

Foundations Family Handbook

2026–2027 Program Year

Welcome to the Family

Foundations is honored to partner with homeschool families by providing students with elite, real-world development. Our signature program builds confidence, capability, and deep social connections through hands-on, specialized instructional sessions.

This handbook serves as our shared partnership roadmap. By enrolling your student, you agree to join us in following these guidelines to keep our instructional community safe, organized, and thriving.

Program Model & Compliance

Foundations operates exclusively as a part-time, specialized homeschool enrichment program for students ages 8+.

- **Program Operational Status:** Foundations operates exclusively as an Open Access homeschool enrichment program. We are not a daycare, licensed childcare facility, or private school. Our program facilitates a multi-disciplinary curriculum structured around independent instructional blocks where families & participants retain open-access freedom.
- **Homeschool Responsibility:** Parents retain ultimate legal custody and supervisory responsibility for their children. You remain fully responsible for your student's legal homeschool compliance, portfolio records, curriculum selections, and annual evaluations, as applicable.
- **The Scheduled Session Window Boundary:** Each registered program day operates within a designated morning block from 9:00 AM to 12:55 PM (a total of 3 hours and 55 minutes). Within this timeframe, the active instructional programming window runs from 9:10 AM to 12:45 PM. Participants may not be on-site outside of the overall 9:00 AM - 12:55 PM session window, as continuous all-day care or extended services are not provided. Foundations operates strictly as an Open Access program and does not provide custodial care or general child care services.

Financial Commitment & Payment Policy

By registering, you are securing your student's dedicated seat for a full 5-month semester track.

- **Financial Commitment & Registration Fees:** By registering, you are securing your student's dedicated seat for a full 5-month semester track. Our staff commitments, facility allocations, and specialized supplies are fully committed for the entire season at the time of your initial enrollment. Therefore, families commit to and are financially responsible for the entire semester registration fee, even if a student withdraws early.
- **Installment Due Dates:** To assist families, Foundations permits this fixed semester registration obligation to be fulfilled via a monthly installment schedule. Installments are due by the last day of the previous month (e.g., February's registration fee installment is due January 31st).
- **The 3-Day SUFS Rule:** State scholarship funding is fully welcomed! If you use Step Up For Students (SUFS) Direct-Pay, you must log into your portal and submit the funds at least 3 business days before our monthly due date. This allows the funding to clear the system on time. We can be found under "Foundations Fine Arts Academy."
- **Scholarship Payment Responsibility:** With prior approval per account, Foundations may allow families with verified 2026–27 scholarship award documentation to defer August and September registration installments through September 30, 2026. Scholarship approval, funding, and payment are controlled by Step Up For Students and are not guaranteed by Foundations. The parent or guardian remains fully responsible for all registration installments and fees if scholarship funds are delayed, unavailable, insufficient, withdrawn, or denied. If the full outstanding balance has not been reserved through EMA or otherwise paid by September 30, 2026, the authorized payment method may be charged, and student attendance may be paused until the account is current.
- **Backup Card Requirement:** Families must keep a valid payment method on file. If SUFS funding is delayed, paused, or rejected by the state, the family remains responsible for the balance, and the card on file will be charged to keep the student's seat active.

Attendance & The Daily Rhythm

Our multi-disciplinary curriculum is engineered as a seamless instructional progression.

- **Roster Continuity:** Regular attendance allows your student to complete large team projects and build lasting friendships. Please send a quick text or email if your student will be absent.
- **Fixed Scheduling:** Missed sessions belong exclusively to that calendar day. To keep our class capacities and instructional resource allocations stable, scheduled sessions cannot be rolled over, refunded, or traded for different days.
- **Arrival & Access Windows:** Please respect our Guides' lesson blocks by utilizing our designated windows. Because Foundations operates strictly as an Open Access community, our staff presence concludes promptly at 12:55 PM, and extended child care or holding services are not provided.

Community Behavior & Culture

Foundations maintains a warm, orderly, and encouraging instructional environment built on respect, personal responsibility, self-control, and consideration for others. We believe students thrive when expectations are clear, good choices are recognized, and inappropriate behavior is addressed consistently.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Treat peers, staff, volunteers, and facility partners with courtesy and respect.
- Follow instructions promptly, especially when health or safety is involved.
- Exercise self-control and avoid interfering with another student's ability to participate.
- Take responsibility for their choices and make reasonable efforts to repair harm they cause.
- Care for shared spaces, equipment, and materials.
- Participate with honesty, effort, and a willingness to improve.

Students are encouraged to think independently, ask thoughtful questions, and express respectful disagreement. They may not ridicule, pressure, shame, label, or target another person for holding different beliefs, values, abilities, or opinions.

- **Family Authority and Program Neutrality:** Parents are the primary authority over their child's beliefs, values, and personal development. Foundations does not use instructional time to promote political parties, candidates, activism, ideological movements, or contemporary social agendas.

- **Curriculum Focus:** Program content will remain focused on the stated educational purpose of each class and will emphasize knowledge, skill, character, creativity, and practical competence. Sensitive political, religious, or social topics that arise unexpectedly may be acknowledged briefly and at an age-appropriate, high level. Staff will not facilitate a broader discussion or offer personal viewpoints. Students will instead be encouraged to speak with their parent or guardian for further guidance.
- **Accountability and Redirection:** Most behavioral concerns will be addressed through clear correction, redirection, a brief break from the activity, and parent communication when appropriate. Students will be given reasonable opportunities to understand the expectation, correct their behavior, and restore trust. Repeated disruption, dishonesty, disrespect, defiance, or refusal to follow safety expectations may result in a parent conference, written behavior expectations, suspension, or termination of enrollment. Foundations may end enrollment when a student's behavior repeatedly or substantially compromises the safety, order, dignity, or learning environment of the group.

Parent and Family Conduct

We welcome respectful questions, concerns, and differences of opinion. Families are expected to communicate directly and civilly with staff and may not confront another student or family regarding a concern.

Harassment, intimidation, abusive language, threats, hostile confrontations, discriminatory conduct, or repeated interference with program operations may result in immediate suspension or termination of the family's registration.

Serious Safety Violations

Physical violence, credible threats, targeted or repeated bullying, intentional property destruction, possession of a weapon, or use of any object to threaten or harm another person may result in immediate removal, suspension, or permanent dismissal. Law enforcement or emergency services may be contacted when warranted. Any financial obligations or refund eligibility following dismissal will be handled according to the enrollment agreement and published payment policies.

Dress Code & Belongings

- **Athletic Clothing:** Growing minds need moving bodies! Students must arrive dressed in comfortable clothing and closed-toe athletic-style shoes that allow them to safely run, jump, and participate in physical activities.
- **Dress Code:** To prevent instructional distractions, costumes, capes, animal ears, tails, masks, cosplay outfits, pajamas, etc., are not permitted during scheduled program sessions.
- **Screen-Free Zone:** Outside of Family-Directed Academics materials during those blocks, all personal electronic devices and cell phones must remain turned off and zipped inside backpacks during scheduled sessions to encourage deep social connection.
- **Labeling:** All personal belongings should be labeled or securely stored in backpacks to prevent any mix-ups.

Health, Safety, & Medical Boundaries

- **Illness Guidelines:** To help protect the health of our entire community, please keep your student home when they may be contagious or are not well enough to participate comfortably. This includes fever, vomiting, diarrhea, a persistent or worsening cough, an unexplained rash, or active sores, blisters, or skin lesions that are draining, cannot be fully covered, or may spread through close contact. Minor cuts and scrapes are not a concern when they are clean, dry, and securely covered. Students must be fever-free for a full 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and must have gone 24 hours without vomiting or diarrhea before returning. Other symptoms should be improving before the student returns. If your student has been diagnosed with a contagious condition, please follow their healthcare provider's return guidance and notify administration before returning so we can take any appropriate precautions.
- **Medication Boundary:** To prevent accidental dosing, our Guides do not hold, manage, or distribute medications. Any long-term daily medications must be administered by a parent prior to arriving for the scheduled session window. Emergency items like EpiPens or inhalers must be clearly labeled and checked in directly with administration for participant-managed access.
- **Medical Emergencies:** If a medical emergency arises, our staff will apply immediate first aid and contact parents immediately. If parents cannot be reached, staff are authorized to contact emergency medical services (911).

Liability, Safety, & Legal Disclosures

- **Belongings Waiver:** We recommend labeling all personal gear. Foundations is not legally or financially responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged personal belongings brought to the facility.
- **Inherent Risks:** Hands-on science experiments, tools, and physical recreation involve normal, inherent risks. By enrolling, families release Foundations, its owners, staff, and facility partners from liability for injuries occurring during standard participation.
- **Emergency Closures:** For severe weather or regional emergencies, we follow the closure decisions of Hillsborough County Public Schools. Sessions cancelled due to county-wide or city-wide closures cannot be rescheduled or refunded.
- **Dispute Resolution:** Any community concerns must first be addressed directly with program leadership through private communication. If a resolution cannot be reached, both parties agree to use formal mediation prior to initiating any legal action.

Final Acknowledgment

By enrolling in or participating in a Foundations program, the registering parent or guardian acknowledges that they have received, read, and agree to follow the policies contained in this Family Handbook. These policies apply throughout the student's enrollment and participation in Foundations programs.