 8:30 will be considered tardy. If a student arrives after 8:30, a parent/guardian must accompany the student to the school office and sign them into school for the day.

The tardy policy is as follows:

- The family will receive a letter after 5 tardies in one quarter. After the 7th tardy in one quarter, the student will be placed on an attendance contract that may take away club activities and other school privileges deemed appropriate by the Director.

We understand that there are traffic situations which can impact arrival at school on time; we do require a phone call from a parent if there is a valid reason for being late on a particular day to excuse a tardy.

Students may be dropped off at 8:00 am. After drop-off/arrival students must come into the building immediately and cannot leave the property.

School Dismissal

Unless a student is involved in Dual Enrollment or Work Study, dismissal is at 2:30 p.m. If a student needs to leave school early, a parent/guardian must come to the school office and sign the student out of school.

Early pickup from school is discouraged, it may cause a student to miss necessary instruction and needing to makeup classwork. Please plan appointments around the school day so that students remain in class until 2:30 each day.

All students must have a Dismissal/Transportation Procedure form on file with the school office. Any

changes to the Dismissal/Transportation arrangements for a student must be made in advance. Students will not be permitted to make last-minute arrangements at the end of the school day. Please notify the office if your child will be leaving with someone other than who is listed on the transportation form.

Before School/After School Care

At this time, the St Johns Bluff campus, does not offer Before or After Care services for our students.

Communication with/from School

We use a digital messaging system (Gradelink.com) that allows us to send you notifications from the school via text, email, and phone. (Please note the phone number used is not the school phone number). Please note that Gradelink is our primary form of communication with you, and it is important that we have current cell phone numbers and email addresses so that we can contact you in a timely manner.

School Contacts

To email the front office: *infojxhs@centeracademy.com*

To email the director: *catherinetaylor@centeracademy.com*

School Phone Number: (904) 645-5366

The Front Office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are encouraged. An open line of communication to discuss a student's academic progress is important. The director and teachers are available throughout the school year to meet with parents to discuss their individual child. Please contact the front office to schedule an appointment before or after school.

Cell Phone & Smartwatch Policy

Ideally, cell phones and smartwatches should not be brought into the school; they should be left in the car or at home.

If a cell phone must be brought to school, the following procedure will apply:

- When the student arrives at school the phone and/or smartwatch must be turned into a CA staff member. Phones will be returned to the student when they leave the building.
- If a call needs to be made during the day, the school phone should be used.
- If a student's cell phone and or smartwatch is seen or heard at any time during the school day, it will be confiscated.
- The confiscated cell phone and or smartwatch will be held by the director in a secure spot until a parent comes to school to reclaim the phone and/or smartwatch.
- Smartwatches; i.e.: Apple watch, Fitbit are not allowed in the classrooms. They must be turned into a Center Academy staff member for safekeeping and will be returned when the student leaves for the day.

Office/School Phone Usage

School phone usage by students will be limited and under the discretion of the school staff. Students will need permission from school staff to use the phone.

School Property and Equipment

Student carrels should contain an appropriately sized desk and chair as well as appropriate school materials including name, folders, textbooks and materials that are necessary for the school day. Items that are distracting or are not relevant to the learning environment shall be removed. Students may not write or draw on the carrel walls.

Respect of school property and equipment is expected, and discipline measures will be taken if a student willfully destroys property or equipment belonging to Center Academy. Each student will be issued textbooks that will be their responsibility. If the textbook is lost, damaged, or destroyed, the student/parents will be responsible for replacing the textbook.

Laptop Use

Students will use school provided laptops only for educational and/or career development activities. Installing, downloading, or modifying software is prohibited. If a specific program/software is needed for an assignment and is not already downloaded, the student should check with the teacher to determine if the software is necessary. **Students/parents will be held responsible for the cost of the laptop and/or repairs if a student deliberately causes damage to a laptop.**

Student Lunches/Snacks and Water Bottles

Students are expected to bring their own lunch each day. Lunches brought from home should be nutritious, easy to prepare and consume without adult assistance. We ask that food sent from home requires no more than 3 minutes to be reheated/cooked. All lunches must be in a sealed container. If it is not in a lunchbox, please seal it in a plastic bag with your child's name. No loose containers. Please include with daily lunches (as needed): plastic cups, forks, spoons, napkins, paper towels, paper plates.

Students may bring refillable water bottles with lids (straws are not allowed). Students may only have water in the classroom during the school day. Water bottles should not be larger than 30 ounces and have a leakproof lid. **Glass and metal bottles are prohibited.**

Snacks may be brought to school and should be nutritious and eaten during break time. Energy drinks containing high amounts of caffeine, sugar and artificial sweeteners are discouraged and may interfere with student learning.

Students may not share snacks or lunch items, including drinks, with other students.

Medications

Students are not permitted to carry or distribute any prescription or non-prescription drugs or treatments, including Tylenol/Advil, allergy medications or any other over the counter medications on the school grounds or at any school function.

The administering of medicine to a student is a parental responsibility and should be delegated to school staff only under unusual circumstances. Parents should ask their physicians if it is possible to prescribe medication so it can be administered at home. Only, when necessary, Center Academy staff will allow the administration of medication on campus and will following these guidelines:

1. An "Authorization for Medication" form must be completed and submitted by a parent or legal guardian of the student. The exact name of the medication and dosage should be indicated on the form.
2. Medications to be dosed to students must be personally brought in by the parent or legal guardian of the student. Medications must be in the original container and labeled; the student's name and dosage must match. Students may not bring the medication to school alone.
3. If a student must take any medication during the school day, the medication must be kept in the school office, and the student will be called to have it administered at the time designated on the container.
4. If a parent or legal guardian would like to give permission for over-the-counter medications such as Tums, Pepto-Bismol or cough drops to be administered, during the school day, they must complete the permission form that is available in the school office.

Weather Policy

Center Academy will generally follow the weather-related decisions made by each of the individual public-school districts in which their school resides. The decision to close schools for inclement weather and preparations for any storm or aftermath weather conditions from a storm will be directed by your local school district. Our school follows the Duval County Schools. Always monitor local newscasts for information about school closings.

All communication from Center Academy (email and text messages) regarding school closures and reopening will be through Gradelink. A message on the school answering machine will also be recorded to provide you with additional information.

Grading Policy and Grading Scale

- ❖ Most assignments are to be finished and turned in by the end of each school day.
- ❖ Any assignment not turned in the day it is due may need to be taken home for homework and turned in the next day by 8:30 am. Assignments that have not been turned in by 8:30 am the following school day are considered "incomplete" and will be marked as such in the gradebook.
- ❖ Students with educational accommodations will be addressed on an individual basis.

- ❖ Students who have missed days because of illness or excused absence will need to complete missed assignments in a timely manner. For each day of excused absence, the student has one additional day to complete and turn in the missed work. For example, if a student is absent on Monday, they must complete and turn in Monday's assignments by Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m.
- ❖ Tests or exams missed due to unexcused absence will be taken the day the student returns to school.
- ❖ Grading Scale:
 - A = 90-100
 - B= 80-89
 - C= 70-79
 - D= 60-69
 - F= Below 60

Transcripts

Transcripts are available for high school students by contacting the school office. Transcripts are available to families/guardians whose accounts are current.

Non-Custodial Parent/Student Records

Center Academy abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Thus, non-custodial parents will be given access to the academic records and to information regarding the academic progress of their children, unless there is a court order specifically stating that the non-custodial parent is denied access to such information. Please be sure to communicate with the school office or Director about any changes. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known.

Student Drivers:

Prior to being given permission to drive on campus, students must provide a copy of their driver license, current registration for the vehicle, and current automobile insurance. The parents must complete the Driver Permission Form and both student and parent must sign it, agreeing to abide by Center Academy policies for student drivers.

For safety reasons, it is mandatory that students drive responsibly. Students seen driving recklessly on Center Academy property will receive disciplinary action as determined by the Director, and the parents will be notified. Student drivers must park in spots designated by the front office. Smoking in cars is **NOT** permitted on school property.

