

# 2011-2012 Brighten Academy



## Parent Handbook

This handbook serves as a guide to the procedures and expectations of Brighten Academy. Procedures and policies may change throughout the year. Please contact your child's teacher or administration if you need further information.

## Table of Contents

Mission	3
Core Beliefs	4
Connections Educational Framework	4
Charter Highlights	7
Administration Roles and Responsibilities	9
Emergency Procedures	10
Clinic	11
Medication	11
PTO	12
School Hours	12
Communication	12
School wide Procedures	13
Attendance	14
Make-up work, late assignments	18
Parking	19
Food Services/Lunch	19
Visitors and Volunteers	20
Awards	20
Student Withdrawal	21
Media Center	21
Technology	22
Dress Code	23
Clothes Closet	28
Parent Compact/Volunteer Hours	28
Discipline	31
Electronic Devices	33
Privacy Rights	34
Homework	34
Recess	35
Field Trips	35
Class Parties	36
ASP	37
Lost and Found	37



**“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”  
W. B. Yeats**

*This handbook is issued to provide detailed information to Brighten Academy families. It is a supplement to the Policies and Procedures of Brighten Academy. This handbook is subject to change based on the needs of the school. The administrative staff welcomes your constructive criticism, comments, and suggestions any time to improve the professionalism of our staff and the efficiency of the school. All policies and procedures herein should be followed and will be strictly enforced.*

The Brighten Academy Board, parents, and staff share this belief – education should inspire children to seek answers, to continually question, and to love learning for the sake of acquiring knowledge and for the betterment of self and community. The founders aspired to create a learning environment for the students of Douglas County which supports this belief about the true nature of education.

### **Vision**

Brighten Academy Charter School is a student-centered learning community dedicated to setting high expectations and building positive relationships. The challenge to succeed is set before all members of the school community by fostering a learning community, being enthusiastic, and providing an opportunity for personal achievement.

Brighten Academy is a safe, friendly place that enables the students to explore, discover, and learn. Together we can overcome challenges, take pride in our achievements, strive for excellence, and build strong character.

### **Mission**

The mission of Brighten Academy is to provide a productive learning environment with a highly qualified staff committed to using an innovative, research-based instructional model that produces measured growth in every student every year.

## **Core Beliefs**

After developing this mission, the Founding Board developed a set of core beliefs that, along with the mission, drove the development of the school and will drive all decisions about operation of Brighten Academy. The core beliefs are as follows:

1. All students will learn.
2. All students have developmental differences, as well as varying levels of experiences, knowledge, and ability.
3. High expectations of every child are necessary to help students reach their full potential.
4. Students learn through active exploration and practical application.
5. Students have different learning styles and should be taught using a variety of instructional strategies.
6. Educating a child is a shared responsibility among the school, home, and community.
7. Appropriate behavior is required of all students and members of the learning community to maximize safety and learning.
8. A nurturing and structured learning environment is essential.
9. Teacher planning, collaboration, and professional development are vital for improving student achievement.
10. The school must cultivate a strong sense of responsibility to self, family, and community.
11. Instructional decisions will be made based on the needs of the students.
12. The school will function as a business and practice fiscal responsibility.

**The object of teaching a child is to enable him  
to get along without a teacher.  
Elbert Hubbard**

Educating a child is more than just providing facts and increasing skill competency. It is development of the whole child. Development of the whole child includes not only cognitive development, but also social/emotional development, character development, and life-long skill competencies that are transferable to any situation.

## **Connections Educational Framework**

Connections is an educational framework that meets the criterion for a comprehensive school reform program. The Connections framework includes the following components:

1. Employ proven methods and strategies based on scientific research
2. Integrate a comprehensive design with aligned components
3. Provide ongoing, high-quality professional development
4. Is supported within the school by teachers, administration, and staff
5. Provide meaningful parent and community involvement in planning, implementing, and evaluating school improvement activities
6. Use high quality external support from an external partner

7. Identify resources to support and sustain the school's comprehensive reform effort
8. Demonstrate strong evidence that academic achievement improves
9. This model has been developed to not only meet the above criteria, but also to align with Brighten Academy's mission and core beliefs. In addition, it is also complementary to some of the approaches being implemented in the Douglas County School System, including the Learning Focused Schools model and the development of Learning Communities.

Brighten Academy will employ an integrated curriculum. The main components of Connections are "The Seven C's": character, commitment, critical thinking, creativity, curiosity, community, and culture.

### **The Seven C's**

#### **Character**

- Shared values
- Empathy
- Honesty
- Trustworthiness
- Caring
- Compassion
- Generosity
- Punctuality
- Self discipline
- Perseverance
- Friendship
- Tolerance
- Fairness

#### **Community**

- Morning assembly – discuss character traits, thought for the day
- Service learning projects – classroom, school wide, community
- Role models from real life, history, literature
- Peer and adult mentoring
- Students aid in daily school upkeep and maintenance (Japanese model)
- Teachers model desired character traits
- Classroom meetings – class discussions, goal setting, and problem solving

#### **Commitment**

- Focus on personal responsibility for learning – (high expectations, goal setting, Individual Learning Plans)
- Increase motivation through engaging learning opportunities
- Learning from failure and the value of perseverance

- Commitment to the task at hand
- Development of concept of personal best
- Safe environment that tolerates mistakes and sees errors as a chance for growth
- Committed staff
- Do what you love, love what you do

### **Critical Thinking**

- Cultivation of higher order thinking skills (application, analysis, evaluation, synthesis)
- Metacognition
- Development of the attributes of a critical thinker:
- Ask pertinent questions
- Assess statements and arguments
- Is able to admit a lack of understanding or information
- Has a sense of curiosity
- Is interested in finding new solutions
- Is able to clearly define a set of criteria for analyzing ideas
- Is willing to examine beliefs, assumptions, and opinions and weigh them against facts
- Listen carefully to others and give feedback
- Sees that critical thinking is a lifelong process of self-assessment
- Suspend judgment until all facts have been gathered and considered
- Look for evidence to support assumption and beliefs
- Is able to adjust opinions when new facts are found
- Look for proof
- Examine problems closely
- Is able to reject information that is incorrect or irrelevant

### **Creativity**

- Teach and reinforce different forms of creativity (fluency, flexibility, elaboration, originality)
- Encourage development of personal expression
- Encourage “thinking outside the box”
- Acceptance and development of multiple intelligences
- Linking the arts with instructional topics
- Creating effective and engaging lessons that inspire creativity
- Role models of creative thinkers from real life, history, literature
- Appreciation of the playful, accepting atmosphere in which creativity flourishes

### **Curiosity**

- Nurture children’s natural curiosity
- Develop inquiring and inquisitive mindsets
- Teach students how to ask important questions
- Refrain from giving answers to problems too readily
- Cultivate a classroom atmosphere that rewards hypothesizing, questioning, and wondering

- Inquiry-based teaching
- Allow students to have more choice in projects

**Community**

- Develop awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship
- Teach children to become agents of change in the community
- Establish natural leadership through service learning projects
- Increase school – community interaction
- Professional learning community focus
- Clear lines of communication established within the community via:
  - ✓ website
  - ✓ school and classroom newsletters
  - ✓ parent/teacher conferences
  - ✓ Board meetings
  - ✓ PTA meetings
  - ✓ local newspapers

**Culture**

- Inclusion
- Diversity
- Orderly, safe, supportive environment
- Students have a sense of belonging and ownership for their school and for their education
- Cultural literacy (that common body of knowledge everyone must have to be culturally literate in our society)
- Focus on cultural awareness
- Development of unique school culture through traditions

**Brighten Charter Highlights**

Our first priorities are to fulfill the school’s mission and to uphold the school’s core beliefs. All staff members, regardless of position or function, have a duty to fulfill these priorities.

In order to fulfill the mission, the following objectives must be met and reported yearly:

<b>Students will make measured growth each year</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brighten Academy will increase the percent of students who exceed on the CRCT by 2.5%</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A statistical representative group will maintain or exceed scores from prior year as measured by the CRCT</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brighten Academy will exceed state and county scores by 7%</li> </ul>
<b>Brighten will develop students’ ethical character and self monitoring actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brighten Academy will develop an ILP that monitors progress on academic and personal</li> </ul>

goals
<b>Brighten Academy will increase student engagement in the community and parental engagement in the school</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will participate in at least 2 service learning activities annually</li> <li>• Ninety eight percent of our families will meet the expectations set forth in the parent compact</li> </ul>
<b>Brighten Academy will cultivate an operationally effective and efficient learning community that promotes growth of students and staff</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brighten Academy will conduct an operational assessment called GAPSS. A score of 3 (operational) will be earned in 6/7 categories</li> </ul>
<b>Brighten Academy will operate using sound business and instructional practices that will ensure sustainability</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive cash Flow</li> <li>• Enrollment will be at or above 95% of capacity</li> </ul>

For each year of operation:

- Brighten Academy’s overall student assessment results will be compared to similar non-charter schools in the Douglas County School System.
- Individual student results (cohort groups) will be used to compare each student’s progress from year to year, assist in planning instruction, develop and monitor progress on Individual Learning Plans, evaluate teaching practices, curriculum, and educational framework, and ensure that charter goals and responsibilities are met. The cohort group will mirror the current student demographic data (percent gifted, special ed, at risk, etc.). All members of the cohort groups will be selected by a random process to ensure statistical validity.
- Brighten Academy’s overall student assessment results will be compared to similar non-charter schools in the Douglas County School System.
- Individual student results will be used to compare each student’s progress from year to year. This will assist in planning instruction, developing and monitoring progress on Individual Learning Plans, and evaluating teaching practices, curriculum.
- Brighten Academy will work collaboratively with the Douglas County School System to ensure that all state and federal academic mandates are met (e.g., No Child Left Behind).

Assessment will be the cornerstone for planning instruction and for determining success of the instructional programs and methods provided by Brighten Academy. A variety of assessment tools will be utilized:

- Rubrics
- Running Records
- Pre and post tests
- Universal Screenings in reading fluency, reading comprehension, and math computation

- Portfolios
  - Will be structurally defined by grade level curriculum benchmarks
  - Will demonstrate student performance on a broad range of tasks
  - Will be shared with parents during conferences
  - Will be used as an indicator for placement each year
- Yearly Criterion Reference Competency Test (CRCT)
- Other standardized test measures employed by the Douglas County School System (e.g., ITBS)

Reporting of instructional focus and individual progress will take place via a variety of communication vehicles

- Newsletters, parent letters, websites, etc.
- 9 week standards based report cards
- Graded papers with commentary
- Parent conferences
- Behavior logs

Where appropriate, thematic and project based instruction of the Georgia Performance standards shall be implemented. Students will participate in hands-on, engaging lessons.

Projects involving the curriculum and service learning opportunities will be provided at least twice annually.

A variety of extracurricular opportunities will be provided to extend the curriculum and achieve the goal of producing well-rounded, actively engaged students. Examples of these opportunities include, but are not limited to; clubs, national or state organizations, tutoring, or sports.

## **Administrative Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Business/Student Services Manager: Angi Andrews**

The primary function is to provide a safe, secure learning environment by maintaining the facility and campus, maintaining accurate student and staff records, and overseeing the school's fiscal operations. The Office Manager will oversee payroll.

### **Curriculum Director Primary Functions: Lisa McDonald**

The primary function is to implement, monitor, and ensure that Brighten Academy is in compliance with state standards and charter objectives as it relates to the curriculum, discipline, student, and staff needs. The Curriculum Director will also manage the instructional staff by completing observations, walk throughs, employee evaluations, and general HR compliance. The Curriculum Director will work closely with parents, staff, and students to make sure that we successfully meet our school's mission.

### **Assistant Director Primary Functions: Connie Arnold**

The primary function is to support the Curriculum Director and Business Manager in meeting the school's goals. The Administrative Assistant is a member of the administrative team. The Administrative Assistant will act on behalf of the Curriculum Director if this person is not available.

### **Instructional Aide Primary Functions: Toni Aybar**

The primary function of the instructional aide is to support the Curriculum Director and other administrators by monitoring and tracking student discipline, completing and calendaring SST, providing classroom instruction when asked, gathering and analyzing student data, and assisting in disseminating school wide communication.

### **Receptionist Primary Functions: Darlene Wheeler**

The receptionist's primary functions are creating a warm and welcoming environment for all stakeholders, dispensing medication and first aid to all students when needed, assisting in the maintenance of student data pertaining to absences, and supporting the general business and communication needs of the school.

### **Office Clerk Primary Functions:**

The primary function of the office clerk is to assist the Business/Student Services Manager in all functions related to finances, human resources, student enrollment, and facility.

### **Emergency Procedures**

We have developed many procedures to ensure that your child is safe while learning at Brighten Academy. Many of our staff members are CPR and First aid certified, and our Office Manager stays current on all required health training.

We ask each family to periodically update all personal information so that you may be easily reached, if the need arises. In case of an emergency dismissal, we will follow the plan you authorize on our "Emergency Release" form. In case of a medical emergency, we will first notify the appropriate medical authorities and then contact the parent or parties under the emergency contact information provided on your enrollment papers. If the need arises for an emergency evacuation of the school, we will use the Brookmont Clubhouse located nearby.

## **Inclement Weather**

The school will follow the Douglas County School closings. Douglas County School System utilizes WSB TV to announce school closings.

In the event of inclement weather during the school day, the school will utilize the alternate transportation plan provided by parents.

## **Clinic and Accident Reports**

Our clinic is designed to meet the medical needs of minor cuts, aches, and accidents. We are not allowed to apply any topical ointments or administer medication without written permission. Please see our medication policy for more detailed information pertaining to the administration of medication.

If a student is seen in the office, a member of the office staff will assist your child. You will be notified if:

- Your child has a temperature of 99.0 degrees or higher
- Your child has a severe cut/abrasion or head injury
- The problem is persistent or recurrent
- Your child requires immediate medical attention

If a child has the following symptoms, they will be sent home immediately:

- A temperature over 100
- A rash or unknown skin problem
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Green discharge from his/her nose
- Severe pain
- Lice or nits

If your child needs to be dismissed due to illness, we will make every effort to contact the parent/guardian listed as the main contact. If they cannot be reached we will begin calling the emergency contacts listed. All students need to be picked up within one hour of notification so that we can safeguard the health of other students and our staff.

We ask that students be symptom free (fever, rash, diarrhea, vomiting, etc.) for 24 hours before returning to school.

## **Medication**

To ensure all students' health and safety, we require all medication (inhalers, prescription, and nonprescription) to be housed and administered through the front office. In order to administer medication, the office must have a current copy of the medicine authorization form. The office

managers are not authorized to administer non-prescription medicine (Tylenol, cold capsules, cough drops) with a verbal consent. All medication must have:

- The student's name
- Be in the original container
- Dosage clearly marked
- Not expired
- Medicine authorization form signed by parent/guardian

## **Policies**

A full copy of Brighten Academy's policies will be housed in the media center and front office. We will also post policies on our website at [www.brightenacademy.com](http://www.brightenacademy.com). Please also check the Governing Board Agenda's as the agenda states policies that are being reviewed. Board Agenda's are posted on our website and on the bulletin board in the main building (the building which houses the front office).

## **PTO**

PTO is the school's parent, teacher, and student organization which has been organized to support the needs of the school and to facilitate involvement of all parties. All parents are strongly encouraged to join the PTO.

## **School Hours**

School office hours are 7:45-3:30.

Instructional school hours are from 8:15-3:00.

All students (grades K-8) must be in their homeroom by 8:15am.

## **Communication**

Brighten Academy will provide timely, clear, and effective communication to the staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders.

As children advance through the grade levels, the needs and methods for teacher/parent communication change. We utilize a daily notebook system in grades K-2, and an agenda system in grades 3-8. Your child's teacher will communicate the specific requirements for daily communication (signing agenda, behavior notes, etc.)

As a school, we primarily rely on email communication so that we can conserve paper. We also post information on our website at [www.brightenacademy.com](http://www.brightenacademy.com). We also know that paper copies are needed, and we will make every effort to send this information home on Wednesdays. We will distribute and post a school wide newsletter monthly (at least) which will include communication from the Board, updated calendar and other school news. PTO, Board, and CCC Nights (Curriculum, Community, and Conversation) meetings serve as another forum to obtain information regarding curriculum, school procedures, policies, or celebrations of learning achievements.

Graded papers, student work, and other classroom information will be distributed by each classroom teacher. Your child's teacher will communicate what day to expect this information, and they will let you know when (if) signatures are needed on graded work or logs. You can also expect a classroom newsletter that will outline special needs, classroom news, and update you on the curricular focus for the month. Staff members will also be available to parents via phone, email, or in person by appointment from the hours of 8:00-4:00 each weekday.

We also encourage administrative/parent, teacher parent, and student led conferences so that you can help is best meet your child's needs. Our charter and parent compact require that we have a conference at least twice a year for the following purposes:

- Develop goals and objectives for the student
- Discuss academic and behavioral performance, strengths, weaknesses
- Discuss academic and behavior interventions (remediation or enrichment)
- Progress in achieving 7 Cs goals
- Discuss progress on Individual Learning Plan goals
- Review of portfolio contents

### **School wide Procedures and Expectations**

Student safety and supervision are our first priority. Punctuality and adherence to the procedures are expected of all staff members.

#### **Student Arrival**

Students may arrive as early as 7:15 a.m. All students arriving BEFORE 7:40 must enter the building through the exterior cafeteria entrance. We will have a staff member standing at the entrance to make sure your child safely transitions from the car into the building. Please make sure you see a staff member before releasing your child from the car.

We will begin our car rider line at 7:40. Our staff will be available to help your child safely exit the car. We ask that you have your child ready to depart the car quickly. The car rider line ends at 8:15. If you arrive after 8:15, you will need to personally escort your child into the building and sign them in through the front office.

### **Procedure for Monitoring Students during AM Car Duty**

Students will sit with their homerooms. Car rooms/halls should be kept **quiet and calm** to help prepare students for a productive day. Students may read, study, draw, or do some other quiet activity. Book bags are to remain packed. Students may not eat or drink during this time. All students will be in their homerooms and/or report directly to their homeroom by 8:00 am.

### **Dismissal**

As you can imagine, dismissal is a very hectic time for all. We certainly appreciate your patience as we work to make sure each child is safely dismissed each day.

Dismissal will begin PROMPTLY at 3:00 pm. You may utilize the car rider line if you have your Brighten Academy car tag. We will issue this tag at the beginning of the year or upon student enrollment. This tag helps to expedite the dismissal process, and it helps us make sure that the person in the car has the authority to pick up the listed student(s). If your transportation plan requires several adults picking up your child you will need to request additional tags. It takes us about 25-30 minutes on a “typical” day to dismiss students. Students who are still in the building at 3:30 (if the car rider line is over) will be sent to the front office or our After School Program.

If you accumulate more than 3 late pick-ups or have failed to pick up your child by 4:00, we will require you to enroll your child in the ASP program. You will be charged the daily fee and any applicable enrollment fees. If your child is not registered in ASP and they have not been picked up by 3:45 we will begin calling all contacts listed on the emergency card.

### **Student Attendance, Tardies, Check Outs**

Attendance is an essential part of the learning process. It is the responsibility of the parents to encourage participation in school; it is the school’s responsibility to provide the environment for each student to obtain a quality educational opportunity. It is difficult to replace the classroom experience and learning opportunities when they are missed, particularly with our focus on hands-on learning.

If a student is absent from school, then the student may not participate in extracurricular activities after school that day.

### **How are absences calculated?**

Absences are counted when an entire day is missed or when a child attends school for less than 3 hours and fifteen minutes (11:30 pm) on any given student day. It is understood there are circumstances which keep a child out of school.

### **Excused Absences**

The following shall be considered excused absences:

- Absence for a temporary or extended period for illness, injury, or for a physical, mental, or emotional disability.
- Absence for a scheduled or emergency appointment or service that cannot be accommodated outside of school hours.
- Absence due to a family emergency
- Absence for observance of religious holidays or restriction in a child's participation in a school activity for religious reasons or strongly held personal beliefs.
- Absence of an educational nature with advance approval for the administration
- Absence due to a serious illness or death in the family.
- A doctor's excuse is required for absences of 3 or more consecutive days.

The parent/guardian must send in written notification of absence prior to (if appropriate) and/or on the day the child returns to school. Teachers will gather missed work before the absence if three or more days notice is provided. All missed assignments must be completed within a reasonable amount of time, typically 3 days.

### **Unexcused Absences**

- An unexcused absence is defined as an absence that is not covered by one of the reasons or circumstances noted as an excused absence. Some examples include oversleeping, vacation, weddings, etc.
- Unexcused absences may subject the student to appropriate penalties as outlined in Brighten's Code of Conduct.
- Out-of-school suspension days are unexcused absences.
- If a student accumulates more than 5 unexcused absences in a school year, he/she will be withdrawn from the school.

### **School Administration Excused Absences:**

Regular attendance is an indicator of success. We also believe that learning extends beyond the classroom. Administration discourages planned trips/excursions during instructional time, but will review requests for excused absences pertaining to trips with an educational focus.

Requests for an excused educational trip must be made in writing at least 5 days prior to leaving. Be sure to state your child's name, teacher's name, educational focus of the trip, and how you plan to present what was learned to the class.

The following criteria will be used to determine if the trip/activity will be excused.

- 1) Attendance record
- 2) Does the trip relate to the Georgia Performance Standard or provide a unique and enriching life experience?
- 3) Academic standing...is the student up to speed on their work and maintaining their grades?
- 4) Student Discipline record

Administration will not excuse trips/events that extend beyond 5 school days (total).

### **Make-up Work for Absences**

Students are expected to make up class work missed as a result of absence or tardiness within the guidelines set by the teacher.

## **Administration of Absences**

### **Unexcused**

#### **At three unexcused absences:**

The school will attempt to contact the parents by phone and/or email.

#### **At four unexcused absences:**

The school will make two attempts to contact the parent by phone. In addition, a notification will be sent via US Mail to inform the parents of the student's unexcused absences.

#### **At five unexcused absences:**

The school will make two attempts to contact the parent by phone. In addition, a second notification will be sent via Certified Mail and US Mail to inform the parents of the student's unexcused absences. Administration will request a parent meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences and determine a plan to improve attendance.

#### **At six (and beyond) unexcused absences:**

The school will make two attempts to contact the parent by phone. The school will send written notification and will contact the appropriate authorities (DFACS and Truancy Officer). The school will also begin the paperwork required for withdrawal.

### **Excused and Unexcused:**

#### **At eight excused or a combination of excused/unexcused absences:**

The school will make two attempts to contact the parent by phone or email. Parents will also be notified of absences via US mail.

#### **At ten excused or a combination of excused/unexcused absences:**

- The school will make two attempts to contact the parent by phone or email. After 10 absences (excused or unexcused) a doctor's note must be supplied for each additional absence. Failure to provide a doctor's excuse will result in the absence being coded unexcused.
- Once 10 absences are accumulated, a meeting with the parents and the attendance committee will be scheduled.

### **Tardiness**

It is expected that students will arrive at school on time to begin the instructional day. The late arrival of students into the classroom is disruptive to the teacher and to the instructional process. A tardy student misses important morning announcements and the initial directions and instruction for the day.

- Tardiness is the failure of the student to get to class on time and is considered a form of absence. The school day officially begins at 8:15 a.m. It is expected that students will be in their classroom at this time.
- All children who arrive after 8:15 am must be walked into the building and signed in by the parent/guardian at the front office.
- Tardies are recorded as part of a student's attendance record.
- Tardies can be excused or unexcused following the same criteria used for absences
- Students must be present for three hours and fifteen minutes to be counted present. Checking in after 11:30 results in an absence.
- Administration reserves the right to excuse tardies for emergency situations related to the school's ability to efficiently unload cars (accident on campus, heavy rain which reduces number of unloading stations, etc.).
- If your child arrives after 10:00 am, please make sure that he/she has a prepared lunch. It will be too late to order a hot lunch for the day.

### **Early Check-Outs**

Students are expected to complete a full instructional day. We know there are times when early check-outs during a day may be needed.

- The school day ends at 3:00 p.m. Any student leaving before this time will be counted as having an early check-out.
- Early check-outs may be either excused or unexcused, following the same criteria as the attendance policy.
- In order for a doctor's appointment check-out to be excused, a note from the doctor must be returned to school the next day. Without this note, the check-out will be marked as unexcused.
- Students leaving before 3:00 p.m. must be signed out through the office.
- Students will be called to the office for release to a parent/guardian. Parents are asked to wait in the office until the child arrives. This procedure is necessary for the protection of our children.
- Only persons listed on the student's card will be allowed to sign out a student unless we have written permission from the parent. We will ask for identification if we do not know the person who is picking up the child.
- If a child checks out due to an illness, we ask that the child is symptom and fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Checkouts will not be permitted after 2:45 p.m. without prior notification to the school.

### **What action is taken on Tardiness / Early Checkouts?**

The Brighten Academy Board policy allows 15 unexcused tardies and/or early checkouts for the year.

- More than 10 unexcused tardies and/or early check-outs will be considered excessive. This will result in a parent/administrator conference, student detention, and a possible discipline referral.
- Parents will be notified via mail and/or phone once a student reaches ten or more unexcused tardies or early checkouts.

### **Student Make Up Work/ Late Assignments**

Teachers are unable to assess students on skills when there is missing work. Students must turn in makeup work within of the designated time frame, which will be communicated by the teacher.

Outstanding or late assignments will be able to be turned in so that understanding can be assessed. Teachers may apply appropriate consequences for this academic infraction (e.g., work during recess, complete a discipline referral, detention, etc.). Students will be marked down on their 7 Cs under Commitment for missing/late assignments.

In preparation for instruction beyond Brighten, our middle school students will be required to complete all assignments (home and class) within the guidelines provided by the teachers. Failure to complete assignments on time could result in disciplinary action.

## **Visitor Parking**

Visitors may choose to park anywhere on the campus except in any fire lane, red curbs, and the pickup and drop off lanes. Please note that some parking places in the parking lot are reserved parking spaces.

The drive in front of the two main buildings is considered a fire lane. We are required to keep this area clear so that emergency vehicles have easy access to all buildings. We ask that when you park along the curb as you enter the building that you do not park in front of the flag pole.

## **Food Services/Lunch**

Students will have the option of purchasing a lunch provided by the Douglas County School system or they may bring a lunch each day.

Student lunches may be purchased for \$1.75 (includes juice or milk). Adult lunches are \$2.80. Students may prepay for the week, month, or year by using a secure, online payment system ([www.parentonline.net](http://www.parentonline.net)) or writing a check to CHMS (Chapel Hill Middle School) cafeteria. Monthly menus will be posted on our school website.

We understand that students may need to purchase a lunch and the funds are not available in the student's account. We will allow a student to accumulate a maximum of \$5.00 in charges. After the \$5.00 limit is reached, a student will be offered a meal which consists of a peanut butter sandwich and a beverage. Adults are not allowed to charge meals.

Since our meals are prepared off campus, an accurate lunch count is very important. Your child will be asked to select his/her lunch choice each morning. If your child arrives after 10:00, we request you send a lunch from home.

Brighten Academy also participates in the Free/Reduced Lunch program. If you need information related to this program, please see the Office Manager.

As a school fundraiser, students will be able to purchase ice cream. Money may not be used from the student's "lunch" account to purchase this item. Ice cream costs \$1.00. We will only accept cash when purchasing ice cream.

If you opt to have your child bring their lunch each day to school. Please make every effort to ensure that the lunch follows nutritional guidelines, and is something that your child will eat. Please note the following when preparing your child's lunch

- Include all condiments, utensils, and napkins

- Refrigeration is not available
- Be mindful that little ones cannot assemble or open certain types of packaging. Selection of lunches should be made with this in mind.
- Microwaves will not be available for student use

### **Visitors and Volunteers**

All visitors are required to check in at the front office and obtain a visitor tag.

Visitors, who are not properly fingerprinted and cleared by administration, are not allowed to have direct supervision (unattended by a staff member) with children. This includes sitting in the hall with children and assisting with work.

Visitors are discouraged from using student restrooms. They are encouraged to use the staff restroom in the main building or in the workroom.

All visits to the classroom should have a meaningful purpose such as volunteering, pre-scheduled conferencing, acting as a guest speaker, etc. Drop-in visits will not be allowed so we can protect instructional time. Parent classroom observations are welcomed, but should be pre-arranged in advance with the teacher. Conferences will be scheduled by appointment only.

Visitors who are volunteering on a given day may take their child, without going through the office after the dismissal bell has rung.

Students are not allowed to bring visitors or guests to school to visit classes without prior approval from the classroom teacher and administration.

Classroom volunteers/visitors are expected to refrain from cell phone use while in the classroom. Volunteers with young children (or children not in the designated classroom) may be asked to work outside of the designated classroom so that the learning environment remains conducive to learning.

### **Awards**

The school shall endeavor to recognize student achievement whenever possible. The following avenues (not intended to be exclusive) will be utilized to formally recognize such achievement.

- **Sunshine Slips** should be awarded at the discretion of a staff member to students who demonstrate exceptional qualities from the list of 7 Cs.
- **Attendance** shall be recognized both monthly and annually.

- **Monthly attendance** privileges shall be awarded to students who maintain 0 absences, 0 unexcused tardies, and 0 unexcused checkouts. Homeroom teachers will coordinate appropriate rewards.
- **Annual attendance** awards will be presented as follows:
  - **Perfect Attendance** – 0 absences, 0 tardies, 0 checkouts
  - **Excellent Attendance** – 0 absences, 0 unexcused and up to 2 excused tardies, 0 unexcused and up to 2 excused checkouts
- **Director’s Honor Club** – Students who achieve a 3D for any Standard (not Element) shall be invited to participate in a Director’s Honor Club each grading period. Special privileges shall be granted to club members.
- **Yearly 7 Cs Awards** – Each year students who achieve a 3 for second semester on their report card in any 7 Cs category shall be awarded a Certificate of Achievement.
- Students who earn a 3 **in every category** of the 7Cs and who achieve all required tasks for the 7Cs Deck shall be awarded a certificate of achievement and the privilege of earning a special green 7Cs Brighten tee shirt. Students who are a part of the discipline cycle during the school year will not be eligible for the green 7 Cs shirt.

### **Student Withdrawal**

The office requires 24 hour notice to prepare all withdrawal forms. Please contact the office manager.

Brighten Academy will forward all information to your child’s new school after we receive a request for records. The office will be happy to make copies of records for personal use at the cost of .25 per page.

### **Media Center**

#### **Selection Procedures for Library Media Resources**

##### **Purpose**

The philosophy of the Brighten Academy library media services is to provide access to information and ideas that support the mission and the instructional program of the Brighten Academy charter. The school library program, as an integral part of the total curriculum, is the vehicle that provides opportunities for students to develop skills needed to manage complex information formats and to foster a lifelong interest in both reading and knowledge. Library media specialists shall use established procedures for the selection of library media to build the collection through selecting and discarding of library media resources. The procedures will also assist students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members in understanding the principles behind selection and collection management in the Brighten Academy library media center.

## **Selection Responsibility**

The Governing Board of Brighten Academy is legally responsible for all matters relating to Brighten Academy including library media resources. Responsibilities for the actual selection of school library materials rest with the professionally trained library media specialist who knows the needs and depth of curriculum, methods of instruction, and the interests, individual differences and wide range of abilities of the students. The media specialist will work cooperatively with administrators and teachers to interpret and guide the application of the policy in making selections.

## **Selection Process**

Resources for library media centers are selected by the professional media staff with due regard to suggestions from the faculty, parents, and students. Library media specialists seek to examine resources before they are ordered whenever possible. Faculty members are responsible for fulfilling teaching objectives and standards of learning; therefore, they provide a valuable resource for library media specialists and are encouraged to request resources. Every effort will be made to honor their requests. Students and parents may also submit requests for resources that they would like to see in the library. The process of selecting resources continues throughout the school year. The discarding of out-dated resources and the replacement of lost and worn resources still of educational value is part of the selection and collection development process. Gift resources, free and inexpensive resources, and sponsored resources are evaluated by the same criteria as purchased resources. Professionally recognized collection development lists and reviews are used to aid in the selection process.

**Please see our media specialist for further information on our selection policies and procedures.**

## **Technology**

Internet access is available to students and teachers at Brighten Academy. We are very pleased to bring this access to our school and believe the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence at Brighten Academy by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Brighten Academy's technology committee has taken precautions to restrict access to inappropriate materials. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover inappropriate information.

Students and staff are expected to abide by all Terms and Conditions established by the school. Prior to students being granted access to the Internet, parents will be required to complete an **Acceptable Use Policy** to acknowledge and agree to school policies.

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Brighten Academy Charter School has adopted this dress code to promote an educational atmosphere that minimizes distractions, maximizes learning, and teaches students the importance of dressing for success. Students' dress should reflect self-respect and pride in their school.

Students are expected to follow this dress code whenever they are on campus during school hours or when attending school-related activities (field trips).

It is a violation of the dress code to wear clothing that reveals a student's underwear, midriff, lower back, upper thigh, or cleavage at any time (including when leaning over or raising the arms). Clothing may NOT be excessively baggy, dirty, sloppy, or tight (form-fitting).

The focus of this dress code is on modesty, neatness, cleanliness, and good taste, which must be observed in addition to the specific requirements set forth below. The school administration will provide the final determination as to whether a specific outfit or article of clothing is acceptable under those standards.

## **BASIC REQUIREMENTS**

### **Shirts**

1. Shirts must be solid red, white, or navy blue in color.
2. Shirts may have a Brighten logo or another logo that is no more than two inches high and three inches wide.
3. The following styles may be worn:
  - a. Oxford button down
  - b. Golf or polo (long or short sleeved)
  - c. Turtlenecks
  - d. Crew neck t-shirt with Brighten logo purchased through school approved vendor
4. Additional adornments (lace, rhinestones, etc.) are not permitted.
5. Oxfords, golf, and polo shirts must be buttoned all the way up except for the top button.
6. Exterior shirts must be long enough to cover the waist (midriff).

7. Shirts must be the proper size for the student wearing them. Shirts may not be form-fitting nor loose enough to show cleavage, chest, or shoulders.
8. Undershirts worn under an exterior shirt must not be visible from the bottom or arms of the shirt and must be tucked in as necessary so they will not be visible. Long sleeve crew neck style shirts may be worn under a collared shirt (which meets dress code requirements).
9. Exterior shirts must not be pinned, rolled, knotted, or otherwise worn to expose garments worn underneath the exterior shirt, with the exception of having collars (in the specified solid colors) visible under a sweater.

### **Pants and Skirts**

1. The following styles are acceptable for boys or girls:
  - a. Slacks
  - b. Shorts
2. The following styles are acceptable for girls:
  - a. Capri pants
  - b. Skirts
  - c. Skorts
  - d. Jumpers
  - e. Dresses
3. Acceptable colors are solid navy blue or khaki.
4. Logos that are no more than two inches high and three inches wide are permitted.
5. All of the garments listed above must be worn at the waist and must extend down to at least two inches from the top of the knee cap.
6. Additional adornments (lace, rhinestones, etc.) are not permitted.
7. Slacks may not be rolled up.
8. Excessively baggy pants and shorts are not permitted.

### **Sweaters**

1. Sweaters must be solid red, white, or navy blue in color.
2. V-neck or short-sleeve sweaters (e.g., golf sweaters or sweater vests) are permitted if worn over a shirt that meets the requirements set forth above.
3. Logos that are no more than two inches high and three inches wide are permitted.

### **Coats / Jackets**

1. All coats and jackets must be solid red, white, or navy blue in color.
2. Coats and jackets may have logos that are no more than two inches high and three inches wide.
3. Coats and jackets may not be worn in lieu of shirts.

### **Shoes**

1. Shoes must be predominantly white, navy blue, black, gray, or brown in color.
2. The following shoe styles are acceptable:
  - a. Tennis Shoes
  - b. Athletic Footwear
  - c. Boots
  - d. Loafers
  - e. Closed toe shoes with less than a one inch heel
3. Shoes may have a manufacturer's logo and name
4. Shoes may have a second color for accents or trim, provided one of the colors listed above is the predominant color.
5. Bedroom shoes and slippers may NOT be worn unless permission is given to wear them on a special-dress day.
6. Students are required to wear athletic shoes during Physical Education or Dance and Movement classes.
7. Students in grades 6-8 may wear sandals with back straps.
8. Flip flops are not permitted.

### **Hair**

1. Hair must be reasonably neat and clean.
2. Hair must appear natural in color.

3. Hairstyles (Mohawks, rat tails, etc.) and adornments (bows, barrettes, etc.) must not be distracting to the individual student or those around him or her.

### **Accessories**

1. Socks, tights, and leggings must be red, white, navy blue, black, or gray in color.
2. Socks, tights, and leggings may be solid in color OR incorporate up to three of the preceding colors in a plaid or argyle pattern.
3. Hats may not be worn indoors unless specifically authorized by the administration for special-dress days.

### **Jewelry**

1. Students (male or female) are permitted to wear earrings in one or both ears. Earrings (studs, bars, chains) may not be visible in any other part of the body other than the ear. Students are not permitted to wear more than 2 earrings in each ear.
2. Students may not wear chains protruding from pants pockets or any other area.
3. Students may not wear jewelry that makes excessive noise or that is distracting to others. Jewelry is to remain modest.
4. Neither Brighten Academy nor its staff is responsible for jewelry that is lost or stolen.

## **SPECIAL DAYS AND EVENTS**

On certain days, students may (but are not required) to wear clothing that is not solid in color and/or that incorporates colors other than those set forth in the Basic Requirements. However, other than the exceptions set forth below or specifically authorized by the school administration, students must comply with the Basic Requirements of the Dress Code whenever they are on campus during school hours or attending school-related activities.

### **Spirit Day (every Monday)**

On Mondays, students may wear any apparel that has the Brighten Academy logo OR shirts that are purchased for or obtained by participation in any fundraiser and special event sponsored by the school (e.g., Relay for Life, Field Day, etc.).

Middle school students (grades 6-8) also may wear jeans on Monday, provided they are free from holes, tears, or fraying and otherwise comply with the Dress Code requirements for pants.

### **Fashionable Friday (every Friday unless otherwise notified in advance)**

Students may “dress down” on Fridays; meaning that they may wear clothing that is not solid in color and/or that incorporates colors other than those specified in the Basic Requirements.

Student also may wear jeans on Fridays, provided they are free from holes, tears, or fraying and otherwise comply with the Dress Code requirements for pants.

Middle school students (grades 6-8) must earn the “privilege” of Fashionable Friday by having no demerits for the week and all assignments must be current. If the privilege is not earned, the student will be required to adhere to the school’s uniform dress code.

### **Seven C’s Shirts (Anytime)**

Seven C’s t-shirts (which are predominately green in color) are awarded to students in grades 2-7 who, in the opinion of the school staff and administration, have demonstrated achievement in each of the following categories: (1) character; (2) commitment; (3) critical thinking; (4) creativity; (5) curiosity; (6) community; and (7) culture. This is a special honor. As a result, Seven C’s t-shirts may be worn at any time by the students who have earned them.

### **School Dances (by written announcement)**

Students who attend school-sponsored dances may wear clothing that is not solid in color and/or that incorporates colors other than those specified in the Basic Requirements. Students may also wear non-crew neck collars that extend no more than two inches from the base of the neck, provided such collars do not expose lingerie or cleavage. Strapless dresses or shirts are not acceptable dress for any school event. Students wearing clothing that does not meet the Dress Code requirements may be asked to leave.

If there are any questions about the acceptability of an outfit, students may bring the outfit to school for consultation with the administration.

### **Costume-Theme Days (by written announcement)**

On costume-theme days, students are invited to wear clothing according to a specific costume theme (e.g., pirates, pajamas, book characters). Students who choose to participate on these days must wear costumes that clearly and obviously follow the designated theme. For example, a t-shirt and jeans with an eye-patch is not a pirate costume, just as a t-shirt and jeans with a teddy bear are not pajamas. Scary masks (e.g., skulls, flesh wounds, etc.) are not permitted as part of student costumes. Students who are not obviously dressed according to the costume theme must wear clothing that otherwise meets the Dress Code requirements.

### **Field Trips and Other Special Events (by written announcement)**

The administration and staff may authorize exceptions to the Basic Requirements of the Dress Code during field trips and other events on a case by case basis.

## **Clothes Closet**

Brighten Academy has a Clothes Closet of FREE clothing that is available to all students on a first-come, first-serve basis. Clothing items are donated by parents, staff, and community members. A form is available online if you would like to request clothes from the clothes closet.

## **Dress Code Violations**

When a student is in violation of the Dress Code, school personnel will generally call his or her parent(s) and ask for an acceptable outfit to be brought to school.

Dress code violations also will be addressed as a disciplinary matter. Two documented Dress Code violations will constitute a disciplinary referral. For additional information, please refer to the Brighten Academy Handbook policy on student discipline.

### **UNSURE?**

Students or parents who are unsure whether a specific outfit or article of clothing complies with this policy should ask the team leader or an administrator for clarification BEFORE the student chooses to wear the outfit or item to school.

The administration will make final determinations with regard to compliance with this policy, including but not limited to issues of modesty, neatness, cleanliness, natural hair colors, and overall acceptable appearance.

## **Parent Involvement Compact**

### **Family School Connection**

The goal of the Parent School Covenant is to create the strongest possible partnership between home and the school and to nourish and facilitate the individual abilities of each child. To succeed in our mission and foster intellectual and social growth, education must extend beyond the classroom walls by recognizing and incorporating the family and home as vital parts of success.

### **Brighten Academy's Pledge to Parents:**

- To provide a program of academic excellence that fulfills the goals expressed in our mission and core beliefs
- To provide a safe and supportive learning environment
- To communicate regularly regarding a child's progress and needs

- To continually reflect on, evaluate, and develop the learning environment
- To provide meaningful parent and student programs and extracurricular activities
- To communicate effectively regarding school and classroom events and policies
- To be courteous and respectful to parents and to work collaboratively to help the child find success

**Parents’ Pledge to the School:**

- To read, understand, and support the mission of Brighten Academy
- To provide a home environment that nurtures a love of learning
- To ensure the child is on time with appropriate materials and assignments
- To provide a nutritious breakfast and lunch each day
- To read to/with the child each day and assist with homework as needed.
- To be courteous and respectful to staff and work collaboratively to help my child find success
- To stay abreast of school communication and follow school policies and procedures
- To attend at least 2 conferences per year to discuss academic progress
- To attend extracurricular activities and events to support the child or the school
- To volunteer and earn a minimum of 20 credits (see attached list of ways to earn credits)
- To maintain an updated Volunteer Log of volunteer activities

Upon enrollment, parents must sign the Parent-School Covenant, that acknowledges that they are in support of these requirements and ensures that the parents are fully involved in their child’s learning. Failure to meet requirements set forth in the parent contract will result in loss of extracurricular privileges such as field day, ASP, clubs, school dances, and other non-instructional events throughout the year. Please note that half of the hours must be completed by January 1 of each school year.

**Ways to Obtain Volunteer Credits (10 credits must be earned by January 1<sup>st</sup>)**

<b>Volunteer Activity</b>	<b>Credit</b>	<b>Per</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Participate in a committee or subcommittee	1	Hour	
Serve as a Board Member or PTO Officer	20	Year	
Serve as a mentor or tutor	2	Hour	
Classroom room parent	5	Year	
Volunteer in the classroom	1	Hour	
Volunteer in the media center (admin, storytelling)	1	Hour	At home work = ½ credit per hour (Requires signature of media specialist on log).
Volunteer in the office	1	Hour	
Volunteer at Car Riders	½	Hour	

Volunteer as a Lunch Buddy (per ½ hour)	½	½ Hour	
Volunteer at extracurricular activity (Spring Fling, chaperone dances, Birdies for Brighten, etc.)	1	Hour	
Volunteer at the Book Fair	1	Hour	
Volunteer as a proctor during testing (per hour)	1	Hour	
Sponsor a club or sport (per hour)	1	Hour	
Attend extracurricular activities or school events, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Classroom performances</li> <li>❖ School performances</li> <li>❖ Competitions</li> <li>❖ Curriculum, Community and Conversation</li> <li>❖ Board Meetings</li> <li>❖ Board Work Sessions</li> <li>❖ Award Celebrations</li> <li>❖ Classroom Parties</li> <li>❖ Learning Celebrations</li> <li>❖ Open House</li> <li>❖ Brighten Basics</li> </ul>	1	Event	
Complete at home projects for teachers, staff, clubs, PTA, etc.	½	Hour	Requires staff member signature
Lawn maintenance	1	Hour	
Chaperone on field trips	3	Day	Overnight trips = 8 credits per day
Saturday Volunteer Days	1	Hour	
Participate in school-wide programs including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Career Day</li> <li>❖ Red Ribbon Week</li> <li>❖ Charter Schools Week</li> </ul>	1	Event	
Donate materials, supplies, snacks, or services that benefit a whole classroom, grade level, or the school	½	Per \$50	Or equivalent Does not include school supplies or fees related to individual child
Charitable donations to our non-profit organization (may be earmarked for your intended purpose)	1	Per \$100	Company match applies
Attend focus groups and/or workshops	1	Event	
Complete parent survey	1	Per survey	
Donation of clothing to the Clothes Closet ( <b>must be in good condition and comply with uniform standards</b> )	½	Per 10 articles	
Any other way the parent, teacher and administrator deem would be appropriate and beneficial in fulfilling the mission of Brighten Academy	TBD by admin.	TBD by Admin.	Submit request for <u>prior</u> approval to administration.

Failure to comply with the parent compact may result in loss of extracurricular privileges (dances, field days, field trips).

## **Discipline**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of Brighten Academy's Student Code of Conduct and Behavior Contract is as follows:

- To create a risk free and safe environment
- To maximize learning time
- To provide information to students and parents about rules and regulations of the school and the plan for consequences for infraction of these rules and regulations
- To provide uniform administrative and disciplinary procedures

### **Statement of Student Conduct**

Our goal is to teach students the value and importance of following established rules and procedures in order to maintain a safe, orderly, and respectful environment both in the educational setting and in our communities. To that end, we will positively reinforce honorable conduct and good behavior as often as possible, and will balance this with appropriate consequences for misconduct. We will continually provide encouragement and support to students in self-management of behavior and control of actions.

Parents and students will be required to sign the Code of Conduct as a pre-requisite for enrollment in the school. As a school of choice, Brighten Academy retains the right to withdraw students who do not conform to appropriate behavioral expectations that support the learning environment defined in the mission and core beliefs and by this Code of Conduct. Students may not enroll at Brighten Academy unless consequences at a prior school or system have been served.

These rules are designed to notify students and parents about the types and range of behaviors prohibited by Brighten Academy. Every specific variation of conduct may not have been included. Consequently, students should expect to be disciplined for misconduct that is obviously inappropriate and contrary to the mission and core beliefs established in the Brighten Academy Charter.

### **Student Misconduct**

Students may be referred to the office for any of the offenses listed below. Students generally travel through three levels of the Discipline Cycle before reaching mediation. Students with a

singular offense will begin on Level I. Students with a referral for the same offense will then move to Level II. Students may be referred to the office and stay on Level I for up to 3 singular non-related offenses before moving to Level II. Students on Level II who incur an additional offense of any nature will be moved to Level III and will begin the mediation process.

### **Examples of Level I or II offenses**

- Assignments Incomplete/Academic Issue
- Attendance
- Bullying (aggressive or passive aggressive)
- Damaging or Misusing School Property/Materials
- Defiance
- Dishonesty (lying, cheating, omission, stealing)
- Disrespect
- Disruption
- Dress Code
- Electronic Devices
- Gambling
- Insubordination
- Language/Gestures
- Missing Materials
- Physical Contact (hitting, kicking, horseplay, fighting, etc.)
- Punctuality
- Quarreling
- Refusal to Identify Self
- School Representation Inappropriate (on or off campus)
- Tattling
- Teasing
- Unauthorized Area
- OTHER:

Certain offenses are considered “Zero Tolerance” and will be immediate grounds for Level III designation and the mediation process to begin. These offenses are listed below:

### **ZERO TOLERANCE**

- Drugs (possession or use)
- Assault & Battery
- Causing Danger
- Intimidation/Threats
- Leaving Premises (on or off campus)
- Weapons (possession or use)
- Bullying

### **School Communication/Intervention for Behavior Referrals:**

When a child is written up for a level one offense, an administrator or his/her designee will notify the parent. The teacher completing the referral should also speak with the parent.

Once a child reaches Level II, an administrative conference is held. This conference will consist of an administrator, the teacher, and the child's parent(s). The conference will focus on the responsibility of the parents, students, and school to help reduce behaviors.

If behaviors persist, the child will be sent to pre-mediation to develop a behavior contract. The pre-mediation committee will be composed of an administrator, a lead teacher, the child's teacher, the parent(s), and any other school personnel as requested (counselor, psychologist, etc.)

If the behavior contract developed in pre-mediation is not fulfilled, the student will be sent to mediation. The mediation policy is outlined in detail in the charter.

### **Classroom Discipline Expectations**

Staff members with direct responsibility for supervision of students are expected to submit and follow a discipline plan that supports the overall Behavior Plan of the school. This plan should be multi-leveled and should consist of reasonable, age-appropriate expectations for children, as well as a balance of positive and negative consequences. Staff members are expected to clearly communicate the plan to parents and students at the beginning of the year and provide reminders throughout the school year. Staff is expected to provide frequent communication to parents regarding their child's behavior.

It is our goal to help every child attain a level of appropriate behavior, and every effort to reach this end should be made. We are advocates of children and should remain objective and fair minded in all ways.

### **Electronic Devices and Toys**

Electronic recreational devices (including, but not limited to: cell phones, MP3 players, IPODs, handheld video games, cameras, laser pointers, tape recorders, ITOUCH, IPETS, etc.) and toys are not permitted at school.

The school shall bear no responsibility for lost, stolen, or broken electronic recreational devices or toys. Students who are in possession of electronic devices when not permitted will be subject to the discipline cycle. If electronic recreational devices or toys are removed from a child's possession, a parent may be required to come to the school in order for the item to be released.

## **Privacy Rights**

We will protect your child's right to privacy by following all guidelines set forth the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This Privacy Act gives parents or eligible students the right to inspect and review the student's education records and prohibits the release of education records to third parties without prior written consent.

We may place directory information on our website or share with the Douglas County School System for the purposes of recognizing student achievement or informing the community about events. Parents/eligible students who object to the release of directory information are required to place the objection in writing and deliver to the school administrator within 10 days of enrollment.

## **Homework**

The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills which have been taught at school. Homework should be based on the academic skill level of the child, and differentiation is expected. Homework should have a specific purpose (e.g., mastery of basic facts; mastery of the spelling pattern).

The following guidelines have been established to ensure that appropriate amounts of homework are provided to allow for a balance of work and home time. These guidelines are based on nightly averages and may change periodically to be either less or more as particular needs arise throughout the school year. Projects are expected to be provided regularly and homework assignments adjusted accordingly to allow for work on the projects. However, parents are expected to guide students in time management for completion of projects.

Teachers are expected to coordinate homework assignments with their co-workers to ensure that assigned homework stays within the guidelines. The time frames listed in the guidelines are TOTALS for the number of minutes students should be assigned homework on average each night and should not be interpreted to mean per subject area or class.

Reading time is expected nightly and should be incorporated as part of the guidelines provided:

Kindergarten-1 <sup>st</sup> Grade:	15-30 minutes nightly
2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade:	30-45 minutes nightly
4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	45-60 minutes nightly

## **Recess and Playground**

Brighten Academy has two playgrounds so that our students can play in a safe, age appropriate environment. The faculty and staff feel that physical activity is very important to students, but we view recess as a privilege. Students who demonstrate inappropriate behavior or work habits may be restricted from play at the teacher's discretion.

As long as the temperature is 40 degrees or higher, the children are allowed to go outside when conditions are dry and as the teacher permits. We will use thermometers/computers to gauge the temperature before heading outside. Recess is considered a privilege earned and may be revoked in whole or part for classroom or school rule infraction or incomplete/missing work or homework. No child may play on the playground or grounds without direct adult supervision.

Students must be dressed appropriately for the weather. Students not dressed appropriately will not be permitted to go outside.

On days where air quality is poor, outdoor play will be suspended.

## **Field Trip Student Guidelines**

Field trips are considered an extension of the regular academic school day. Therefore, all school and discipline policies will be enforced at all times.

**Field trip Dress:** Students must always dress for a field trip in the regular Brighten Academy dress code attire unless the teacher states otherwise. The teacher has the right to suggest jeans along with the dress code shirt.

### **Field Trip early check outs:**

All children are required to remain in school until the end of the day, unless the teacher states otherwise. In order to accommodate personal schedules and avoid additional trips to school, students will be allowed to check out AFTER a field trip with an excused check-out after 2:15pm. Checking out early (excused or unexcused) may compromise your child earning a perfect attendance award. Another child in a class that is not a part of the field trip would not be considered an excused absence.

### **Field trip check outs from field trip site:**

No child will be allowed to be checked out from the field trip site for the day under any circumstances. All children must ride on the transportation provided by the school both to and from the field trip location

### **Chaperone Lottery:**

A lottery drawing will be held to determine who can fill chaperone spots if interest exceeds vacancies.

### **General Fieldtrip Policies:**

1. Any adult chaperoning a field trip will be subject to a criminal background check and fingerprinting.
2. When completing the background check application please note that all information must be disclosed on the application. Any information NOT disclosed that is noted on the background check will constitute an automatic dismissal from eligibility for chaperoning on the trip or any future field trips. There will be no exceptions to this rule. The administrator will make determinations about suitability for a chaperone to attend if criminal findings are denoted on the background check.
3. While away on an overnight field trip, an adult chaperone must remain with the students at all times. This includes evening times.
4. During overnight field trips, students must always travel using transportation provided for by the school and may not ride in personal cars at any time.
5. Students are not permitted to leave the group's location at any time, even with a parent. (e.g., walking to a near-by restaurant.)
6. Students must be accounted for at all times by school personnel or approved chaperones.
7. All school rules and policies apply while on a field trip. Consumption of alcohol, use of drugs, and use of tobacco is prohibited.
8. Chaperones may not bring additional siblings or other children.
9. Chaperones must sign the chaperone policy before each field trip.

A detailed field trip chaperone policy is located in the school's policy manual.

### **Class Parties and Celebrations**

Parties of a non-instructional nature shall be limited to twice yearly – one at the winter holiday break, and one at the end of the school year. Please be sure to discuss special plans and activities with your child's teacher before the event.

We enjoy celebrating birthdays with our children, but we have several students who have food allergies. Please contact the teacher before sending in snacks for these special occasions. We also prefer that birthday snacks are eaten and passed out in the cafeteria. Please make sure the snack is prepared so that individual servings can be quickly distributed. Whole cakes and cookies require a lot of time to distribute, and we often do not have the proper materials to cut or distribute the cake.

## **After School Program (ASP)**

### **Mission**

The mission of the After School Program (ASP) is to provide a safe, relaxed, and engaging environment for its elementary and middle school students.

The ASP provides enrichment activities, social interaction with peers, and homework help in a well supervised, structured setting for its students. ASP serves students who are enrolled in the school. Students take part in experiences that encourage creativity, social relationships, appropriate behavior, and a positive self-image.

ASP maintains separate policies and procedures. Please see the ASP Director with any questions.

### **Lost and Found**

Children are encouraged to label all clothing and personal items and to visit the Lost and Found area frequently. The lost and found area is located by the cafeteria. We will donate all items to charity after each monthly Saturday work day.