



The Freedom Institute
Christopher Marker, CEO
239-427-1776
Chris.Marker@FreedomInstitute.net
www.freedominstitute.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 8, 2025

Freedom Institute of Naples Welcomes Students Back on August 11

Innovative Programs, Trusted Leadership, and Cutting-Edge Technology Set the Stage for a Bold New School Year

NAPLES, Fla. — The Freedom Institute of Naples is proud to announce the official start of the 2025–2026 school year on Monday, Aug. 11, welcoming back students, families, and staff with renewed energy and a strong commitment to excellence through an innovative, student-centered approach to education.

This year marks a dynamic chapter for the Freedom Institute, led by familiar, trusted educators who have grown into new roles through well-earned promotions.

With the appointment of Christy Vaill as the new principal, the expansion of AI-driven learning tools, and a continued focus on character development and academic rigor, the school is positioned to lead the way in preparing students for the challenges of tomorrow.

“We will take our vision of Economic Freedom through Learning to the next level in our third year,” Freedom Institute CEO Chris Marker said. “We have incredible, driven,

motivated students who will work with us to develop their critical thinking skills, hone their high school experience to target the professions they dream of and go on as patriotic and productive Americans. Our incredible staff will ensure that it happens.”

Supporting that vision is Vaill, whose deep roots in Collier County education and strong leadership help bring the Institute’s mission to life each day.

She has served in education since 2007 as a teacher, instructional coach, media specialist and assistant principal. She holds a master’s degree in education from the University of Florida and an Educational Leadership degree from Florida Gulf Coast University.

“My top priorities for the year are to continue to improve upon the amazing foundation that has been established these last two years,” Vaill said. “Building and strengthening relationships with staff, students, families, community members and all stakeholders is a focus.”

She also likes the positive school culture and wants to continue to expand that with more student and parent events, more community partnerships that lead to internships, jobs, and experiences for Freedom students.

As a founding staff member of the Freedom Institute, she began as a Senior Success Coach in 2023. She’s passionate about fostering strong relationships and a positive school culture where every student feels supported, inspired, and empowered to succeed.

“I love everything about Freedom, and have from day one,” she said. “So, it’s easy to maintain what has already been built, because I’m truly passionate about our program and collaborated with our team to get us to the place we are now.”

In a pioneering move, the Freedom Institute has also appointed Nathan Poteet as the Executive Director of Programs and Artificial Intelligence to lead its AI integration strategy. Students and teachers alike will benefit from personalized learning pathways, intelligent tutoring systems, and advanced digital tools that enhance not replace human instruction.

“Our goals for this year include certifying many of our current students in Artificial Intelligence, while also laying the groundwork to offer certification opportunities to

educators and other external participants in the future,” Poteet said. “We are currently piloting an AI-focused high school program with 10 students, who are receiving their curriculum through a variety of instructional methods. Each course includes embedded AI modules on a weekly basis. We plan to significantly expand all programs in the upcoming year.”

One of the driving forces behind the Freedom Institute’s success is its tailored approach to education. That same approach will be used with the addition of AI.

“As with all aspects of learning at Freedom, students play a central role in shaping their educational experience,” Poteet said. “Our approach is fully student-centered, with each class tailored to meet the unique needs, interests, and goals of every individual learner. We believe that meaningful learning happens when students have a voice in their education, which is why we actively seek and incorporate their feedback on a weekly basis. This ongoing dialogue allows us to adapt our instruction in real time, ensuring that our courses remain relevant, engaging, and aligned with each student’s personal and academic goals.”

The Freedom Institute invites parents, community partners, and members of the media to follow its updates throughout the year as it continues to model what 21st-century education can and should look like.

For more information about the Freedom Institute visit www.freedominstitute.net or call 239-427-1776.

-30-

More about Principal Christy Vaill:

Christy Vaill began her career in education in 2007 and has served the Collier County community in a variety of impactful roles, including classroom teacher, resource teacher, media specialist, instructional coach, and assistant principal. A proud founding staff member of The Freedom Institute of Collier County, she began as a Senior Success Coach in 2023 and transitioned to Principal two years later. Mrs. Vaill holds a Master’s in Education from the University of Florida and a Master’s in Educational Leadership from Florida Gulf Coast University. She is certified in Educational Leadership (K–12), Exceptional Student Education (K–12), Educational Media Specialist (PK–12), and Elementary Education (K–6), with additional endorsements in ESOL and Reading. Dedicated to creating a supportive, high-achieving school culture, Mrs. Vaill believes

that building strong, meaningful relationships is key to student success and is passionate about ensuring every child feels valued, empowered, and inspired to reach their full potential.

About Executive Director of Programs and Artificial Intelligence Nathan Poteet:

Dr. Nathan Poteet is an experienced educator and leader with a Doctorate in Educational Leadership and a passion for transforming learning. With many years in the field of education, he brings both classroom and administrative expertise to the forefront of innovation. Dr. Poteet holds multiple AI certifications, including AI for Education, AI for Business, AI for Marketing, and several Google AI certifications. His deep knowledge of both education and artificial intelligence led to the creation of the Freedom AI program—a powerful solution designed to help educators and homeschool families integrate AI tools to enhance teaching, save time, and personalize learning.

About Freedom Institute of Collier County:

Freedom Institute is a 9th to 12th grade private educational institution serving students across Collier County and beyond. The Institute's high school model uniquely supports homeschool families while offering structured academic programming tailored to meet students' individual learning needs.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

The Freedom Institute
2706 Horseshoe Dr. S. Naples, Florida
239-427-1776