

2020-2021 Brighten Academy



Parent Handbook In-Person, Hybrid, and Digital Learning Models

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.

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**“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.

Beginning in March of 2020, schools across the nation faced a change to our “normal” way of operating school due to the pandemic created by the COVID-19 virus. This handbook is intended to serve as the procedures for in-person, hybrid, and digital learning models. For the purposes of this handbook, in-person learning indicates traditional face-to-face school model (procedures in black print). Hybrid refers to a combination of in-person and online learning (students come to school 2-4 days per week face-to-face and complete 1-3 days per week of online assignments at home). The digital learning model refers to 100% online learning five days a week. Red print in this handbook indicates additions for digital, hybrid, or new guidelines.

****Update: 9.28.2020—Changes (from what is in red font) will be indicated with strikethrough (~~strikethrough~~) font. New information is in blue and noted with an asterisk (*).**

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 nurture habits of scholarship and ethical character in a joyful, engaging, rigorous, and equitable learning environment. Inspired educators, in partnership with parents and the community, will ensure measured growth in every student every year and empower students to create a brighter future for our world.

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 of Character": craftsmanship, commitment, critical thinking, creativity, curiosity, community, and crew culture.

The Seven C's

Craftsmanship

- Pride in Work
- Quality Projects
- Authentic work
- Student generated projects
- Visually appealing

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
 - ✓ PTO meetings
 - ✓ local newspapers
- 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
- Teachers model desired character traits
- Classroom meetings – class discussions, goal setting, and problem solving

Crew Culture

- Treating others with kindness and respect
- Developing empathy for others
- 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

EL Education

In EL Education schools...

Learning is active. Students are scientists, urban planners, historians, and activists, investigating real community problems and collaborating with peers to develop creative, actionable solutions.

Learning is challenging. Students at all levels are pushed and supported to do more than they think they can. Excellence is expected in the quality of their work thinking.

Learning is meaningful. Students apply their skills and knowledge to real-world issues and problems and make positive change in their communities. They see the relevance of their learning and are motivated by understanding that learning has purpose.

Learning is public. Through formal structures of presentation, exhibition, critique, and data analysis, students and teachers build a shared vision of pathways to achievement.

Learning is collaborative. School leaders, teachers, students, and families share rigorous expectations for quality work, achievement, and behavior. Trust, respect, responsibility, and joy in learning permeate the school culture.

EL Education schools create environments that promote deep engagement in learning and support students to achieve at high levels. EL students gain skills critical to college readiness and lifelong success-literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, persistence toward excellence, and active citizenship-as well as mastery of subject-area knowledge.

EL Education Design Principles

1. The Primacy of Self-Discovery
2. The Having of Wonderful Ideas
3. The Responsibility for Learning
4. Empathy and Caring
5. Success and Failure
6. Collaboration and Competition
7. Diversity and Inclusion
8. The Natural World
9. Solitude and Reflection
10. Service and Compassion

EL Education- Crew

An EL Education school culture is planned for, developed, and sustained through practices that bring the community together, promote shared understandings, and encourage all community members to become crew, not passengers. Students in EL schools are known well and supported by adults. The structure of crew allows for relationship building, academic progress, monitoring, and character development. Crew allows students to build positive connections with their peers and with their crew leader. Crew leaders strategically plan crew to address and assess these multiple goals. Outside of school, mentoring, internships, and apprenticeships foster relationships between students and community members.

Community Circle

Community Meetings are a common structure in EL Education Schools that help to build a culture of pride, success and celebration in both academics and character. Community Circle is a whole-school activity that will occur three times a year. We will come together to celebrate our achieved goals and accomplishments. Parents are welcome at Community Circle meetings.

Due to restrictions on group sizes and social distancing guidance, all in-person community circle activities are cancelled until further notice.

Administrative Roles and Responsibilities

Business/Student Services Manager: Angi Andrews

The primary function is to oversee the front office, maintain accurate student and staff records, oversees the school's fiscal operations, human resources, and payroll.

Executive 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 Director will also manage the instructional staff by completing observations, walk throughs, employee evaluations, and general HR compliance. The 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 Director, Business Manager, and Facilities and Operations Administrator in meeting the school's goals. The Assistant Director is a member of the administrative team. The Assistant Director will act on behalf of the Director if this person is not available.

Facilities and Operations Administrator Primary Functions: Kelly Bemus

The primary function is to support the Director, Assistant Director, and Business Manager in meeting the school's goals. The Facilities and Operations Administrator will also oversee the campus and maintenance. The Facilities and Operations Administrator is a member of the administrative team and will act on behalf of the Director if this person is not available. This position also oversees the After School Program.

Instructional Aide Primary Functions: Toni Aybar

The primary function of the instructional aide is to support the Director and other administrators by monitoring and tracking student discipline, providing classroom instruction when asked, gathering and analyzing student data, and assisting in disseminating school wide communication. This position also oversees extracurricular clubs.

Student and Family Support Assistant: Pam Scherer

The primary function of the Student and Family Support Assistant is to create 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, and supporting the general business and communication needs of the school.

Student Services and Substitute Teacher Coordinator: Katie Smith

The primary function of the student services coordinator is to assist the Business/Student Services Manager in all functions related to finances, human resources, substitute teacher scheduling, and student enrollment.

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.

Non-Discrimination

Brighten Academy will not engage in unlawful discrimination. Brighten Academy does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

School Wide Procedures and Expectations

School Hours

School office hours are 7:10 am until 4:00 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and 7:10 am until 2:00 pm on Wednesdays.

Instructional school hours are from 8:00 am until 3:15 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and 8:00 am until 1:00 pm on Wednesdays. Exceptions are noted on the school calendar. All students (grades K-8) must **be seated in their homeroom** by 8:00 am.

Hybrid—students are expected to be in their homerooms on their assigned in-person days by 8:00 am and will be dismissed at 3:15 pm.

*New arrival times for in-person learning days: Students may arrive as early as 7:40 am. Elementary students should be seated in their homeroom class by 8:15 am. Middle school students should be seated in their first block period class by 8:30 am.
(~~A detailed dismissal plan will be established and communicated at a later date.~~) *See new Dismissal plan.

Wednesdays will be digital learning days for all students with occasional scheduled check-in sessions with students as needed.

Digital learning—a schedule will be sent with all live (synchronous) teaching sessions listed from each teacher. Students are expected to be online during live (synchronous) teaching at the time and day specified by the teachers. Live (synchronous) sessions will be scheduled between 8:30 am and 3:30 pm.

Student Arrival

All staff and students will have their temperature taken and be given a health survey before being allowed to enter the school. Staff or students with a temperature at or above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or exhibiting any of the COVID-19 symptoms determined by the CDC will not be allowed to stay at school. Per CDC guidance, persons with temperatures at or above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms should adhere to guidelines established by the DPH and CDC before returning to school.

Students are ~~strongly encouraged~~ *required to wear a face mask/covering while in the school building. Exceptions may occur in the classroom as social distancing is maintained.

Student safety and supervision is our first priority. Students may arrive as early as ~~7:10 a.m.~~ *7:40 am. They will be monitored by a staff member/s. Students who are participating in the school breakfast program should eat as soon as they arrive to ensure access for all students. ~~Students will be dismissed to homerooms at 7:45.~~ Students may not bring drinks (coffee, cups with straws, open containers) into the school building. Closed containers with water will only be allowed.

Students may arrive as early as ~~7:10 am~~ *7:40 am on days they are scheduled for in person learning. Parents and students will stay in the carpool line where a staff member will conduct the health screening at the vehicle. Please have your student(s) put on their masks before the staff member comes to the vehicle. Parking and walking your student to the sidewalk or into the building will not be permitted. Thank you for your patience and caution in our carpool line.

They will enter the building at two different doors: media center doors and through the playground area to the doors under the breezeway to allow for social distancing. The placement in the carpool line will determine which door students enter.

Students will proceed directly to their homerooms. Students may not bring drinks (coffee, cups with straws, open containers) into the school building. Closed containers with water will only be allowed. Breakfast will be served on a cart, and students will be allowed to take it to their homerooms to eat. Proper hand and table washing will be required before and after students eat.

Dismissal

~~An updated plan for dismissal will be sent at a later date when the school is allowed to move to the hybrid school model.~~

*New dismissal times: Dismissal times will be staggered to allow for social distancing. The dismissal times are as follows:

- Kindergarten through 5th grade classes will dismiss at 3:10 pm
- Middle school (6th-8th grades) will dismiss at 3:40 pm

Other notes for dismissal:

- Dismissal pick up locations will be spread out around the exits of the school. Each teacher will communicate their dismissal location to parents prior to the hybrid start date.
- Dismissal locations will be marked with a cone and letter designation.
- Parents are expected to pick up their students at the dismissal location.
- The pick up card is required for pick up. Please be prepared to show the card to the teacher for every pick up. Anyone without a card will be asked to go to the front office reception area with a form of positive identification in order to pick up a student.
- Only persons listed on the emergency contact list will be allowed to pick up students from the front office reception area.
- Please park in a designated parking space for pick up. Parking along the curb or in no parking zones is prohibited and greatly impedes the traffic flow.
- Please wear a mask when picking up students.

Regular dismissal information (*note—for information only—information in blue is hybrid plan):

We certainly appreciate your patience as we work to make sure each child is safely dismissed each day. Any adult picking up students must present a school issued pick up card to the staff member on duty at the doors and to the staff member on duty at the pick up location. Anyone without the card will be required to go to the office to present their identification to pick up the student.

Dismissal will begin PROMPTLY at 3:15 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and 1:00 on Wednesdays. All parents will park in a designated parking space in the parking lot. Students in grades K-2 will remain in their homerooms. Students in 3rd-5th grades will report to their first floor “partner” room (locations posted at the media center doors and in the hallways) for dismissal. All students in 6-8 grades and their K-5 siblings will report to the gym for dismissal.

Pick up for students in K-5th grades will be at the media center entrance. Parents/other authorized adults will park and walk in to pick up in a classroom on the first floor (K-5th students) or in the gym (6th-8th and their siblings) after presenting their school issued pick up card to the staff member on duty at the media center doors and in the classroom. Students will not be released into a taxi or other personal transportation service.

Students who are still in the building at 3:45 pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday or 1:30 pm on Wednesday will be considered a late pick-up. If more than 3 late pick-ups are accrued, your child will be sent to the ASP program and drop in rates will apply (\$25.00 per day per child). Drop in fees not paid upon pick up will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 per family.

Any child not picked up by 4:00 pm (regular dismissal days—on the first occurrence) OR 1:45 (1:00 dismissal days—on first occurrence) will be sent to the ASP program and drop in rates will apply. Drop in fees not paid upon pick up will be charged a late fee.

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 Student Services 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 campus, we will be evacuated to the First Baptist Church parking lot.

Emergency procedures will be followed and practiced as guidance recommends. Potential school closures due to COVID-19 illnesses will be communicated via Remind as soon as possible.

Security and Safety

Safety is a top priority of Brighten Academy, and a school safety plan shall be developed, implemented, and annually updated working closely with the county, state, and federal emergency management agencies according to county and state procedures. Safety drills will be conducted according to state law.

Part of the safety plan at Brighten Academy is the addition of an armed security officer. This officer shall hold Peace Officer Standards and Training certification and adhere to any and all additional guidance associated with P.O.S.T. training. The security officer will also work to build relationships with students as a Success Coach, providing opportunities for students to learn from and about positive Crew role models.

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.

Added: In the event school building is closed due to inclement weather, students will participate in digital learning. Teachers will communicate assignments for the day(s) missed due to school closings.

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, apply/administer herbs/homeopathic substances in any form, 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 of 100.4 degrees or higher
- A rash or unknown skin problem
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Green discharge from his/her nose
- Severe pain
- Lice (live bugs)

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.

If your child is sent home due to illness (vomiting, diarrhea, fever) he/she must be symptom free (unaided by medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and until further notice, many factors will be considered in determining when a student with COVID-19 or an illness consistent with COVID-19 will be permitted to return to school. The latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) considers test results, prior antibodies, symptoms, and contact tracing when determining how long a student must quarantine before being allowed to return to school. The DPH requires schools to report all COVID-19 illnesses and illnesses consistent with COVID-19 and contact tracing for such illnesses.

Parents will be notified and asked to pick up any student with the following symptoms:

- Fever/Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or Body Aches
- Headache
- New Loss of Taste or Smell
- Sore Throat
- Congestion or Runny Nose
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Diarrhea

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, etc.) 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. Please also check the Governing Board Agendas as the agenda states policies that are being reviewed. Board Agendas 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. All new Brighten Academy Governing Board members are voted in by the PTO membership. Contact the front office for more information.

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. Your child's teacher will communicate the specific requirements for daily communication (signing agenda, behavior notes, etc.). The school also uses the Remind electronic communication tool to relay important information. Be sure to sign up for notifications from each of your child's teacher and from the school. Directions will be available during open house and in the front office.

As a school, we primarily rely on Remind electronic communications so that we can conserve paper. We also post information on our website at www.brightenacademy.com. If you do not have internet access and would like to receive a paper copy of school communication, please notify the office. We will distribute (electronically) 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 other informational 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 send this information home on **Mondays** in a special folder, and they will let you know when (if) signatures are needed on graded work or logs. You can also expect a classroom newsletter or communication outlining 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 between the hours of 8:00-4:00 each weekday during their planning time or other time without student supervision responsibilities.

Each teacher is responsible for maintaining a classroom website, which can be accessed from our main web address, www.brightenacademy.com. Homework sheets, project notices, additional practice and classroom information will be posted for your convenience. Our middle school teachers post work daily and rely on their websites to communicate important information. Please help your middle school child develop a routine of checking the website for helpful information.

We also encourage administrative/parent, teacher parent, and student led conferences so that you can 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

All in-person conferences are suspended until further notice. During hybrid and digital learning, electronic communication via Remind and email will be the primary forms of communication. Please make sure to sign up for Remind accounts for each of your child's teachers for up to date information. Teachers will communicate "office hours" for student and parent communication.

Forms of Payment

Throughout the year, Brighten will sponsor various activities, field studies, and fundraisers that may require a fee or donation. We also have some fee based programs such as ASP and some of our clubs that require fees for participation. We no longer accept cash or personal checks as we have transitioned to an online bill paying service. Information about setting up an account and payments will be sent home at the beginning of the year or contact the front office for details about how to set up an account and payment procedures.

We also accept a signed money order or cashier's check made payable to Brighten Academy. Our contracted food service management company also accepts money orders for meal (breakfast, lunch, extras, etc.) payments. They do not accept personal checks.

Our PTO will still accept cash and checks for various events, and our sports and extracurricular programs will accept cash for entrance to games and programs. The school also supports some local charities and may have various activities (dress down days, ice cream sales, etc.) where cash payments will be accepted.

Refunds will be issued through our online bill paying service via electronic check or US mail. Requests should be made to the Business Manager.

Food Services/Lunch

Breakfast/Lunch Program

During hybrid learning breakfast and lunch will be served. For meal information during digital learning, please contact an administrator.

Hybrid learning update: all breakfast and lunch meals will be provide free of charge to students until December 31, 2020. Our lunch provider, SLA, is also providing the opportunity for virtual learners to pick up meals curbside at the school. Please see Remind messages and our website for information on how to order and pick up details.

During hybrid learning, students may bring their own lunch on days they are attending school in-person.

Brighten Academy has contracted our meal services with SLA Management. Students will have the option of purchasing a breakfast and/or lunch provided by SLA Management each day. SLA Management is a foodservice management company dedicated to providing high quality,

nutritious, and cost efficient meal programs to the academic community. All SLA Management school lunches mirror the National School Lunch daily requirements for protein, vegetable, fruit, dairy and grain.

The school will communicate the cost of lunch and breakfast at the beginning of each school year. All payments will be received via the online lunch payment portal, cash, or through a money order addressed to Brighten Academy Charter School. We no longer accept personal check payments for lunch accounts.

We understand that students may need to purchase a lunch and not have the funds available in the student's account. Per board policy, a student cannot accumulate a charge over \$8.00. After the \$8.00 limit is reached, a student will be offered an alternative meal (this meal still incurs a nominal charge). Adults are not allowed to charge meals.

One milk is provided with each purchased lunch, and students may purchase an additional carton of milk for 75 cents. Students may purchase side items and /or a carton of juice. The charge for individual items varies from \$.75 to \$1.00, and it is NOT covered by free/reduced-price meal policies.

Brighten Academy participates in the Free/Reduced Lunch program. If you need information related to this program, please contact an administrator.

You may opt to have your child bring his/her 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.

Vending machines (water and snacks that meet the USDA guidelines) are available for visitor, student, and staff use during the school day.

Visitors and Volunteers

Until further notice all visitors will be restricted from campus due to COVID-19 precautions and CDC guidance. All visitors should enter through the front office (which is now located in the atrium) to conduct their business. Visitors will not be allowed beyond the front office area.

We welcome parents and visitors to our school, and we feel our families are key partners in educating our children. We actively seek to build relationships with our community including field experts, career talks, and volunteers. We look forward to meeting you and partnering with you.

All visits to the classroom should have a meaningful purpose such as volunteering, pre-scheduled conferencing, acting as a guest speaker, etc. Teachers and staff are expected to be fully engaged with their students during the school day. In order to limit distractions, we do not allow drop-in visits/conferencing without an appointment. Parent classroom observations are welcomed, but should be pre-arranged in advance with the teacher. Conferences can be scheduled with the teacher by appointment.

When you visit, please check in at the front office (now located in the atrium area) 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 should use the adult restroom in the main building or on each floor of the classroom building.

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.

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

Parking

Visitors may choose to park anywhere on the campus except in any fire lane, red curbs, and the drop off lanes. The lot to the right as you enter by Prestley Mill Road is designated for staff only, as are the three rows of spaces adjacent to the playing field (in the main lot by the office). Please always park in a parking space and avoid blocking the reserved handicapped spaces.

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. Please see the Brighten Academy Policy Manual for the complete policy on the selection process, procurement, and reconsideration of library resources.

Position on Intellectual Freedom

The Governing Board of Brighten Academy subscribes in principle to the statements of policy on library philosophy as expressed in the *Library Bill of Rights* of the American Library Association, a copy of which is appended to this policy statement (Appendix A). The principles of intellectual freedom expressed in the *Library Bill of Rights* are inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. In the event library materials are questioned, the principles of intellectual freedom shall be defended.

The Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Material should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibilities to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

During hybrid learning, media center materials will be available for checkout by request. Contact during the transfer of materials will be minimized, and materials should be cleaned in between uses or untouched for the designated period of time to deem it safe to check out to another user.

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 and students will be required to sign off on the **Acceptable Use Policy** to acknowledge and agree to school policies.

During digital and hybrid learning, each student and family will sign a Digital Learning Contract acknowledging they will abide by rules and norms to keep all students safe and to keep the online learning environment productive.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students will be expected to adhere to dress code requirements when on campus for in-person learning. The expectation for students at home on digital learning days is that non-revealing, daytime wear clothing (no pajamas, nightgowns, or swimwear) should be worn for all live online meetings with teachers or classmates. Clothing with inappropriate words or graphics should not be worn during online meetings in view of others.

During hybrid learning, students who are attending school in-person may dress down on Mondays and Fridays. The dress code is in effect for other days students are on campus in-person.

Brighten Academy Charter School has adopted this dress code to promote an educational atmosphere that minimizes distractions, maximizes learning, promotes a sense of Crew and

school spirit, and teaches students the importance of dressing for success. Students' dress should reflect self-respect and pride in their school.

The focus of this dress code is on modesty, neatness, and cleanliness, 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.

SHIRTS

1. Shirts must be solid red, white, or navy blue in color. Shirts may have a Brighten logo or another logo that is no more than two inches high and three inches wide.
2. Shirts sanctioned and/or sold by Brighten Academy ("Spirit Shirts") such as, but not limited to: PTO, drama, school sponsored clubs, class shirts, Relay for Life, sports jerseys, etc.) may be worn any day of the week. Spirit shirts must bear the Brighten name, logo, or mascot to be deemed a "Spirit Shirt." Beginning the 2019-20 school year "Spirit Shirts" will only be available with the base colors of red, white, or blue. If your student has a Brighten Spirit Shirt from prior years that is not red, white, or blue it can be worn on Wednesdays only.
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.

BOTTOMS

1. The following styles are acceptable
 - a. Slacks
 - b. Shorts
 - c. Capri pants
 - d. Skirts
 - e. Skorts
 - f. Jumpers
 - g. Dresses
2. Acceptable colors are solid navy blue or khaki.
3. Logos that are no more than two inches high and three inches wide are permitted.
4. 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 BACK of the knee cap.
5. Additional adornments (lace, rhinestones, etc.) are not permitted.
6. Slacks may not be rolled up.
7. 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 for shirts.
3. Logos that are no more than two inches high and three inches wide are permitted.

COATS/JACKETS

All coats and jackets worn during the school day must be solid black, brown, gray, 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 or all day as an accessory.
4. Hooded sweatshirts with a full zipper are considered a jacket and allowable.

5. Hooded sweatshirts with no zipper (with or without front pocket) are considered hoodies and are not part of dress code, therefore not allowed.

SHOES

1. Shoes must be solid black, brown, gray, white, or navy blue 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 or equal to 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 the base color of the full shoe is solid.
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 other classes requiring physical activity.
7. Flip flops are not permitted.

HAIR

1. Hair must be reasonably neat and clean.
2. Hair must appear natural in color. Blue, pink, green, purple, and rainbow colored hair are examples of hair that is not 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 that are clearly visible with shorts or skirts, such as calf length or knee socks, are to be solid black, brown, gray, red, white, or navy blue in color.
2. Tights and leggings (acceptable when worn with shorts or skirts no more than 2 inches above the BACK of the knee) are to be solid black, brown, gray, red, white, or navy blue in color.

3. Logos can be no larger than 2x3 inches.
4. Hats or distracting decorative headbands, subject to staff discretion, may not be worn indoors unless specifically authorized by administration or staff for special-dress days.

JEWELRY

1. Students 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. Earrings of any style may not extend more than 1 inch below the earlobe.
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.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION

1. Students should come ready to actively participate in class to learn about personal fitness, develop and improve different sport skills, and learn more about a variety of different sports.
2. All students will dress down in a red, white, navy blue, or Spirit Shirt. Shirts will follow other dress code requirements related to style and fit.
3. All students will dress down in navy athletic pants or shorts (no more than 2 inches above the BACK of the knee.) Leggings are not permitted.
4. All students will wear tennis shoes during PE. Tennis shoes need to adhere to the dress code standards. See dress code for shoes requirements.

Students will be given a daily grade for dressing out and participation. This will make up part of their overall grade in the class. After the third time of a student not dressing out the student's parents will be notified.

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.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ONLY

Middle school students (grades 6-8) may also purchase a jersey pass for \$1 to wear their favorite sports team shirt on Fridays.

Regardless of a purchased jersey pass, on Fridays, middle school students may also wear jeans provided they are free from holes, tears, or fraying and otherwise comply with the Dress Code requirements for pants.

Middle school (grades 6-8) may also purchase a hat pass for \$1 to wear on Friday.

Middle school students are permitted to wear sandals with a back strap, provided they are closed toed.

WEAR WHAT YOU WANT WEDNESDAYS

Students may “dress down” on Wednesdays; 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 Wednesdays, provided they are free from holes, tears, or fraying and otherwise comply with the Dress Code requirements for pants.

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).

7 C’S GREEN SHIRT

Seven C’s Green Shirts 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) craftsmanship;
- (2) commitment;
- (3) critical thinking;
- (4) creativity;
- (5) curiosity;
- (6) community;
- (7) crew.

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. Middle school green hoodies are the only hoodies permissible.

SCHOOL DANCES

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

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 STUDIES AND OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS

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

CLOTHES CLOSET

Brighten Academy offers gently used uniform clothing in a variety of sizes and appropriate colors in our Clothes Closet. The clothing is free of charge, and families can “shop” for items anytime of the school year. The clothing is also used in case of an emergency. Students may use items for as long as needed. Donations are accepted, and volunteer credit (1/2 credit per 10 items) is given for donations.

Clothes Closet will be not be open for “shopping” during digital or hybrid learning, but families may request sizes as needed and items will be sent home.

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, or the student can opt to select something from the Clothes Closet.

Upon the third (3rd) documented Dress Code violation the student will receive a classroom disciplinary referral. Thereafter, violations will follow the Brighten discipline code.

For additional information, please refer to the Brighten Academy Handbook policy on student discipline.

VERIFY DRESS CODE COMPLIANCE

Students or parents who are unsure whether a specific outfit or article of clothing complies with this policy should ask an administrator or staff member 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.

For additional information, please refer to the Brighten Academy Handbook policy on student discipline.

Student Attendance, Tardies, Check Outs

Student engagement in learning is paramount to academic success. During hybrid and digital learning, teachers will measure attendance in many ways in conjunction with student engagement: participation/presence in discussions during live (synchronous) sessions, collaboration with peers, interacting with recorded (asynchronous) information from the teacher, completing/turning in work in a timely manner, etc. Students should make every effort to engage with the learning on a daily basis.

Teachers will communicate expectations that translate to “attendance” criteria for digital and hybrid learning models. This criteria will contain due dates, as well as levels of engagement that qualify as attendance.

Attendance is an essential part of the learning process. It is the responsibility of the parents to encourage participation in school, and 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 or checks out early due to illness, 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 a.m.) on any given student day. To be counted present for the day, students must check in before 11:30 a.m. and stay the remainder of the day or arrive by 8:00 a.m. and stay until 11:30 a.m.

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 due to a serious illness or death in the family.
- Any condition rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
- Out-of-school suspension 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.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and until further notice, many factors will be considered in determining when a student with COVID-19 or an illness consistent with COVID-19 will be permitted to return to school. The latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) considers test results, prior antibodies, symptoms, and contact tracing when determining how long a student must quarantine before being allowed to return to school. The DPH requires schools to report all COVID-19 illnesses and illnesses consistent with COVID-19 and contact tracing for such illnesses.

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.
- Any absence for which a written note (handwritten, typed, or email is acceptable) is not received.

Please consult the Brighten Academy policy manual for the full policy on attendance.

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

Please see the Brighten Academy Policy Manual for the complete details on the administration of absences.

Our intention is to work with each family at Brighten Academy during digital and hybrid learning to minimize absenteeism with clear guidelines for student engagement. Our plan will include close communication between the school, teachers, and families, along with a commitment to help all students engage with learning.

After 4 unexcused absences, the school will initiate the process for excessive absences with parent contact. Upon subsequent unexcused absences, school contact may include referral to the school counselor or a school social worker, notification of county representatives or the authorities, or referral to DFACS in accordance with Georgia compulsory school attendance laws.

Tardiness

It is expected that students will arrive at school on time to begin the instructional day. A student who is tardy misses important morning announcements and the initial directions and instruction for the day.

- The school day officially begins at 8:00 a.m. All children who **arrive at** or after 7:59 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.
- 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 3:15 p.m. Any student leaving before this time will be counted as having an early check-out.
- 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 3:15 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.
- 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.
- To prepare for a safe dismissal of the school, no check-outs between 2:55 and 3:15 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday will be allowed and no check-outs between 12:40 and 1:00 pm on Wednesday will be allowed.

Student Make Up Work/ Late Assignments

Students who are absent from school/class will be given the opportunity to make up assignments. The general rule is that work needs to be completed and submitted for evaluation within three days of returning to school. We understand that students who are out for extended periods of time may need more time to complete work. The teacher will be happy to discuss timelines if needed.

Students are assessed on their Habits of Scholarship as an effective learner. In order to master this standard, students must regularly complete and turn in quality work. In addition to mastering the Habits of Scholarship standard, students must mount multiple forms of evidence proving they have mastered the content. If work is not submitted or is inconsistently submitted, we cannot properly assess the student's level of understanding. This can result in a lower performance grade or a score of incomplete on the report card.

Student Withdrawal

The office requires 24 hour notice to prepare all withdrawal forms.

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.

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 infractions
- To provide uniform administrative and disciplinary procedures
- To treat students equitably and inclusively

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, equitable, inclusive, and respectful environment both in the educational setting and in our communities. Students at Brighten Academy will engage in lessons to help them learn to disagree with respect, resolve conflicts in a positive way, and participate in restorative practices to mend relationships. Learning experiences developing norms and the classroom community will be used to build a culture of crew where students treat their peers and teachers with respect, feel supported in their feelings, and help one another succeed.

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 (pending a Due Process Hearing) 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 that violate the school norms and community agreements of Brighten Academy. Every specific variation of conduct may not have been included. Consequently, students should expect to be held accountable for conduct that is inappropriate and contrary to the mission and core beliefs established in the Brighten Academy Charter.

During hybrid learning, students will be instructed on appropriate social distancing, creating and maintaining healthy habits with regards to handwashing and cleanliness, and the social-emotional effects of the pandemic. Students are expected to treat others with respect and adhere to guidelines involving face masks, social distancing, and other measures put into place recommended to protect everyone's safety.

Student Conduct Discipline Tiers

Students generally travel through three levels of the Discipline Cycle before reaching a Due Process Hearing. At each level teaching and administrative supports are built in to help students be more successful in meeting our school and community norms. Students with a singular offense will begin on Level I. Students may be referred to the office and stay on Level I for up to three (3) singular non-related offenses. Upon the third offense the student is moved to Level II. Students on Level II who incur an additional offense of any nature will be moved to Level III and have consequences which could carry a maximum penalty of expulsion pending a Due Process Hearing. School supports including the Student Support Team (SST) committee are also used to help students successfully meet school and community norms during the discipline cycle.

Examples of Level I or II and Zero Tolerance Offenses are outlined in our Discipline policies located in the Policy Manual <http://www.brightenacademy.com/policies.html>

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

ZERO TOLERANCE See Board Policy for a comprehensive list, including, but not limited to:

- Drugs (Possession or Use)
- Assault & Battery
- Causing Danger
- Intimidation/Threats
- Leaving Premises (On or Off Campus)
- Weapons (Possession or Use)
- Bullying
- Theft

School Communication/Intervention for Behavior Referrals:

When a child receives an office referral an administrator or his/her designee will investigate the incident. Parents will be notified of the findings and determined consequence(s).

To ensure Due Process and an opportunity to determine root causes of behaviors once a child reaches Level II, a parent/teacher conference is held. The intent of the conference is to create an action plan to proactively determine the responsibility of the parents, students, and school to help the student be more successful in the classroom and school community. An administrative observation will also be conducted to provide further insight on the behaviors, and the student will be referred to Tier 2 of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). In Tier 2, a behavior goal is established and monitored for effectiveness to help the student.

Students who receive subsequent administrative referrals will be referred to the Tier 3 Student Support Team. Previous behavior goals will be reviewed, revised as needed, and a behavior contract will be developed. If the student fails to make progress on the goals and behavior contract developed in the SST Committee, the student will be referred to a Due Process Hearing with a consequence rendered up to, and possibly including, expulsion. The Due Process Hearing policy is outlined in detail in the policy manual. All federal and state law Due Process procedures will be followed for all Due Process Hearings.

A Waiver may be offered in place of a Due Process Hearing at the discretion of administration. The waiver will include stipulations that must be met and takes the place of the hearing.

Classroom Discipline Expectations

Staff members with direct responsibility for supervision of students are expected to follow a discipline plan that supports the developmental and emotional needs of the student and reflects the community agreements of the school. This plan should be multi-leveled and should consist of reasonable, age-appropriate expectations for children, as well as structures to give students an opportunity to take accountability for ways they contribute to and detract from the crew culture. 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.

During hybrid learning, students will be instructed on appropriate social distancing, creating and maintaining healthy habits with regards to handwashing and cleanliness, and the social-emotional effects of the pandemic. Students are expected to treat others with respect and adhere to guidelines involving face masks, social distancing, and other measures put into place recommended to protect everyone's safety.

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, smartwatches, ITOUCH, IPETS, etc.) and toys are not permitted at school.

Students in ~~grades 4-8~~ * **grades K-8** are allowed to participate in a voluntary Bring Your Own Technology Plan. Students must have parent and teacher permission to participate in this program. Failure to comply with this policy for use of the BYOT will result in a loss of BYOT privileges and/or disciplinary action. Further incidents will result in an office discipline referral.

The homeroom teacher reserves the right to revoke a student's privilege regarding BYOT at any time and will inform the parent if such an instance occurs.

The school shall bear no responsibility for lost, stolen, or broken electronic recreational devices or toys. Students who are using and/or in possession of electronic devices when not permitted will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including an office discipline referral. If electronic recreational devices or toys are removed from a child's possession, a parent will be required to pick up the item from the front office.

[See the technology section for more information on the online learning contract.](#)

Assessment and Grading

Assessment and grading 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 state standardized tests (Georgia Milestones, etc.)
- Other standardized test measures employed by the Douglas County School System (e.g., ITBS)
- Common Benchmark Assessments
- Projects
- Discussions, daily skill maintenance, daily learning activities

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 in graded work folder for K-5 and electronic grade access for 6th-8th graders
- Parent conferences
- Behavior logs
- Student Led Conferences

Where appropriate, thematic and project based instruction of the Common Core Georgia Standards of Excellence (CC-GSE) 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.

During digital and hybrid, students will maintain an electronic work portfolio. Parents will have access to the student's portfolio. Parent conferences will be conducted via zoom or phone calls. In-person conferences are suspended until further notice.

Grading Policy

Brighten Academy will utilize standard based assessment. The following definitions will be used when assessing a student.

Standard – What a student is to know, understand, and be able to do (multi-dimensional)

Element – What a student is to know, understand, and be able to do (uni-dimensional)

Formative Assessment – Formal and informal assessment that takes place WHILE a student is learning (Ex: quiz, observation, ticket out the door, journal prompt, center work, oral reading, discussion protocols, quick checks)

Summative Assessment – Formal assessment conducted at the end of an instructional lesson, unit, or set of lessons or units (Ex: benchmark tests, standardized tests, tests, projects)

Mastery – student **consistently** demonstrates **independent** competency free from major errors and omissions regarding any of the information or process (simple or complex) that were **explicitly** taught

Independent – Student completes task without teacher assistance. Students who are being served with an **IEP** are entitled to the assistance outlined per content area. For example, a student who requires certain teacher assistance according to goals outlined in the IEP, would be deemed independent. Modifications through **SST** that do not alter the content (extra time, preferential seating, reduced work, etc.) will be deemed independent. The Director or other authorized school leader will support the classroom teachers' development of assessment based on students who are being served through SST, IEP, or a 504.

Assessment should be a tool that provides positive feedback and accurate representation of what a child has learned compared to the standard. The following Grading Scale will be employed throughout Brighten Academy to provide consistency among grade levels. Grades will be given on all report cards and posted on all permanent records in grades K-8, using this scale.

3D Exceeding

In addition to score a 3.0 performance, INDEPENDENTLY goes beyond what is taught; transfers to real world contexts

3.0 Meeting

INDEPENDENTLY understands and applies grade level simple and complex concepts

2.5 Approaching

WITH GUIDANCE understands and applies most grade level simple and complex concepts

2.0 Progressing

WITH MUCH SUPPORT inconsistently understands and applies some grade level simple and complex concepts

1.5/1.0 Not Progressing

WITH MUCH SUPPORT understands few simple grade level concepts; performs below grade level

* Not Evaluated

Standards in the domain were not assessed or there is not adequate data to provide a grade

Please note that a child who is not working independently will not be able to obtain a score higher than a 2.0.

Brighten Academy strives to educate the whole child, and to that end students will also receive grades and be assessed on our 7 Cs. Each grade level team will use learning targets specifically tailored for their students. The 7 Cs can be categorized as Effective Learner traits and Ethical People traits, and this follows along with EL Education's philosophy that character education is equally as important as mastery of knowledge and skills and producing high quality work. The chart below outlines how the 7 Cs will be assessed. More information will come from your child's teacher on how this will be implemented.

BACS will graduate students who leave Brighten better than they came and ready to do more than they think possible, equipped with a crew mindset of equity and inclusion and equipped with the Habits of Scholarship to become effective learners.

Kindergarten

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
<p>I can identify the needs and feelings of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can identify different feelings. • I can identify my feelings. • I can identify the feelings of others. 	<p>I can be responsible for my words and actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can describe what being responsible for my behavior looks and sounds like. 	<p>I can understand it's okay for people to have different ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can play well with others by accepting other's ideas. • I can take turns with my peers. • I can speak kindly with my peers even when we disagree.
<p>Sample Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings Chart • Verbal Sentence Stems • Labeled Picture 	<p>Sample Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrated Concept Map for daily segments 	<p>Sample Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role play to model taking turns and respecting other's ideas • Teacher Checklist • Rubrics

Responsibility	Perseverance
I can try my best to complete high quality work.	I can use feedback from teachers and/or peers to improve the quality of my work.
I can begin to maintain focus in class.	I can tell my story as a learner using evidence from my portfolio.
I can ask questions to help me understand and support myself as a learner.	I can identify when I need help to complete my work.

1st Grade

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
<p>I can identify the needs and feelings of others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can identify my needs. • I can identify the needs of others. • I can identify my feelings. • I can identify the feelings of others. 	<p>I can be responsible for my words and actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can define responsibility • I can describe what being responsible for my behavior looks and sounds like. 	<p>I can understand it's okay for people to have different opinions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can define the meaning of opinion. • I can speak kindly with my peers, even when we disagree.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can demonstrate acceptance by the way I treat people
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Responsibility	Perseverance
I can sustain focus and complete classwork on time.	I can use feedback from teachers and/or peers to improve the quality of my work.
I can begin to complete high quality work through multiple drafts.	I can tell my story as a learner using evidence from my portfolio.
I can track my progress to support myself as a learner.	I can identify when I need help to complete my work.

2nd Grade

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
I can identify and describe the needs and feelings of others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can describe what my feelings look, feel, and sound like. I can describe what others' feelings look, feel, and sound like. 	I can be responsible for my words and actions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can define responsibility I can describe what being responsible for my behavior looks and sounds like. 	I can respectfully acknowledge other's point of view, even when I do not agree. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can accept other's points of view, even when we don't agree. I can speak kindly with my peers, even when we disagree. I can demonstrate acceptance by the way I treat people.

Responsibility	Perseverance
I can do my best to complete high quality work.	I can use feedback from teachers and/or peers to improve the quality of my work.
I can stay on task to focus on my work.	I can tell my story as a learner using evidence from my portfolio.
With support, I can begin to utilize rubrics, revisions, feedback, and reflections to complete high quality work on time.	I can appropriately seek help from peers and others to complete my work.

3rd Grade

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
<p>I can identify and care about the needs and feelings of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can describe and explain the needs and feelings of others. • I can identify the difference between telling and tattling. • I can identify appropriate facial expressions for a situation. • I can identify ways I can meet someone’s needs. 	<p>I can show responsibility for my words and actions by following Crew norms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can identify and explain my Crew norms and how they positively create an equitable and inclusive environment. <p>I can explain and describe my Crew norms and how they contribute to a more equitable and inclusive environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can say what an equitable classroom looks, feels, and sounds like. • I can tell when things aren’t equitable and inclusive. <p>I can take the initiative to treat my environment with respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can leave no trace. 	<p>I can respectfully acknowledge other’s point of view, even when I do not agree.</p>

Responsibility	Perseverance
I can begin to use goals to support myself as a learner.	I can use feedback from teachers and/or peers to improve the quality of my work.
I can begin to use action plans to support myself as a learner.	I can reflect on myself as a learner to tell my academic story.
I can track my progress to support myself as a learner.	I can appropriately seek help from peers and others to complete my work.
With support, I can begin to utilize rubrics, revisions, feedback, and reflections to complete high quality work on time.	
I can begin to apply academic strategies to fully engage my learning	

4th Grade

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
<p>I can identify and care about the needs and feelings of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can describe and explain the needs and feelings of others. • I can identify ways I can meet someone’s needs. • I can identify appropriate facial expressions for a situation. • I can identify ways I help/hurt others. 	<p>I can show responsibility for my actions by treating others with kindness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can show others I am listening because I keep my hands, feet, and body still, and I look at the person who is speaking. • I return borrowed items in the same condition I receive them. <p>I can explain and describe my Crew norms and how they contribute to a more equitable and inclusive environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can say what an equitable classroom looks, feels, and sounds like. • I can tell when things aren’t equitable and inclusive. <p>I can take the initiative to treat my environment with respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can leave no trace by cleaning up after myself and throwing trash in the trash can. 	<p>I can respectfully acknowledge other’s point of view, even when I do not agree.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can speak kindly with my peers, even when we disagree. • I can demonstrate acceptance by the way I treat people.

Responsibility	Perseverance
<p>With support, I can develop goals and action plans and track my progress to support myself as a learner.</p>	<p>I can use feedback from teachers and/or peers to improve the quality of my work.</p>
<p>With support, I can utilize rubrics, revisions, feedback, and reflections to complete high quality work on time.</p>	<p>I can reflect on myself as a learner to tell my academic story with evidence.</p>
<p>I can begin to apply organizational strategies to fully engage my learning.</p>	<p>I can appropriately seek help from peers and others to complete my work.</p>
<p>I can apply academic strategies to fully engage in my learning.</p>	

5th Grade

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
<p>I can identify and care about the needs and feelings of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can describe and explain the needs and feelings of others. • I can identify ways I can meet someone’s needs. • I can identify appropriate facial expressions and body language for a situation. • I can identify ways I help/hurt others. 	<p>I can show responsibility for my actions by treating others with kindness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can show others I am listening because I keep my hands, feet, and body still, and I look at the person who is speaking. • I return borrowed items in the same condition I receive them. <p>I can explain and describe my Crew norms and how they contribute to a more equitable and inclusive environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can say what an equitable classroom looks, feels, and sounds like. • I can tell when things aren’t equitable and inclusive. <p>I can take the initiative to treat my environment with respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can leave no trace by cleaning up after myself and throwing trash in the trash can. 	<p>I can respectfully understand and accept others’ viewpoints that are different from my own.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can listen to others’ point of view when we disagree without interrupting or arguing.

Responsibility	Perseverance
With support, I can develop goals and action plans and track progress to support myself as a learner	I can use feedback from teachers and/or peers to improve the quality of my work.
I can apply academic strategies to fully engage in my learning.	I can reflect on myself as a learner to tell my academic story with evidence.
I can apply organizational strategies to fully engage in my learning.	I can appropriately seek help from peers and others to complete my work.

With support, I can utilize rubrics, revision, feedback, and reflections to complete high quality work on time.

6th Grade

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
<p>I can explain how to show concern for the needs and feelings of others and to take action to ensure that their needs are met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can describe the steps of effective listening. • I know how to use accountable talk to show others they have been heard in an academic setting. • I know how to use accountable talk to show others they have been heard in a non-academic setting. 	<p>I can explain how to show responsibility for my actions and how to treat others around me in a respectful manner (friends, family, and community members).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know the principles of restorative practices. • I know how to use restorative practices to right a wrong. 	<p>I know how to have a respectful conversation on a disagreement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know how to have a respectful conversation on a disagreement.

Responsibility	Perseverance
I can develop goals and action plans and track progress to support myself as a learner.	I can provide kind, specific, and helpful feedback to my peers and incorporate feedback to improve the quality of my work.
I can utilize rubrics, revisions, feedback, and reflections to complete high quality work on time	I can prove that I am a quality learner with evidence from my portfolio.
I can stay on task and problem solve through sharing ideas and resources while being respectful of others.	I can offer appropriate help to others and seek help from peers and others to complete my work.

7th Grade

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
<p>I can explain how to show concern for the needs and feelings of others and to take action to ensure that their needs are met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can describe the steps of effective listening. • I know how to use accountable talk to show others they have been heard in an academic setting. • I know how to use accountable talk to show others they have been heard in a non-academic setting. 	<p>I can explain how to show responsibility for my actions and how to treat others around me in a respectful manner (friends, family, and community members).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know the principles of restorative practices. • I know how to use restorative practices to right a wrong. 	<p>I know how to use accountable talk stems to express disagreement or confusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can explain how to use accountable talk. • I know how to use accountable talk stems to express disagreement or confusion.

Responsibility	Perseverance
I can develop goals and action plans and track progress to support myself as a learner.	I can provide kind, specific, and helpful feedback to my peers and incorporate feedback to improve the quality of my work.
I can utilize rubrics, revisions, feedback, and reflections to complete high quality work on time.	I can prove that I am a quality learner with evidence from my portfolio.
I can stay on task and problem solve through sharing ideas and resources while being respectful of others.	I can offer appropriate help to others and seek help from peers and others to complete my work.

8th Grade

Care	Leadership	Respectful Disagreement
<p>I can explain how to show concern for the needs and feelings of others and to take action to ensure that their needs are met.</p>	<p>I can explain how to show responsibility for my actions and how to treat others around me in a respectful manner (friends, family, and community members).</p>	<p>I know how to use accountable talk to express myself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can explain how to use accountable talk.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can describe the steps of effective listening. • I know how to use accountable talk to show others they have been heard in an academic setting. • I know how to use accountable talk to show others they have been heard in a non-academic setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know the principles of restorative practices. • I know how to use restorative practices to right a wrong. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know how to use accountable talk to express myself.
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Responsibility	Perseverance
I can develop goals and action plans and track progress to support myself as a learner.	I can provide kind, specific, and helpful feedback to my peers and incorporate feedback to improve the quality of my work.
I can demonstrate consistent use of academic and organizational strategies to fully engage in my learning.	I can prove that I am a quality learner with evidence from my portfolio.
I can utilize rubrics, revisions, feedback, and reflections to complete high quality work on time.	I can offer appropriate help to others and seek help from peers and others to complete my work.
I can use effective research strategies to investigate a topic of study.	

Homework

Hybrid and digital learning will require students to work on many skills at home, therefore “homework” may be incorporated into a student’s daily digital work. Reading and math skill work is advised for all students daily.

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 st Grade:	15-30 minutes nightly
2 nd -3 rd Grade:	30-45 minutes nightly
4 th -8 th Grade:	45-60 minutes nightly

Recess and Playground

Brighten Academy has an area where our students can play in a safe, age appropriate environment. The faculty and staff feel that physical activity is very important to students. There may be times when recess is used to resolve a conflict, participate in restorative practices, or complete unfinished learning.

As long as the temperature is 40 degrees or higher, the students are allowed to go outside when conditions are dry and as the teacher permits. On days where air quality is poor or heat advisories are issued, outdoor play will be suspended.

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

Playground equipment and Gaga Ball game pit use will be restricted during hybrid and digital learning due to the inability to properly sanitize in between groups. Play will be restricted to designated areas for single class use to maintain social distancing. Designated areas include parts of the parking lot (blocked for safety), the outdoor classroom area (excluding the area adjacent to the building running parallel to Timber Ridge Road due to utility access points), and the field beside the playground equipment. The CDC guidelines encourage outdoor time for students.

Movies in the Classroom

There may be times when a teacher chooses to show a movie in the classroom to enhance the curriculum. The guidelines for movies are as follows:

- For students in Kindergarten-3rd grade, only “G” rated movies will be shown. Prior parent written approval must be obtained for a K-3 child to view a PG movie.
- For students in 4th-8th grade, teachers may show rated “G” or “PG” movies with proper vetting for content and appropriateness. In the beginning of the school year, parents of 4th-8th graders will sign off on the beginning of the year forms acknowledging that “G”

and “PG” rated movies may be shown. Parents may notify the school in writing if they do not wish for their child to view “PG” or “PG-13” rated movies.

- Special permission should be gained from parents of students in grades 4-8 to watch a “PG-13” rated movie.
- Under no circumstances will a movie rated “R” be shown.

During hybrid or digital learning, the expectation is that all videos or movies shown are directly linked to instruction.

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, acknowledging they are in support of these requirements and ensures 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. Report cards and other documents will be maintained in the office until the requirements are met. Please note that half of the hours must be completed by January 1 of each school year. Families who join us later in the year will be asked to earn two hours per month enrolled. If a circumstance exists that may impede a family from earning their volunteer credits, please notify the school administration.

Ways to Obtain Volunteer Credits (10 credits must be earned by January 1st)

Volunteer Activity	Credit	Per	Notes
Participate in a committee or subcommittee	1	Hour	
Serve as a Board Member or PTO Officer	20	Year	
Serve as a PTO Committee Chair	10	Event	
Serve as a mentor or tutor	2	Hour	
Classroom room parent	10	Year	
Volunteer in the classroom, media center, specials, clubs, car riders, lunch room, office, or other school event/activities (activities include, but not limited to PTO events, Board events, Athletic events, Fine Arts Events, Book Fair, etc.)	1	Hour	
Complete at home projects making games, crafts, or assisting in other ways	1/2	Hour	Requires signature from staff member
Volunteer as a proctor during testing (per hour)	1	Hour	
Sponsor a club or sport (per hour)	1	Hour	
Attend focus groups, parent workshops, student led / teacher conferences, Brighten Basics, School Performances, Open House, Athletic Events, Board Meeting, PTO meetings, Celebrations, and other school events	1	Event	

Lawn maintenance	2	Hour	Bring own equipment/supplies
Chaperone on field studies	1	Hour	Overnight trips = 12 credits per day (must have fingerprint/background check and listed as an official chaperone)
Saturday Volunteer Days	2	Hour	Bring own equipment/supplies
Coordinate, contribute or present in school wide programs including, but not limited to... Career Day, Community Circle, Charter School Week	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
Complete parent survey	1	Per survey	
Donation of clothing to the Clothes Closet (must be in good condition and comply with uniform standards)	½	Per 10 articles	
Facilitating the Completion of 7 C's Deck	5	Per Family	Teacher's Signature
Join PTO, Booster Club for Band, Sports, or Other	1	Per Family	Signature required
Student attendance—0 absences and 0 tardies per month	1	Per Family	
Sign and return important school documents (i.e. report cards, standardized test information, re-enrollment forms, etc.)	1	Per Child	
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.

If a circumstance exists that may impede a family from earning their volunteer credits, please notify the school administration.

Failure to comply with the parent compact may result in loss of, extracurricular privileges (dances, field days, field studies). See section on extracurricular activities in this handbook for more information.

During hybrid and digital learning, families will earn one credit per day of digital learning. Families should plan to track this on the electronic platform. In-person gatherings have been suspended until further notice.

Students Not in Good Standing

As a school of choice, we have the responsibility to make sure all parties (school, parent, and student) are working together to provide an optimum learning environment. Student, parent, and school expectations are outlined in our Parent Contract, Discipline/Student Code of Conduct, and our charter.

Since we are a team, we pledge to help you and your child meet his/her learning goals and comply with Brighten's procedures and policies. To be deemed in good standing we have the following criteria:

- *Meeting expectations of parent compact, including being current on volunteer hours
- *No grades of "incomplete" due to not turning in assignments
- *No outstanding fees related to meal charges, ASP, book returns, clubs/athletics, etc.
- *Meeting expectations of student contract/discipline code

If the expectations above are not met we will notify you via phone or email and give you an opportunity to discuss the concerns. If the issues cannot be resolved you may be deemed as "not in good standing." This will impact your child's ability to participate in extracurricular activities and the school will maintain all records in the office (including report cards) for your review.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities will be conducted following the guidelines set forth by the state and local governments and the CDC guidance on group size gatherings. More information will be communicated by the club/extracurricular sponsor.

We work hard to offer a robust extracurricular program for our students. Some of these programs are free and others are fee based to help offset the operational and supply costs for the program. We begin (most) of our clubs and extracurricular programs in late September. You will receive a listing of all available activities in September.

Students must be deemed in "good standing" in order to participate in extracurricular programs. In good standing is defined as:

- *Meeting expectations of parent compact, including being current on volunteer hours
- *No grades of "incomplete" due to not turning in assignments
- *No outstanding fees related to meal charges, ASP, book returns, clubs/athletics, etc.
- *Meeting expectations of student contract/discipline code

In addition to our club program, Brighten Academy considers the following activities as extracurricular and subject to the provision of being in "good standing."

- *Participation in Field Day (K-8)
- *Participation in Behavior Reward Days (6-8)
- *After School Program (ASP)
- *Beta Club Convention

Field Study Student Guidelines

All field studies (field trips) are suspended until further notice during hybrid and digital learning.

Field studies are carefully planned outings designed with a clear purpose to support and enrich the curriculum. Unlike field trips where students are passive participants, field studies require students to engage in research, inquiry techniques, and active investigations. Field studies enhance the curriculum while deepening learning for students. Students are expected to engage fully in the experience, maximize their understanding, and display the norms of our crew culture during field studies outside of the school campus.

Field study dress: Students must always dress for a field study 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 study 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 study 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 study would not be considered an excused check out.

Field study check outs from field study site:

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

Chaperone Lottery:

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

General Field Study Policies:

1. Any adult chaperoning a field study will be subject to a criminal background check. A criminal background check must be completed every year for those wishing to chaperone field studies. See office personnel for more information.
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 studies. 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 study, an adult chaperone must remain with the students at all times. This includes evening times.

4. During overnight field studies, 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 study. 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 study.

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

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/Rise Up 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 annually. **Attendance awards are suspended until further notice.**
 - **Annual attendance** awards will be presented as follows:
 - **Perfect Attendance** – 0 absences, 0 tardies
 - **Excellent Attendance** – 0 absences, 0 unexcused and up to 2 excused tardies
- **Director's Honor Club** – Students who achieve a 3D for any Standard 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** – Students who earn "meets" **in every category** of the 7Cs Habits of Scholarship 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.

Class Parties and Celebrations

Celebrations shall take place in a virtual setting. In-person celebrations and parties are suspended until further notice.

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. We do not have the proper materials to cut and serve whole cakes and cookies, so please adhere to individual servings.

After School Program (ASP)

The After School Program is suspended during digital learning. Updated information will come as needed.

The After School Program will resume beginning October 19, 2020. See the ASP handbook for updated information.

Mission

The mission of Brighten Academy's After School Program (ASP) is to provide a safe, nurturing and engaging environment for its elementary and middle school students. We desire to engage with the whole child physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually through developmentally and age appropriate activities.

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 refer to the ASP Handbook or see the ASP Director with any questions.

Lost and Found

Parents and students 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.

During hybrid learning, parents should contact their child's teacher for information about lost items. Building visits are restricted until further notice.

Hybrid/In-Person Learning

Safety is our top priority as we welcome students back to our building. Our administration and staff have worked hard to identify and implement practices to minimize risk and begin a return to normalcy in learning and instruction. Although the handbook covers most topics, here is a list (not exhaustive) of safety protocols:

- Access to water will be in the classrooms only. Water fountains will be covered/inaccessible until further notice.
- Increased cleaning procedures will be implemented.
- Arrival and dismissal for social distancing
- Health screenings
- Face masks/coverings required inside common areas of school and when social distancing is not possible
- Room capacities identified and posted according to square footage and CDC guidelines
- Students distributed according to hybrid plan to allow for social distancing
- Limited use of common areas
- Cleaning more frequently during the day on high-touch areas
- Increased frequency/routine of hand washing/sanitizer use
- Classroom furniture arranged for social distancing
- No shared manipulatives or materials without cleaning in between
- No playground equipment usage due to inability to clean properly in between groups
- Signage and verbiage posted and referred to regarding social distancing and hand washing
- Clinic area and isolation areas identified and set up if needed
- Limited movement by students; teachers will move instead
- Classes will eat lunch in their classrooms
- Health checks including temperature will be required before entry into the building for all staff and students
- Arrival procedures for students include the health and temperature check before students exit the car
- Dismissal procedures—parents won't come in the building; students will be at an exit where parents will wait outside to pick up
- Close contact and consultation with a school system nurse for COVID-19 symptoms and COVID-19-like symptoms and symptom management