



Essential Eligibility Criteria

Updated 11.20.25

All FBRA applicants and current students must meet the FBRA Essential Eligibility Criteria to attend the school. FBRA recognizes the unique nature of its programming; many of the sites and venues for the activities included in FBRA's programming are challenging, remote, and exposed to nature's elements.

The health and safety of our students and staff are a top priority, along with the educational quality of the program experience for all participants. To achieve essential goals, the individuals at each program must be capable of and committed to learning and using outdoor skills, meeting physical and social challenges, and taking care of themselves and each other. We make reasonable accommodations for students and staff with disabilities.

The Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC) to all FBRA and FBRA-sponsored activities. If a student applicant does not meet specific criteria, FBRA may still be able to accommodate an applicant, but will not do so if it significantly alters the fundamental nature of the program activity, jeopardizes the health and safety of students or staff, or places an undue administrative or financial burden on FBRA. Requests for accommodations must be submitted to FBRA with the application or as soon as a student or staff encounters a change in ability during their time at FBRA. Requests are not guaranteed; FBRA will work with the student, family, and/or staff to determine the feasibility of the request. A final plan for accommodations will be reviewed and approved by FBRA and the student, family, and/or staff.

General EEC for all participants and activities: Participants must be able to...

- Understand verbal and visual instructions individually and in a group setting and follow such instructions whether supervised or not.
- Comprehend hazards and safety concerns when explained and adhere to safety policies and procedures even when staff are not present.
- Identify and recognize hazards posed by the environment (e.g., steep or uneven terrain, moving water, sun, wind, cold, etc.), their own well being (e.g., fatigue, state of mind and other influencers of judgment and decision making), and other participants.
- Effectively communicate to others personal distress, injury or need for assistance, and communicate to others any hazards and dangers that they perceive.
- Stay properly hydrated and nourished, by day or night, and learn skills for self-care, including proper hygiene and use of clothing and equipment.
- Refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, and any misuse of prescription or over the counter drugs. If using prescription drugs, is able to follow correct dosage and appropriate administration.
- Contribute to a safe social and learning environment and maintain appropriate relationships with other group members and instructors, refraining from sexual activity, harassment and bullying, self-harm, and other behavior that disrupts the learning of others or the cohesion of the group.
- Abstain from cell phone use during all FBRA programming (note FBRA staff carries communication devices for emergency situations).
- If diabetic, meet the criteria outlined in the [Diabetes Addendum to the Essential Eligibility Criteria](#).

Outdoor and International Travel Activities EEC: Participants must be able to...

- Live and function in an outdoor camp setting without access to electricity for up to 6 days. Note that no prior camping experience is expected nor necessary. This criterion is meant to address students who have medications or other medical interventions that require access to electricity.
- Travel internationally by air and live and function in a homestay setting for up to 10 days.
- Walk continuously for 1 mile at a moderate pace over uneven terrain unassisted while carrying a small daypack weighing 10-15 pounds.
- Maintain pace with the group during activities involving walking or paddling.



- Not have access to medical care facilities for the duration of a multi-day program.
- Wear all safety equipment as instructed.

Water Activities EEC: Participants must be able to...

- Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water.
- Swim or be comfortable in the water, including fast moving water, while wearing a personal flotation device.
- Independently maintain a seated body position with limited back support while paddling watercraft in turbulent whitewater. Adaptive equipment may be used; if needed this equipment cannot impede nor lessen the effectiveness of safety procedures or equipment. No participant may be belted into a boat or adaptive equipment while on water.
- Be functional in a wet environment; specifically those students who may have assistive devices or technologies that lose functionality when wet or are prohibited from getting wet.
- Get in and out of a boat from shore independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance.
- If in water, independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face-up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket.
- Reenter a boat on water independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance.
- In the event of a capsized, independently get out from under capsized craft, remain face-up in water with personal floatation device, and identify, make progress to and ascend shoreline with or without instruction.

If you have any questions on these Essential Eligibility Criteria or on your/your student's ability to meet one or more criteria please contact FBRA at (828) 348-4320 or via email from our website.