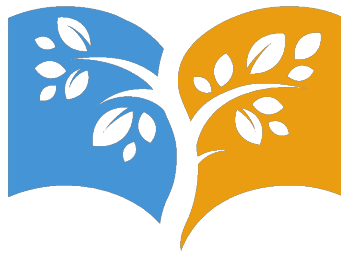


GREAT OAKS



CHARTER SCHOOLS

Great oaks, from little acorns grow

**WELCOME TO GREAT OAKS BRIDGEPORT,
WHERE LITTLE ACORNS GROW.**

We started Great Oaks Charter School in 2014. We have rules and you have to try your best to meet the expectations.

This school is a school that shows excellence, perseverance, integrity, and compassion.

We are striving to help Bridgeport's students have a better education.

We are giving scholars extra help by having math and language art tutorials.

We provide a rigorous education that ensures academic success.

We have a strict uniform policy because we do not want any distractions during our education time.

Nikayla Mesidor
(Class of 2025)

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Welcome!

Welcome to Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport! We are honored you have chosen Great Oaks as your school community and we are thrilled to partner with you this year to support your scholar's growth and learning. We take the commitment we have made to you and your children very seriously; throughout our years together we strive to provide all scholars with the education necessary to graduate from college and succeed in the world beyond. The middle school years are crucial for this long-term goal as middle school is where we ensure scholars have the learned and practiced the foundational academic and socio-emotional skills that will allow them fully engage in a rigorous, college preparatory high school program. Collaboration between the school staff and families is critical in supporting your scholar to live up to their full potential.

This handbook outlines the key policies that will enable us all to best support your children. These policies have been carefully researched and aligned to policies at other Great Oaks schools and similar schools in CT to ensure the academic well-being and overall safety of all our scholars. We thank you in advance for believing in our school and working together with us to best support your children's growth this year.

VISION AND CORE VALUES

At Great Oaks Bridgeport, our unrelenting focus on academic achievement with individualized care and support develops students' mindsets, skills and knowledge to prepare them for high school and college success. We deeply value our scholars and recognize the greatness in every individual. Our team gets to know students extremely well and uses that knowledge to educate to the individual so students reach their maximum potential.

Students will take ownership over their academic career and consistently act on their commitment to academic excellence. They will understand how the choices they make today can impact the opportunities they have in the future. They will have developed a strong sense of self and pride in their own identity. They will use their strengths to be active contributors to the Great Oaks Bridgeport community and to the greater good.

The **Core Values** that guide the Great Oaks Bridgeport community are:

Excellence: We are committed to producing high quality work and never settling for good enough. We use our unique gifts and talents for our own and the broader good.

Perseverance: We give our best effort to every task at every time. We strive to be the best version of ourselves. We persist in the face of challenges and take pride in our accomplishments.

Integrity: We tell the truth to ourselves and others. We ensure alignment between our beliefs and our actions. We engage in honest self-reflection and do what is good, just, and true.

Compassion: We see the greatness in each other. We appreciate each other's strengths while supporting each other to improve and grow. We act with care and concern for others.

THE GREAT OAKS APPROACH

We believe all our students can achieve our mission. All students can go to college. They need two essential things: a positive and nurturing school environment and a willingness to work hard and follow rules.

We intend to build character in our scholars. In order to do this, we set high expectations for the actions, mindsets and choices that have been demonstrated to lead individuals down a path of professional and personal success. In setting high expectations for what it means to be a part of the Great Oaks community we consistently call scholars' attention to the positive and negative choices they make as well as their natural consequences.

While we see each child as an individual, it is critically important that each individual learn to see their impact on our community as a whole and strive to make an overall positive impact. The classroom environment is for learning and we enforce strict rules on what it means to be ready to learn and to support, not detract, from others' learning. Just as your child will reap tangible and intangible rewards for making positive choices, they will earn consequences for making negative choices. We ask for continued parental support because the journey to college requires diligence.

Each Great Oaks teacher and staff member devotes an enormous amount of energy to help each child succeed. But we realize that Great Oaks may not be the right fit for every student. No school is perfect for each individual. We are a "choice" school. Parents and students choose to enter our lottery, and for that we are humble and grateful. We are committed to providing an environment where all students can become college-ready. For this reason, continued or serious misbehavior -- even after dozens of meetings and conversations with a student, parent, and staff, and even after hundreds of hours of one-on-one help for that student -- will not be tolerated.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Great Oaks School, in accordance with its non-discrimination policy, does not discriminate in its programs, activities, facilities, employment, or educational opportunities on the basis of race, color, age, disability, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation, and does not tolerate any form of discrimination, intimidation, threat, coercion, and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others by interfering with their freedom to learn and to work.

We further consider low expectations based on race, color, disability, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation a form of discrimination. We believe all of our students can succeed in college, regardless of their background. Our approach means all students will be expected to succeed academically and adhere to the Code of Conduct.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Daily Schedule: Monday-Thursday, the school day runs from 7:30 am – 3:45 pm. Busses will depart Great Oaks by 3:50 pm. An optional after school homework support session will run from 3:50 – 4:45 pm.

On Friday, the school day runs from 7:30 am – 12:30 pm with busses leaving Great Oaks by 12:40 pm.

Students may only be dismissed early from school if a parent arrives to pick them up and signs them out.

Cancellation Due to Poor Weather Conditions: Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport follows the same cancellation decisions as by Bridgeport Public Schools. If BPS is closed, Great Oaks will be closed. If BPS is delayed, Great Oaks will be delayed. In the event of poor weather conditions, please listen to local television and radio stations for information about school cancellations for Bridgeport Public Schools.

Required After School Times: Scholars may be required to go to detention on Fridays from 12:30-2:30. There is no late bus. Parents are responsible for picking up their scholars from detention.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Excellent attendance is absolutely vital to success at Great Oaks. Our curriculum is very rigorous and demanding, and every day is essential for scholars to keep pace.

Furthermore, regular attendance contributes to the development of responsibility, discipline, and good work habits. Great Oaks Bridgeport's attendance regulations are designed to help students understand that the benefits of regular attendance will be gained through responsibility and commitment.

Great Oaks Attendance Expectations

- ▶ Scholars are expected to attend school, and arrive on time, every day that classes are scheduled.
- ▶ Students should only miss school for serious illness. Missing the bus, vacations, appointments, and mild illness are not acceptable reasons to miss school.
Fridays after 12:30 pm or days students don't have school are great times for appointments.
- ▶ If your child is going to miss school, please call the main office by 7:30 am at 203-870-8188. Please note that speaking with main office staff or sending an email is not sufficient to excuse an absence. Great Oaks Charter School also requires written documentation excusing the scholar's absence.
- ▶ Students shall have zero unexcused absences.
- ▶ No scholar will miss more than 18 days of school over the course of the year (including excused and unexcused absences). The parent/guardian of any scholar that has 19 or more excused or unexcused absences will be required to attend a retention hearing.

Types of Absences

In accordance with state law, Great Oaks Bridgeport distinguishes between excused and unexcused absences for the purposes of record-keeping and determining cases of truancy.

According to state law, families may excuse up to 9 absences with notes. After 10 or more absences, formal documentation for absences is required. We encourage families to track their child's absences as well as gather and submit documentation, like notes from doctor's offices, on an on-going basis.

Excused Absences

- ▶ Illness or injury – up to 3 consecutive days excused by parent note (if within 9 allowed parent excuse notes).
- ▶ Medically excused or illness days are excused with a doctor’s note that specifies dates covered by the absence, and the expected date of return.
- ▶ Deaths in the family – obituary, or funeral program with the specific date of absence noted.
- ▶ Family emergency – family member very ill and close to dying, student’s home lost to fire or eviction, a family members’ military deployment, or return from deployment, natural disaster, or the family home is being quarantined by the local health department
- ▶ Religious holidays or religious obligation.
- ▶ Required court appearances – subpoena, a police summons, a notice to appear, or a signed letter from a court official.

Unexcused Absences

- ▶ Absences that are not reported by the parent and verified with proper documentation.
- ▶ Vacation days which do not occur during designated school vacations.
- ▶ Not attending classes without the knowledge and permission of the parent or school.
- ▶ Missing a day of school because of a missed school bus.

Disciplinary Absences

Absences that are the result of suspension due to a consequence are considered an absence, neither excused or unexcused per the State of Connecticut. The Connecticut State Board of Education policy states that “A student is considered to be ‘in attendance’ if present at his/her assigned school or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving a full-day in-school suspension, an out of school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent.

Tardiness

Getting to school on time is key to each scholar’s success, at school and in life. Late scholars miss academics, and tardiness in general is a bad habit. Great Oaks Bridgeport believes that the most effective way to change student behavior is to reinforce and maximize appropriate conduct such as coming to school on time.

The school’s doors open at 7:30. The first class begins at 8:00. Arrival at 8:00 or later is considered tardy. Students who earn an unexcused tardy will earn a \$5 deduction.

Early Dismissal

Scholars are expected to stay in school until the very end of the day. Early pickups are disruptive to the learning environment. Doctor's appointments should be scheduled after school hours or on Fridays, when scholars have an early dismissal time of 12:30pm.

Attendance and Truancy Interventions

Great Oaks takes attendance very seriously. We incentivize great attendance with individual recognition, advisory competition and other joy-filled opportunities.

We will also work closely with scholars and families who demonstrate a need for additional support. If a scholar demonstrates at-risk attendance behaviors, we will follow a series of progressive attendance interventions designed to help that scholar be present and in school. We encourage families to be proactive and reach out to us for support.

Finally, as a Connecticut public school, Great Oaks is bound by law to enforce specific truancy procedures. According to state law, a truant is defined as a child age 5 to 18, inclusive, who has 4 unexcused absences from school in any one-month or 10 unexcused absences from school in any school year. A habitual truant is any such child who has 20 unexcused absences within a school year. Connecticut statute 10-198a (Policies and Procedures Concerning Truants) requires that the school submit a referral for services to the Department of Children and Families no later than 15 calendar days after the failure of parent to cooperate with attempts to solve truancy issues or for any child defined as habitually truant.

Other Attendance Policies

- ▶ **Transportation and Attendance** - Missing the bus is not an acceptable reason to miss an entire day of school. Although students shouldn't miss the bus, each student should have a backup plan for getting to school. Parents should call the school to inform the Attendance Officer immediately after the student misses the bus so that the school knows the situation and can help problem-solve.
- ▶ **Appointments** - Parents/Guardians are responsible for scheduling medical appointments outside of school time. The best times are Friday afternoons after dismissal (12:30pm), or when school is not in session. In the rare case that a student has a medical appointment at a time when school is in session, it is encouraged that he/she should not be absent for the entire school day.
- ▶ **Attendance and After-School Events** - Students who are absent from school cannot attend after-school events.

STUDENT UNIFORM POLICY

Why We Have Uniforms

All scholars must come to school in the Great Oaks uniform every day. If a scholar arrives to school out of uniform with an issue that cannot be fixed at school, parents will be called and asked to bring in a uniform before the scholar is sent to class. We have a required school uniform for several very important reasons:

- 1. Uniforms unite us as a community.** When you look at the Great Oaks shirts, it is a powerful visual statement of our community. Scholars make a commitment that when they put on the Great Oaks uniform, they are agreeing to live up to the school's core values.
- 2. Uniforms reduce distractions and clothing competition.** Often scholars spend more time discussing and evaluating what others are wearing or not wearing than they spend focusing on learning. Wearing uniforms eliminates this distraction.
- 3. Uniforms make us all equal.** Whether families have high incomes or low incomes, the scholars come to school looking the same way. No one is made to feel bad about the clothes they have or don't have.
- 4. Uniforms look professional.** Scholars look neat when they arrive to school with shirts tucked into their dress pants. The scholars come mentally prepared for school and "dressed for work."

Note: *The constant evolution in fashion means that gray areas in uniform policies will emerge. Our Culture team has the authority to determine whether any specific article worn by a student adheres to our uniform policy.*

All uniforms shirts and sweaters must be purchased through Uniformz located on [4008 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT \(203\) 396-0013](#). See the following pages for a description of uniform requirements.

Dress Uniform

Middle and High School students have different uniforms. Uniform expectations for both are outlined below.

	6th – 8th Grade	9th Grade
Shirts	Scholars must wear the orange Great Oaks polo shirt every day. This must be the shirt with the Great Oaks logo stitched onto the left breast. They are available in long and short sleeve. The basic uniform polo is orange. Shirts must be tucked in at all times. When it is covered by a sweater, the collar must be visible.	Scholars must wear the <u>blue Great Oaks button down</u> shirt every day. This must be the shirt with the Great Oaks logo stitched onto the left breast. They are available in long and short sleeve. Shirts must be tucked in at all times. When it is covered by a sweater, the collar must be visible.
Ties	Middle school scholars are not required to wear ties.	Students who identify as male must wear the Great Oaks orange and blue striped tie with their button down shirts.
Undershirts	When worn, undershirts must be solid white or black. Long sleeve undershirts may not be worn with short sleeve polo shirts.	

Outer Wear	The only outer wear that may be worn in the building are navy blue cardigan sweaters. Any other jacket or outer layer must be removed and stowed in the scholar's locker while in the building.	
Bottoms	The uniform bottom is khaki dress pants, dress shorts or skirts. Pants should be tailored and must be worn at the waist. Absolutely no cargos, stretch pants or skinny jeans. Shorts and skirts must be knee length. Skirts must be plain, khaki skirt at least to the top of the knee when standing. Other specifications are same as pants. If socks or tights are visible, they must adhere to the specifications below. During warm-weather months, the Lead Dean will let students know when they can wear khaki dress shorts that come at least to the top of the knee when standing. Other specifications are same as pants.	
Hosiery	If tights are visible, they must be solid navy blue, white or black. Tights cannot be worn under shorts.	
Belts	A solid black or brown belt must be worn with all pants/shorts/skorts with belt loops.	
Shoes	Scholars must wear black or brown shoes. Sandals or boots MAY NOT be worn in the building. In the winter, scholars may leave dress shoes in their lockers and change into them when they arrive at school.	Scholars must wear <u>black or brown dress shoes</u> . Sandals or boots MAY NOT be worn in the building. In the winter, scholars may leave dress shoes in their lockers and change into them when they arrive at school.

Accessories and Additional Items

Hats	Scholars are not allowed to wear hats, scarves, or any other head coverings except for religious purposes as communicated in advance by a parent or guardian.
Sunglasses	Sunglasses are not to be worn during the school day.

How Uniforms Are Checked

- ▶ Uniforms will be checked when students enter their breakfast rooms in the morning. Students will remove any outerwear before they enter their breakfast classrooms. A staff member will then check each student for uniform adherence.
- ▶ Students with uniform issues that cannot be easily fixed (i.e. no belt, no uniform shirt, wrong pants) will be sent to the problem solving room to get a uniform loaned to them for the day. Students must give either their cell phone or bus pass for collateral to ensure they return the loaned uniform. If Great Oaks does not have a loaner uniform available, parents will be asked to bring their student a uniform.
- ▶ Students with correctable uniform issues (i.e. wrong color undershirt, un-tucked shirt, large earrings) will be required to fix the issue before they are sent to class.

- ▶ Every effort will be made to catch uniform issues at arrival, but all members of the staff will continue to verify uniform compliance throughout the day. If they notice an issue that can be easily corrected, they will ask the student to correct it. If it was an issue that had been previously addressed, the student will earn an additional consequence for non-compliance.
- ▶ Scholars will earn demerits for uniform violations.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Absolute integrity is expected of every Great Oaks scholar in all academic work. Integrity means following our core values, and the values most essential to an academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to your own work and others' work. Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework, but in all work connected to the educational process. While both students and teachers assume responsibility for maintaining these values, this statement is concerned specifically with the conduct of Great Oaks scholars.

A Great Oaks scholar's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance should be given credit, and the student's academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, Great Oaks scholars have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers.

Guidelines for Students

A. General Responsibilities

1. A student shall in no way misrepresent his or her work.
2. A student shall in no way fraudulently or unfairly advance his or her achievement in school.
3. A student shall refuse to participate in another student's failure to maintain integrity.
4. A student shall not in any other manner violate the principle of academic integrity.

B. Examples of Violations

The following actions are examples of activities that violate the Code of Academic Integrity. This is not a definitive list.

1. Knowingly representing the work of others as one's own.
2. Using, obtaining, or providing unauthorized assistance on examinations.
3. Fabricating data or information for use in academic work.
4. Forging a signature to certify completion of a course assignment.
5. Unfairly holding onto or damaging school library materials.
6. Misrepresenting one's academic accomplishments papers, or any other academic work.

Academic Misconduct

A faculty member may impose a grade penalty for any misconduct in the classroom or examination room. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, talking during an exam, bringing unauthorized materials into the exam room, and disruptive behavior in the classroom.

Promotion Criteria

Attendance

Consistent and punctual attendance to school is foundational. Nineteen (19) absences, excused or unexcused, in any year may result in a student repeating the year, at the Administration's discretion.

Promotion Policy

Class credit is determined by a combination of coursework, assessments and homework. Passing at Great Oaks requires students earning a minimum of a 70% average in a course at the end of the year. Each quarter is weighted equally for the final year average. A student who earns a 69% in a class at the end of the year does not pass the class. To be clear: There are no Ds at Great Oaks.

At Great Oaks, students will only be promoted when they have demonstrated mastery of the academic standards. We believe that promoting students to the next grade because of their age, not their readiness to complete the school work, is not beneficial to students. To build a culture of learning and achievement, and to hold students accountable for their own efforts in their education, we use a strict promotion policy outlined below for both middle and high school students.

Note: All students' graduation, promotion, and retention cases are reviewed by the Executive Director, Assistant Principal of Special Services, and Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction at the conclusion of each school year. Throughout the year, academic teams meet regularly to review grades and other factors that may impact a student's academic performance. Interventions are designed to support students, and family meetings and communication plans are put in place where necessary.

Middle School Promotion Policy

Students in grades 6 through 8 who earn below a 70% in two or more core courses will be required to repeat the grade. Students who earn below a 70% in one core course will have the opportunity to make up that credit by participating in the GO-BPT Summer Academy Program. At the end of the Summer Academy Program, students will be required to demonstrate mastery to promote. Students will only receive credit for passing the program if they demonstrate mastery on the final exam, project, or course requirements as defined at the outset of the program. If students pass their summer program, they will be promoted to the next grade level. If students do not pass the summer program, they will be required to repeat the grade.

High School Promotion Policy

All students are required to meet statewide graduation requirements in order to earn a diploma at Great Oaks. To earn a Great Oaks high school diploma, students must:

- Earn a passing scores of 70% or higher for all high school core academic course and enrichment classes required for graduation, which include:
 - Core Academic Classes
 - 4 English and Math credits
 - 3 Science and History credits
 - 2 Language credits (Note: The language offered is Spanish. In select cases, as demonstrated by testing, students may complete their Language requirement by enrolling in Reading, ESL, and/or Transition classes.)
 - Enrichment Classes
 - 4 Enrichment credits which vary by grade level and can include Physical Fitness, Art, Seminar, SAT Prep, College Readiness, etc.
 - 0.5 Health and Safety credits
 - 1 Senior Demonstration
- Meet the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Competency Determination Graduation

Requirements

- Settle all financial obligations to Great Oaks, including paying all outstanding balances for instructional supplies, building repairs, etc.

High School students who earn below a 70% in one core course will have the opportunity to make up that credit by participating in the GO-BPT Summer Academy Program. At the end of the Summer Academy Program, students will be required to demonstrate mastery to promote. Students will only receive credit for passing the program if they demonstrate mastery on the final exam, project, or course requirements as defined at the outset of the program. If students pass their summer program, they will receive the credit for the course. If students do not, they will be required to repeat the course to earn credit and/or enroll in an equivalent class to earn the required credits for graduation.

HOMework, GRADING AND ASSESSMENT POLICIES

Homework is an important component of Great Oaks' academic program. Students have three daily responsibilities related to homework:

- ▶ Track all homework assignments using their school agenda.
- ▶ Complete all homework assignments to the high standards set forth by the teachers and school.
- ▶ Turn in completed work on time according to their grade specific system.

At Great Oaks, our homework policy is that students should be practicing work done in their core classes every evening. If the homework is not a practice of already taught content, it should serve as preparation for what will be done in class the following day. For these reasons we must help our scholars build the habit of completing homework each night in all their subjects. The assigned work must be purposeful and efficient for scholars to complete. Middle School students should be spending no more than 1 hour on homework each night. 9th grade students should spend no more than 2 hours of homework each night. If they are regularly spending more time on their homework, they should ask their teacher for help.

Please keep in mind that parents can keep track of their scholars' grades on homework and all assignments by logging into eSchools. If parents want to stay more up to date with the nightly assignments given to their scholar, they can look at the Great Oaks agenda provided by the school.

Grading Policy

For each course final grades will be calculated according to the following formula:

- ▶ Homework Completion: 10%
- ▶ Class Performance (anything graded, i.e. daily participation, do now, classwork): 25%
- ▶ Formative Assessments (weekly quizzes): 25%
- ▶ Summative Assessments (unit tests, presentations, projects): 40 %

Progress reports will be sent out to parents every three weeks excluding the first three weeks of each quarter. These reports will include grades on all assignments since the beginning of the quarter and a homework average since the beginning of the quarter.

Assessments: Every 10 weeks students will take interim assessments in each of their core classes. These assessments are required to be completed so that teachers can actively plan for re-teaching. Students will also participate in three rounds of adaptive testing to pinpoint their specific learning needs in Science and Math; this test is called a NWEA MAP assessment. These will occur in the fall, winter and spring, approximately mid-September, February and May. These assessments are particularly useful in targeting the learning needs in tutorial and Science instruction. Finally, 6-8 grade students will complete ELA and Math SBAC exams in May. Again, these assessments are required for all students.

Grading Scale: We use the same grading scale as Bridgeport Public Schools, but passing grades are only a 70% or above for each class.

A+ 97 - 100%	B+ 87 - 89%	C+ 77 - 79%	F < 70
A 93 - 96%	B 83 - 86%	C 73 - 76%	
A- 90 - 92%	B- 80 - 82%	C- 70 - 72%	

Report Cards will go home one to two weeks following the close of each quarter. These reports will include a grade for each class for the quarter, teacher and tutor comments for all subjects, as well as any updated testing results for each subject.

Progress Reports will go home every three weeks on Thursday. The reports will include an itemized list of assignments and grades for each.

READING LEVELS

The best way to increase reading levels is to read! Please make sure your child reads his/her class novels and passages as well as an appropriately self-selected book at home. Their nightly independent reading should be with their 'just right' book, a book they can read and understand independently.

Students, take advantage of every opportunity you have to read – at breakfast, in class, for homework, in tutorial and while you wait for something. Every minute you spend in focused reading will pay off in an increase in your ability to read harder words and understand harder content.

Our goal at Great Oaks is to grow each student by an average of 1.5 to 2 years of growth in reading ability. According to the Fountas & Pinnell reading assessment, our desired reading levels for the end of each year in middle school are:

Grade 6	Level V
Grade 7	Level X
Grade 8	Level Z

Below is a chart that represents what two years of growth would be for students entering at each F&P level:

Start Level

**Two Year
Growth**

Start Level

**Two Year
Growth**

A	J	N	T
B	K	O	T
C	L	P	U
D	M	Q	U
E	M	R	V
F	N	S	V
G	O	T	W
H	O	U	W
I	P	V	X
J	P	W	Y
K	Q	X	Z
L	R	Y	Z+
M	S	Z	Z+

To celebrate students' efforts to improve their reading we hold quarterly parties for all students who read at least 1,000 pages in their independent reading books.

Scholars: This is your goal every quarter: read at least 1,000 pages!

CODE OF CONDUCT

Great Oaks Charter School provides a joyful, safe, respectful, and structured environment to ensure academic and social development. In order to achieve our vision, we need to ensure that we create an environment where the daily behavior of all stakeholders reinforces our commitment to our core values and our scholars can grow to their full academic and social potential. Great Oaks Charter School cares about our scholars' safety and conduct not simply when they are in school, but at all times, including when they are traveling to and from school or school activities. A disciplinary offense is a violation of the school's Code of Conduct if it occurs while the scholar is at school and/or on school grounds; is participating in a school-sponsored activity; is walking to or from school or a school-sponsored event; is walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school-provided transportation; or is walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on public transportation to and from school or a school-sponsored activity. School-related disciplinary offenses may also include serious misconduct outside the school where evidence exists that the scholar's conduct had a significant impact on the educational environment and/or the conduct has a substantial detrimental effect on the school, including the safety of the scholar, other scholars, or staff members.

Expectations

- ▶ Arrive on time
- ▶ Follow the dress code
- ▶▶ Do homework nightly

Do your own work

▶ Be respectful

Be responsible

Norms

▶ We keep our personal electronic devices (cell phones, music players) off and out of sight while we are in the building

▶ We respect the property of the school and fellow students

▶ We do not chew gum in the building

▶ We only eat food in designated areas

▶ We speak softly in the halls and classrooms

▶ We use appropriate language

▶ We do not make unwanted physical contact with others

▶ We show respect for each other

▶ We accept responsibility for our actions

▶ We follow school procedures

Procedures

In order to operate efficiently and effectively we will follow procedures throughout the day. Procedures will be explained and modeled by teachers. Students will have an opportunity to practice procedures during new scholar induction. Examples of events will have clear procedures are:

▶ Arrival at school and entry into the building

▶ Whole School / Grade Level activities

▶ Receiving and eating meals

▶ Walking in the hallways /transitioning between classes

▶ Bathroom breaks

▶ Entering the classroom

▶ Fire drills

Although consequences are given to our scholars, we support them with the following range of school responses and interventions:

Non-verbal warning

- ▶ Verbal warnings
- ▶ Time out within the classroom
- ▶ Intervention groups
- ▶ Scholar-teacher conference
- ▶ Scholar-administrator conference
- ▶ Call home to parents
- ▶ Re-setting scholars outside of classroom
- ▶ Note home to parents to be signed and brought back to school
- ▶ Meeting with parents before the scholar can return to class
- ▶ Verbal or written apology
- ▶ Modified classroom participation
- ▶ Parent asked to attend class with child
- ▶ Restorative Culture Consequences

Paycheck Systems

In order to ensure that the school's values are respected at all times, the scholar management system at Great Oaks-Bridgeport is centered around maintaining the EPIC core values (*excellence, perseverance, integrity, compassion*), and promoting success. We believe that scholars should be empowered to understand that their choices in life determine if they are rewarded or penalized. Scholars who choose to uphold the school's values are rewarded, and scholars who choose to not uphold them are held accountable and must "pay" the consequences. This philosophy is reflected in the school's Paycheck Management System, in which scholars receive "GO Dollars" for displaying the school's core values of EPIC and GRIT, but lose dollars for not upholding these values. The Paycheck Management System also allows parents, teachers, and scholars to have a constant dialogue around behavior. Every Thursday, the paycheck will be sent home. The paycheck will include all of the merits and deductions, as well as provide the scholar and parent with a summary of the scholar's behavior for the week.

Paycheck Procedure: Each educator will track merits and deductions throughout the day.

During class, teachers are required to state the scholar's name, level of merit/deduction and reason for merit/deduction. For example, "*Maria, level 1 deduction for talking*" or "*Jose, that is a merit for excellence.*" At the end of each class, teacher will input all information into the paycheck tracking system on Dean's List.

Each Friday during tutorial, tutors will conduct paycheck conferences so scholars are reflecting on their strengths and areas of struggle. Students will use the data from their paychecks to set goals for the following week. Every Thursday, paychecks will be distributed in English tutorial. Every scholar is expected to return the paycheck summary signed by his or her parent on Friday morning. When the scholar returns his/her paycheck, along with the grade report, the scholar earns \$5. Scholars who earn below \$35 each week are placed on Administrative

Consequence.

Administrative Consequence: Scholars who earn below \$35 each week are placed on Administrative Consequence. They will eat lunch silently for the week (Mon. - Fri.). During this time, they will do an analysis on their paycheck that began during tutorial and create SMART goals for improvement.

Discipline Procedure

The paycheck is not the sole form of management to be used in a classroom. The paycheck can be used to remind a scholar of what is professional/safe and allow the scholar to get back on track before the situation escalates. Along with the paycheck, teachers are expected to use the tiered-interventions listed on the Discipline Referral form to curb misbehavior. If a scholar receives three or more infractions, s/he may be sent to a reflection desk in the back of the classroom and asked to fill out a Behavior Reflection Form. Scholars will move to the reflection desk and complete the short reflection to give the scholar a chance to calm down and write about his or her feelings. The teacher is to come to meet the scholar within 4-6 minutes. If the scholar is ready to leave the reflection desk, the teacher keeps the behavior reflection form and contacts the parent sometime that day. If the scholar is not ready to leave the reflection desk, s/he may be asked to remain at the reflection desk a little longer. If the scholar continues to be disruptive, then one of the Discipline Referral forms must be completed on DeansList by the teacher. The Dean/Team Leader will meet with the scholar, contact his/her parent(s), and results in a larger paycheck deduction. If the scholar is able to get back on track and the infraction does not warrant further consequence, the scholar will be sent back to class with a pass from the Dean/Team Leader. If the scholar's actions require a greater consequence, the scholar may be sent to the Dean and either be given a parent conference request, be placed on in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.

Lunch Detention

There is one way scholars would be required to serve a lunch detention:

Scholars who earn below a \$35 on their weekly paycheck will be placed on Administrative for the week. Scholars must report to lunch detention each day and may work on reflections from Family Group leaders, homework or read independently. Scholars who earn administrative will also be required to complete community service in order to demonstrate the desire to improve our team, our family.

In-School Suspensions (ISS)/ Out of School Suspensions (OSS)

In-school Suspension and/or Mandatory Parent Conference: More severe infractions result in an in-school suspension or Mandatory Parent Conference. The scholar will be housed at a desk in the Problem Solving Room. The scholar is responsible for completing all work for that day; however, the scholar may not be permitted to attend class. The scholar must also have a restorative conversation with the Dean, as well as read an article and complete an essay reflection on the infraction.

Out-of-school Suspension: The most severe infractions will result in an out-of-school suspension. The scholar will be responsible to make up any missing work. This work can be picked up by 4:00 P.M. in the main office or before the child is sent home for the day. If scholars are picked up by 10:30 A.M. on the day of the infraction, that day counts as the suspension. If the child is picked up after 10:30 A.M., then the scholar will serve in-school suspension for the day and be suspended, out of school, for the following full school day. All parents must bring scholars back from suspension by 7:30 A.M. the next morning and meet with the Dean of Students or Principal. If

scholars return without a parent or after 7:30 A.M., the scholar will not be permitted to stay in school.

The following infractions, which warrant an ISS or OSS which last between 90 minutes and 10 days. Some unacceptable behaviors may include referral for Expulsion Hearing and/or Police Report.

- ▶ Damaging, destroying, or stealing personal or school property or attempting to do so (including graffiti)
- ▶ Improper use of technology
- ▶ Earning multiple detentions
- ▶ Disrespectful behavior to staff member, student, or visitor, including verbal disrespect, written disrespect, or disrespect on the internet.
- ▶ Possession, use, sale of alcohol or illegal drugs, or drug paraphernalia
- ▶ Possession and/or use of weapons/dangerous objects, including but not limited to firearms, needles, martial arts weapons or knives of any kind, or anything else determined illegal. (*Any illegal substances will be reported to the police as required by law*)
- ▶ Gang-related activity
- ▶ Physical altercation: Pushing, harassing, or physical contact before a fight transpires
- ▶ Leaving an area without permission
- ▶ Disruptions of lunch/after-school detention
- ▶ Verbal, sexual, physical harassment or violent threats
- ▶ Gambling
- ▶ Leaving school grounds without permission
- ▶ Repeated violations of Student Code of Conduct, including repeated disruptions to the educational process

IEP Manifestation of Disability Meeting: If a scholar reaches ten out-of-school suspensions during the school year, a manifestation of disability meeting must take place. The scholar's parent, Social Worker, and Dean must all attend the meeting. If it is determined that the scholar's behavior, which caused the suspensions, is a manifestation of his/her disability, a new plan for the scholar must be created.

Bus Expectations and Suspensions

Great Oaks Charter School busing is provided by Bridgeport Public Schools. Bridgeport Public Schools determines the eligibility of a scholar for yellow school busing. Great Oaks reserves the right to suspend an eligible scholar from the bus if he or she in any way threatens the safety and well-being of his or her peers.

Bus expectations are that scholars:

- ▶ Keep the aisles clear
- ▶ Keep their voices at level 2
- ▶ Stay seated until the bus comes to a full stop or to school where staff is waiting to greet them

▶ Keep their bottoms on their seat at all times; not standing or kneeling on seats.

Specific infractions, which may warrant a Bus Suspension include but are not limited to:

- ▶ Disrespect or not following directions from the bus driver or other transportation staff
- ▶ Endangers the safety of the bus or any individual on the bus
- ▶ Repeated violation of the Bus Expectations

During bus suspensions, families are responsible for the student's transportation to and from school.

Rewards

All field trips are based on paycheck averages. Scholars must maintain a \$50 per week average to attend field trips and school incentive events. Scholars will attend field trips and events approximately once a month. All scholars who earn above \$50 each week, earn a jeans and sneakers dress down pass for that Friday. Scholars must wear their Great Oaks uniform top, any Great Oaks t-shirt, or a college shirt and pair it with jeans and sneakers/shoes of his/her choice. Additionally, the highest paycheck earners of each team will earn a prize (*ex: Dress Down Day Pass, HW Pass, Great Oaks SWAG*) in community meeting every month. At the end of each quarter, all scholars will be able to use the dollars they have earned in total to bid in a silent auction. *Some of the prizes may include:*

- iTunes gift card
- Lunch or dinner with a teacher
- Dean of Students or Principal for the day
- Order lunch during the school day
- Professional's Day (*no uniform*)
- Sporting event
- Movies

Categories and Prizes: At the end of each month, the Dean will check Dean's List to determine which scholar has the highest overall paycheck average, highest paycheck for his/her team, and the greatest improved average from beginning to end of the month. Those scholars will receive the following prizes:

Highest Overall Paycheck Average (in the entire school): Scholar is allowed to change one rule that affects the entire school for one day. *For example:* Star Wars Day, No HW Day, Pizza Friday. Other scholars are permitted to submit rule-change ideas to this scholar.

Highest Paycheck Average Per Team: Scholars receive school SWAG:

- Buttons
- Water Bottles
- Bracelets
- Hats
- Sunglasses

Biggest Improvement Per Month: Scholars receive a mystery bag full of assorted candy, popcorn, chips, or snacks. A surprise revolutionary delivers the mystery bags, during class, to these scholars.

Announcements: Each week the School Culture bulletin board will display the Paycheck Leaderboard for the week. It will list each team name, along with the names of the top 3 scholars with the highest paycheck average in that class, for the week.

This is necessary to ensure we are highlighting scholars each week. Paychecks are still delivered on Thursdays, so announcements will happen on Friday. This will require a quick turnaround, but is essential to continue to build investment.

Spotlight: The Dean will update a bulletin board each month with the picture and rule change of the scholar who had the highest overall paycheck average in the school, highest paycheck per team, and highest growth.

EPIC Fridays

Scholars who have not earned detention the previous week earn EPIC Fridays. Scholars that earn EPIC Friday are able to wear their EPIC Swag with black or blue jeans and their choice of footwear (no high heels, sandals, or open-toed shoes). Black and blue jeans have to be as follows:

- ▶ No ripped attire (with or without leggings underneath)
- ▶ No logos or writing

Perfect Attendance

Attendance at school is critical. Students who have perfect attendance each month will be invited to a [Perfect Attendance pizza party](#).

Dress Down Days:

Occasionally Great Oaks has a full dress down or partial dress down day. When we do have these days, [the scholars need to follow these guidelines:](#)

- ▶ No shorts, pants, or skirts 2' above the knee (with or without leggings)
- ▶ No cut off or midriff shirts or tank tops
- ▶ No leggings, yoga pants, and jeggings, etc.
- ▶ No ripped attire
- ▶ No inappropriate logos
- ▶ No flip flops, open-toed shoes or sandals
- ▶ No hats or hoods can be worn in the building

FIELD TRIPS AND SOCIAL OUTINGS

In order to provide an enriched educational experience, Great Oaks staff may take scholars off campus. There are five types of off-campus outings.

- ▶ Neighborhood Walks

- ▶ School Supervised Field Trips
- ▶ Family Activities
- ▶ Social Outings
- ▶ College Visits

Neighborhood Walks may be taken as part of an academic or Physical Education Class. They are supervised by staff at a ratio of no more than 10 scholars per staff member. Scholars will not be taken more than ten blocks from the school. Permission slips are not necessary for neighborhood walks.

School Supervised Field Trips may be taken as a class, grade or school. Permission slips will always be sent home and must be returned to school by the requested deadline. Students without signed permission slips will not be able to attend field trips. Permission may not be given by phone.

Family Activities are sometimes made available to families. These outings require parents supervising their own children. They are usually in the afternoons or on weekends and are always optional. Unaccompanied scholars will not be allowed to attend Family Activities.

Social Outings are part of the unique model of Great Oaks where tutors are encouraged to develop strong relationships with scholars and their families. Your child's tutor may organize an afternoon or weekend social outing with a small group of scholars. Social outings always include at least two chaperones and a ratio of no more than 5 scholars per staff member. Social Outings must always occur in a public place. Social outings must be pre-approved by the School Director and permission slips are required.

College Visits will be scheduled for each grade level. We organize college visits for all grade levels so that students can experience the dynamics of college campuses. As a school whose mission is based in college success, an ethos of college preparation permeates our school culture. Students' cohorts are named after colleges and universities. College banners adorn the walls of the school, and college prep classes span the high school years.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones should not be seen or heard at any time. Any time a staff member sees or hears a scholar's phone out during the school day, it will be confiscated and a parent must come pick it up. It will not be returned directly to the student.

CIVILITY CODE

Our families are partners with Great Oaks staff in creating a warm and respectful environment for everyone in our team and family. We work hard to ensure that the school's values permeate all interactions with families and scholars. Therefore, school staff and families are both responsible for ensuring that all communication be mutually respectful.

While we encourage families to share any and all concerns with the appropriate school staff, the school will retain the right to end any meeting or phone conversation in which the volume, tone, or substance of the communication

is rude (name-calling or frequent interruptions), profane (cursing or profane language), or threatening. Moreover, when conversations have clearly gone past the point where productive problem-solving is an option, the school reserves the right to end the conversation and schedule additional time at a later date. At the same time, families have the right to end conversations if staff members are not displaying mutual respect and should reschedule for a later date. Families also have the option of addressing the actions of a staff member during a meeting via the family concerns procedure.

The school reserves the right to require parents, guardians, or community members who violate the civility code to provide written requests for meetings, outlining the nature of the concern and with whom they would like to speak. Because of the school's commitment to ensuring the safety of scholars and staff, and maintaining a calm, productive, positive learning environment, the school reserves the right to bar an individual from the school site if there are repeated violations to the civility code. In such a case, the school staff member will meet with a parent off-campus at an agreed-upon location (e.g. a public library, community center) or meet on campus 30 minutes after school ends.

SCHOOL VISITOR POLICY

Parents/guardians/families are a vital part of the Great Oaks community. We welcome you as a partner in the education of our scholars, and you should feel free to observe regularly at the school. In order to maximize our scholar's learning time and minimize distraction in our classrooms, we ask that you do the following:

- ▶ Please let us know in advance if you plan to visit.
- ▶ Upon arriving, sign-in with the Main Office and obtain a visitor badge to wear while in the building.
- ▶ Refrain from interacting with scholars so that they are able to pay attention to their teachers at all times.
- ▶ Turn off your cell phone prior to entering the classroom.
- ▶ Sit behind all scholars (at the back of the classroom) so that you are not blocking a child's view.
- ▶ If you would like to speak with the teacher following your visit, please contact them by phone or call the school to set up a follow up meeting. Teachers will generally be unable to meet or talk with you during their teaching time.

If a visitor is coming to school to drop something off for a scholar or to leave a message, we still require that the visitor come first to the main office. For the sake of scholar safety, we cannot have anyone unannounced in the building.

EMERGENCIES

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the school either by phone or in person. Under no circumstance should parents or guardians contact scholars in their classrooms, including after school, or attempt to withdraw scholars from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members in the school office.

Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedures

Please note, some procedures may change once the school year has officially begun. Scholars will be notified of and trained in any significant changes.

In case of emergency, if a scholar or staff member sees fire or smells smoke, he or she should close the door and notify an administrator. Upon hearing an alarm, school staff will assemble scholars in their rooms and proceed out of the building according to the fire evacuation plan posted in each room. Scholars should follow the direction of staff members who will verify the safety of the stairwells and lead scholars outside the building to the designated locations, where school staff will line up scholars by class and take attendance.

Frequently throughout the school year, scholars and staff will participate in fire drills to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the appropriate response in the event of an emergency.

In case of a more serious emergency, should it be necessary to evacuate our school before, during, or after the school day – and it appears that we will be unable to return to the school for an extended period of time or for the rest of the day – school staff and scholars will evacuate according to the school’s evacuation plan. Staff will line up scholars in a safe and orderly fashion on the sidewalks outside the evacuation site. After staff takes attendance, should conditions permit, all staff and scholars will return promptly to school.

ADDRESSING FAMILY CONCERNS

Great Oaks is committed to maintaining a strong partnership and ongoing dialogue between its teachers, staff, our scholars, and their families. If you have a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, we welcome your input and encourage you to contact the appropriate staff member at the school.

Procedures for Addressing Concerns

Step 1: Contact Staff Member Involved

If a parent has an issue or concern, the first step towards resolving the issue will be to contact the staff member involved by phone or email. The parent should call the school’s front desk to obtain phone and email contact information. The staff member and the parent will then set up a meeting to discuss the issue either on the phone or in-person and work to reach a resolution that satisfies both parties.

Step 2: Contact an Administrator (Director of School Culture)

If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the parent’s next step is to reach out to the appropriate administrator via phone or email or use the “parent concern process form” to explain the issue in writing. Even if the issue is a problem with the administrator directly, the parent should go through this step. It is important to work to resolve the issue directly first. The parent should contact the school’s front desk to obtain contact information for the administrator.

The administrator will reply within 3 business days, at least acknowledging the complaint has been received, and the administrator may take up to 5 additional business days to investigate and reach a decision.

Step 3: Written Complaint sent to the School Director’s Supervisor

If the parent is not satisfied with the School Director’s decision or response, the parent may write a letter to the Executive Director of Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport or use the “parent concern process form” to explain the issue. The parent can fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school’s front desk) the letter/completed form, and the office staff will ensure that the communication gets to the ED. If the parent would like to reach out

to the ED directly, the parent should contact the front desk of the school to get his/her contact information. The ED will reply within 3 business days and may take up to 10 business days to investigate and reach a decision. The ED will send a written decision via regular mail to the parent within 10 business days of receiving the letter or form. Please note that the ED will not respond to complaints that have not gone through steps 1-2. A member of the front office staff will put a copy of the complaint form and the ED's response in the scholar's file, and the front office staff will also ensure that a summary of the complaint and resolution is logged in the school's scholar information system.

Step 4: Written Complaint to the School's Board of Directors:

If the parent is not satisfied with the ED's decision or response, the parent may write a letter to the school's Board of Directors or use the "parent concern process form" to explain the issue. The parent can fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school's front desk) the letter. The Board or its designee will reply within 3 business days and may take up to 10 business days to investigate and reach a decision. The Board or its designee will send a written decision to the parent within 10 business days of receiving the letter or form. Please note that the Board or its designee will generally refer complaints that have not gone through steps 1-3 back to the school. A member of the front office staff will put a copy of the complaint form and Board's response in the scholar's file, and the front office staff will also ensure that a summary of the complaint and resolution is logged in the school's scholar information system. If an individual or group voices a complaint at a public meeting of the School's Board of Directors or to individual directors, directors shall not respond to the substance of the complaint, but instead shall thank the individual or group for their time and direct them to this complaint procedure.

Step 5: Written Complaint to the Authorizer:

If the parent is not satisfied with the Board's decision, the parent may present their concern to the authorizer, the Charter Schools Office of the State Department of Education. This organization will investigate and respond. The parent can get contact information for the authorizer from the school's front desk. (Please note that the school will ask the authorizer not respond to complaints that have not gone through steps 1-4.)

Please note that if the school gets multiple complaints on the same or a similar subject, the school may elect to consider all of the complaints in one process to ensure the process is clearly and effectively communicated to each family fairly and consistently.

The process described above is designed so that parents/guardians can speak with the staff members who are most directly involved with the situation. Usually, this is the best way to resolve a concern or complaint because staff members can more quickly and efficiently address family concerns. ***Parents do have the right, however, to submit concerns directly to the Board or to authorizers. In this case, the board will determine whether the complaint alleges a violation of the law or of the charter. If it does not, the Board will generally direct the parent/guardian back to the school level.***

Grievances Related to Discrimination Issues

Great Oaks does not condone or tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability in admission or access to, or treatment, or employment in its programs or activities. Families have the right, therefore, to file a formal grievance if they believe that Great Oaks has violated a discrimination law (including Section 504, Title IX, and Title VI). The grievance procedure for discrimination issues is included in Appendix D. The purpose of this formal grievance procedure is to provide a simple and accessible process to address problems and claims of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability.

STUDENT COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport uses computers, networks and Internet services, as one way of enhancing its mission to provide all of our students with the academic and character skills they need to graduate from top colleges, to succeed in a competitive world and to serve as the next generation of leaders in our communities.

The following rules are intended to provide general guidelines and examples of prohibited computer and Internet uses, but do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by users. Failure to comply with Great Oaks Student Computer and Internet Use Policy and these rules may result in loss of computer and Internet privileges, and/or legal and disciplinary action.

Computer Use is a Privilege

Student use of Great Oaks' computers, networks and Internet services is a privilege. No one will deliberately or willfully cause damage to computer equipment, network resources, or assist another in doing the same.

Acceptable Use

Student access to Great Oaks' computers, networks and Internet services are provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the curriculum and instructional goals. The same rules and expectations govern student conduct and communication on computers and online services. Students are expected to comply with these rules and all specific instructions from staff members when accessing computers and network resources.

Prohibited Use

The student is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving school computers, networks and Internet services, and for his/her information, files, passwords and accounts. Examples of unacceptable uses that are prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1.** Accessing Inappropriate Materials- Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading, scanning or displaying materials that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing and/or illegal
- 2.** Illegal Activities- Using computers, networks and Internet services for any illegal activity or that violates other Great Oaks policies, procedures and/or school rules
- 3.** Violating Copyrights- Copying or downloading copyrighted material without the owner's permission
- 4.** Plagiarism - Representing as one's own work any material obtained on the Internet
- 5.** Copying Software/Media Files- Copying or downloading software without the authorization of the system administrator; illegally downloading music, photos, movies or other such files
- 6.** Non-School Related Uses- Using the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services for non-school-related purposes such as private financial gain; commercial, advertising or solicitation purposes
- 7.** Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access- Sharing passwords, using other users' passwords without permission and/or accessing other user accounts

8. Malicious Use/Vandalism - Any malicious use, disruption or harm to the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services, including but not limited to hacking activities and creation/uploading of computer viruses.
9. Unauthorized access to Social Networking/Chat Rooms/News Groups- Accessing social networking sites or software, chat rooms or newsgroups without specific authorizations from the supervising teacher

No Expectation of Privacy

Great Oaks retains control, custody, and supervision of all computers, networks and Internet services owned or leased by Great Oaks. Great Oaks reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by students. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, software accounts, Internet services, email, and stored files. Each person will respect the rights of others to the protection of the files they store on a computer and will not alter or damage such files or accounts.

Cyber Bullying

The law defines “cyber bullying” as the use of digital information and communication devices to willfully and repeatedly hurt either a person or persons through the medium of electronic text, photos, or videos. Examples of this behavior include but are not limited to:

- ▶ Sending false, cruel, vicious messages
- ▶ Creating websites that have stories, cartoons, pictures, and jokes ridiculing others
- ▶ Breaking into an email account and sending vicious or embarrassing materials to others
- ▶ Engaging someone in electronic communication, tricking that person into revealing sensitive personal information and forwarding that information to others
- ▶ Posting of a student picture without their permission

The online activities and technologies often used by students engaged in Cyber Bullying include but are not limited to social networking sites, chat rooms and discussion groups, instant messaging, text messaging, computers, cell phones and personal digital devices, digital cameras, cell phone cameras, and webcams. As new technologies emerge, they too may be included with the above forms of electronic communication.

Communication

The school will inform students annually of procedures for reporting bullying, either by including this policy in the Family/Student Handbook or by other means.

Additional information about reporting, investigation, intervention, and prevention of cyber bullying is included in Appendix A.

NURSING SERVICES & MEDICATION

Our School Nurse provides nursing services for Great Oaks. We recommend, however, that parents have a doctor or health center look into any recurring health problem a child is having.

The nurse is responsible for checking all health records to be certain that each scholar is properly immunized. In the process of enrolling at Great Oaks Charter School, incoming scholars must present a health assessment and immunization record that has been conducted within one year prior to the student's entry by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine. For a family's convenience, this state Health Assessment Record form (the blue HAR-3 form) is included in the child's enrollment packet. As an alternative to an assessment provided from the family, Great Oaks Charter School also accepts health records sent from the previous school district provided the assessments were undergone within the one-year timeframe.

In addition, according to state law, scholars must present an updated physical before beginning the seventh grade that documents the following immunizations:

- ▶ **Tdap/Td:** 1 dose for students who have completed their primary DTaP series. Students who start the series at age 7 or older only need a total of 3 doses of tetanus-diphtheria containing vaccine, one of which must be Tdap
- ▶ **Polio:** At least 3 doses. The last dose must be given on or after 4th birthday
- ▶ **MMR:** 2 doses separated by at least 28 days, 1st dose on or after 1st birthday
- ▶ **Meningococcal:** 1 dose
- ▶ **Hep B:** 3 doses, last dose on or after 24 weeks of age
- ▶ **Varicella:** 2 doses separated by at least 3 months-1st dose on or after 1st birthday; or verification of disease

If your child requires medication during school hours, please contact the Office Manager to request a Medical Administration Form (or MAF). The building nurse has the training and resources to store and administer medication. However, medication cannot be administered to your child until your child's physician has completed the form. This is a requirement of the state law and pertains to all medicine, including aspirin, Tylenol, and other over-the-counter medicines.

The building nurse will keep a detailed log of all medicines that are administered.

ELEVATOR USE

The elevator at Great Oaks Bridgeport is intended only for students with medical needs that prohibit them from climbing stairs. Students will only be allowed to use the elevator if the use of the elevator is deemed medically necessary by our School Nurse. Parent requests to allow students use of the elevator must be accompanied by a doctor's note explaining the medical needs and the circumstances that would require the student to use the elevator.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Breakfast, lunch and a snack will be available at Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport. As part of its participation in the School Nutrition Program (a federal program that subsidizes scholar meals), the school must collect completed lunch application forms for all its scholars. Great Oaks provides free breakfast, lunch and snack to all scholars regardless of family income but we must have a completed lunch application form from all families. This policy helps the school ensure that we maximize the reimbursements we receive from the federal government.

Parents may send lunch to school. If you are sending lunch to school with your child, we ask that you send in nutritious foods. Please do not let your child bring unhealthy drinks (e.g., sodas or juices heavy in sugar) or unhealthy snacks (snacks high in sugar) to school. The school reserves the right not to allow scholars to consume unhealthy food and drinks at school. Please see the healthy foods policy below for more information.

Great Oaks will not accept delivery of take-out or fast food for scholars' lunches. For safety and ensuring that scholars only eat lunches that meet with their dietary restrictions, parents not may bring food intended to be consumed by another scholar.

Healthy Foods Policy

Scholar nutrition and health is a big concern at Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport. Poor eating habits can adversely affect scholar performance by causing, among other things, a lack of focus, low stamina, and/or behavioral outbursts – and, of course, long-term health consequences. In an effort to curb the consumption of low-nutrition foods, the following policy has been created.

Food and beverages brought to school must meet dietary guidelines and contribute to the health of scholars. The school will prohibit the consumption of foods of low nutritional value during breakfast, designated snack periods, lunch and other times scholars have access to food during the school day.

Food of low nutritional value consists of:

- ▶ Chewing gum and candy
- ▶ Food and drinks containing high sugar or other sweeteners
- ▶ “Juice” or juice products containing little fruit or vegetable juice
- ▶ Foods with high fat/serving ratio (e.g. cookies, cheetos, potato chips, foods fried in oil)
- ▶ Carbonated beverages
- ▶ Cakes/cupcakes (unless this is part of a celebration approved by the teacher)

Teachers planning fundraisers, parties, or other school-related events are encouraged to consider healthier alternatives. If scholars bring foods low in nutritional value to school, Great Oaks teachers and staff will hold them at the front desk until parents pick them up.

Food of low nutritional value will be confiscated and thrown out.

Candy and Snacks

Scholars may not have any candy with them at school. Teachers will take any candy from scholars and treat it like “non-academic material.” It will be disposed of immediately as it is not feasible to hold on to food items.

Sunflower seeds with shells are not permitted in the school at any time as they create a sanitation problem.

Food not During Designated Times

Scholars may not eat food except during breakfast, lunch, and snack times. Scholars may not have food in their pockets or with them in any way except during snack and lunch. All snack food must be completed during snack time – and in the classroom. Scholars may not take snacks out of the classroom (for example, to the bathroom). Teachers will take food that scholars have out during unauthorized times and treat it like “non-academic” material. (Parents may come to pick up the food if they want.)

The only beverage allowed outside of mealtimes is water in a clear, plastic bottle. No additives, sweeteners or powders may be added to the water. Beverages other than water will be confiscated and thrown away.

Gum

Scholars (and teachers) should not chew gum. Scholars with gum may face a consequence, and repeat offenders will face more serious consequences.

Classroom Parties, Birthdays, and Other Events

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport supports scholar’s social and emotional growth by celebrating their achievements. Most of these celebrations take the form of school-wide or grade- level events which celebrate scholar academic achievement and character growth. In addition, each class usually celebrates scholars’ birthdays by singing happy birthday and other rituals in a uniform way that is the same for and fair to all scholars. Teachers seek to make scholars feel truly special on their “special” day.

To maintain the structure and consistency of the school day as well as to preserve sacred learning time, Great Oaks does not allow individual celebrations of birthdays or other holidays during the school day. Families should not bring in food treats or other gift items for birthdays or holidays as the school cannot commit teacher or other staff time to distributing them and because such items can distract scholars from their learning.

Families wishing to involve classmates in the celebration of their scholar’s birthday or other holidays can do so by inviting them to a party that occurs outside of school hours. The school can support such families by distributing a flyer to families in that scholar’s class. To avoid hurt feelings and distractions from learning, the school can only do this if every scholar in the class is invited. Families wishing to have such an invitation distributed should send it to school in the scholar’s homework folder. Invitations must be general (as in not addressed to specific scholars) and must be issued to all scholars in the class.

In order to minimize competition and distractions from learning, scholars must be in full uniform on their birthdays and other holidays.

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

By signing this, scholars indicate that they have received and read a copy of Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport's Family Handbook and understand and agree to the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school. Scholar signatures further show that scholars understand that if they ever have any questions regarding school policies, they can always ask their parent/guardian or other member of the school community for a further explanation.

By signing this, parents indicate that they have received and read a copy of Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport's Family Handbook and understand and agree to the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school. Parent signatures further show that parents understand that if they ever have any questions regarding school policies, they can always ask a teacher or staff member for further clarification.

Scholar Name

Parent / Guardian Name

Date

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Reporting, Investigation, Intervention, and Prevention of Cyber Bullying

Reporting Cyber Bullying

- 1.** If a student feels that he/she is a victim of cyber bullying, or witnesses a student being bullied, the student may report the incident to the Director, School Culture. Students may report cyber bullying situations anonymously.
- 2.** If a parent or guardian suspects cyber bullying, they may report it to the Director, School Culture.
- 3.** Any staff member who witnesses or receives any report of cyber bullying shall notify the Director, School Culture.
- 4.** All reports will be documented and maintained for the duration of the student's' tenure at the school.
- 5.** The school will maintain a list of the number of confirmed acts of cyber bullying, without specific names. The school will make the list available upon request and will provide the number of confirmed acts of cyber bullying as required to the State Department of Education.

Investigation

- 1.** As with any situation involving a breach of school culture, the Director, School Culture will take the following action.
- 2.** The Director, School Culture will investigate, in a timely fashion, parents' reports and will review students' reports, anonymous or otherwise, to determine the proper action.
- 3.** The Director, School Culture will question the reporting student or parent about specific details, which may include date of incident, time, location, and what was said or done to the student being cyber bullied. If the reporter is anonymous, the Director, School Culture will question those who are listed in the report. No disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- 4.** The Director, School Culture will then meet with and question the student(s) accused of bullying, as well as the student(s) being cyber bullied.
- 5.** The Director, School Culture or his/her designee will call the parents or guardians of all students involved in verified incidents of cyber bullying and inform them of the incident, the school's response, the consequences.
- 6.** At the discretion of the Director, School Culture or his/her designee, the parents of both parties may be required to come in and meet with the Director, School Culture and Social Worker for mediation.

Intervention and Prevention

Intervention

The school will promote the use of interventions that are least intrusive and most effective, and will develop case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated acts of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. Intervention may include, but not limited to the following:

- 1.** As the situation may warrant, the school may provide counseling or refer students to outside counseling to address the needs of the victim(s) of the bullying.
- 2.** As the situation may warrant, the school may provide or refer out for counseling and support to address the behavior of the students who bully (e.g. empathy training, anger management, and social skills), and will take other disciplinary measures as appropriate.
- 3.** The school will monitor each individual situation to ensure that the bullying ceases for individual victims and on a school-wide basis.
- 4.** Disciplinary sanctions and consequences will be commensurate with the situation.

Prevention

Consistent with Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport's values orientation and ongoing EPIC character education, the school will send consistent messages to students throughout the school year that bullying is not part of our school's culture and will not be tolerated. Prevention may include, but is not limited to the following:

- 1.** The school will maintain rules prohibiting cyber bullying, harassment and intimidation and will establish appropriate consequences for those who bully other students.
- 2.** As part of our regular EPIC character education program, the school will provide advisory time and age appropriate curricula for all classes to discuss bullying in school and the effects of it.
- 3.** The school will implement an on-going cyber safety curriculum to ensure that students are knowledgeable about how to safely interact online.
- 4.** The school will work to protect the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications.
- 5.** The school will discuss EPIC values with parents during orientations.
- 6.** The school's Friday professional development program will contain a time to discuss promoting positive school culture including character development and bullying prevention.
- 7.** The school will use common time with students to discuss cyber safety and cyber bullying issues with students.
- 8.** The school will host tech sessions to teach parents how to monitor their children's behavior on the Internet and their phones.

Appendix B: Disciplinary Procedures and Due Process Rights

The discipline policy of Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport is an important part of how we build a learning-focused, safe, and positive school environment. However, it is important that we implement these policies in a fair and transparent way. Scholars and their families deserve and are entitled to the due process protections outlined below.

NOTE: Students who have previously been identified as having one or more disabilities under the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act may require alternative and/or additional procedures related to discipline. Specific procedures regarding disciplinary action for those students are set forth more fully below.

Classroom Removals

- ▶ A teacher has the authority to remove a scholar from the classroom when the scholar's behavior poses a continuing danger to scholars or staff or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process.
- ▶ When a scholar is removed, the teacher must notify the Director, School Culture or the Director's designee at once and send the scholar to a designated area.
- ▶ As soon as the child is able to have a calm conversation, the scholar will have the opportunity for an informal hearing with the Director, School Culture or Director's designee to hear the reasons for the removal and have an opportunity to informally present the scholar's version of the relevant events before the staff member makes a decision whether to assign additional consequences. (Connecticut law requires a scholar to have this informal hearing before he or she is removed from class more than six times in one school year or more than twice in one week. However, we think it is good practice to have an informal hearing, to the greatest extent possible, in connection with each removal.)
- ▶ The overall goal is to get the scholar back on track and back in class as quickly as possible. In order to return to class, the scholar may have to complete a reflection form, not be disruptive in the removal area or other classrooms or offices, demonstrate that he/she is calm and ready to return to class, and have a satisfactory conversation with the Director, School Culture or Director's designee about the behavior and how the scholar is to behave the rest of the day and in the future. In addition, the scholar may be required to have a discussion with and apologize to the relevant teacher or staff member before re-entering the class.
- ▶ In cases of major or egregious behavior, the School Director or Director, School Culture may decide that the behavior warrants additional consequences that would keep the scholar from returning to class.
- ▶ The Director, School Culture, School Director, or designee will record the amount of time lost from class. In most cases, the scholar will be able to return to class in 20 to 60 minutes.

In-School Suspensions

The School Director or a Director, School Culture, as a designee of the School Director, also has the authority to issue in-school suspensions (ISS). An ISS involves the scholar attending school but not attending regular classes and lasts between 90 minutes and ten days. An ISS can only be issued by the School Director, or Director, School Culture. When a scholar has done a behavior that could warrant an in-school suspension, the following steps must take place:

- 1.** Review the evidence and ensure that the incident giving rise to the suspension is properly documented. (May be done by the School Director, Director, or designee.)
- 2.** Except in cases where a scholar's behavior poses an immediate threat to the safety of scholars or staff, the School Director or Director will conduct an informal hearing with the scholar. In this informal hearing, the scholar will hear the reasons for the removal from class and have an opportunity to informally present the scholar's version of the relevant events before the School Director, or director makes a decision whether to assign In-School Suspension.
- 3.** After the informal hearing, the School Director or director will determine the appropriate consequence and, if it's an in-school suspension, the length of suspension. In determining the length of the in-school suspension, the School Director or director may receive and consider evidence of past disciplinary problems, which have led to previous disciplinary actions. The decision of the School Director or director with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including in- school suspensions shall be final.
- 4.** The School Director, director or their designee will make reasonable attempts by telephone to immediately notify the parent/guardian of the in-school suspension, stating the cause(s) leading to the discipline, the length of in-school suspension, and what the scholar must do to re-enter the school community.
- 5.** The School Director, director or their designee will send written notification of the in-school suspension to the parent/guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address known to the School Director, director, or designee) stating the cause(s) leading to the suspension, the length of suspension, and what steps the scholar needs to complete for a successful re-entry into the school community.

Misbehavior during an in-school suspension may result in an out-of-school suspension or other consequence.

Out-of-School Suspensions

The School Director or a Director, School Culture, as a designee of the School Director, also has the authority to issue an out-of-school suspension, which is a suspension that lasts between 90 minutes and 10 days. When a scholar has done a behavior that could warrant such a suspension, the following steps must take place:

- 1.** The School Director or director will review the evidence and ensure that the incident giving rise to the suspension is properly documented.
- 2.** Except in cases where a scholar's behavior poses an immediate threat to the safety of scholars or staff, the School Director or director will conduct an informal hearing with the scholar. In this informal hearing, the scholar will hear the reasons for the removal from class and have an opportunity to informally present the scholar's version of the relevant events before the School Director or director makes a decision whether to assign additional consequences, including out-of- school suspension.
- 3.** After the informal hearing, the School Director or director will determine the appropriate consequence and if they determine out-of-school suspension, the length of suspension. In determining the length of the suspension, the School Director or director will receive and consider: evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to previous disciplinary actions, learning/behavioral support provided to the student, student's intent and expressed reasons for the behavior, intensity of offenses, age, grade development of student, student's academic progress and relative risk of lost instruction, interpretation of culture and communication factors, and history of school and family collaboration in supporting positive behaviors. The decision of the School Director or director with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including short-term suspensions shall be final.

4. The School Director, director, or their designee will make reasonable attempts by telephone to immediately notify the parent/guardian of the suspension, stating the cause(s) leading to the suspension, the length of suspension, and what the scholar must do to re-enter the school community.
5. The School Director, director or their designee will send written notification of the short-term out-of-school suspension to the parent/guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address known to the School Director, director, or designee) stating the cause(s) leading to the suspension, the length of suspension, the time and place for alternate education, and what the scholar will be asked to do to re-enter the school community, and the parent's right to request an informal conference with the School Director or director

Hearing Regarding Out-of-School Suspension Decisions

When notified about an out-of-school suspension decision, a parent may request an informal conference with the School Director or Director, School Culture to present the scholar's version of the incident and question the complaining witnesses against the scholar. The school may limit or prohibit questioning of other scholars if there is good reason to do so (e.g. bullying, harassment, or any other situation that might impact the social, emotional, or physical well-being of a scholar). This hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible and normally within one day. The out-of-school suspension will stand while the hearing is taking place, although it will be removed from the child's record if the hearing reveals that the suspension decision was made in error.

Work completion during suspension and documentation of suspensions

Scholars are responsible for completing academic work missed during the suspension. During the suspension, scholars have the right to substantially equivalent education in addition to IEP services. The completed work will receive full credit if it is submitted by the deadlines in accordance with the school make-up policy. If a scholar does not complete this work, the scholar may face standard academic consequences (e.g., Homework Extension, no academic credit).

Re-entry from In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension

We ask all scholars who are suspended to take the following steps before they re-enter the school or classroom. We believe that the following practices are essential to set up the scholar for success. The length of a longer suspension may be reduced (at the discretion of the School Director)

if the following are satisfied:

- ▶ The scholar and parent meet with the School Director, Director, School Culture or Director's designee.
- ▶ The scholar writes a letter of apology of acceptable quality (as deemed by the School Director or Director based on the child's academic level.
- ▶ The scholar presents this letter to Great Oaks staff and/or scholars.
- ▶ Scholars who are suspended two or more times may be asked to submit a reasonable and realistic, plan for improvement (based on a template / guidance given by the school). This plan must be of acceptable quality, as defined by the School Director or Director.
- ▶ The scholar may be asked to meet additional conditions if school staff believes these conditions will improve the likelihood of the scholar returning to school successfully.

Recommendation for Expulsion

An expulsion may be recommended by the School Director. It is the removal of a student from school for more

than 10 days or up to one year) due to serious, major, or egregious infractions. An expulsion can only be ordered by the Board of Directors or a duly appointed Hearing Officer (“Fact-Finder”), after a formal hearing following the procedures set forth below. A scholar may appeal an expulsion decision to the Board of Directors, and thereafter to the Commissioner of Education.

Hearing Procedures

Except in an emergency situation, prior to long-term discipline of a scholar, a hearing shall be conducted by a “Fact Finder” (which could be the Board of Directors or a designated Hearing Officer), and governed by the procedures outlined below. Whenever an emergency exists, the hearing provided for above shall be held as soon as possible within the time limits set forth by law.

Written notice of the hearing must be given within a reasonable time prior to that hearing to the scholar, or if a minor, to his/her parent/guardian or person legally responsible for the scholar. **Specifically, the school shall provide written notice to the Parent or Guardian within 48 hours of the incident of the date and time of a formal hearing, which shall occur no less than 5 days after the incident in question, but within 10 days of the incident.**

A parent may request to postpone the hearing beyond ten days for a reasonable period time to allow the parent and scholar to prepare their case. In such cases, the scholar must remain out of school while awaiting the hearing; alternative instruction will be provided by the school. A scholar may be represented by counsel at the hearing at the scholar’s/parent’s own expense.

A scholar may be represented by any third party of his/her choice, including an attorney, at his/her own expense or expense of his/her parents/guardians. A scholar may be entitled to free or reduced legal services through various agencies. A parent may request information about such services from the School Director or Director, School Culture.

A scholar is entitled to the services of a translator or interpreter, to be provided by the School or the Board, whenever the scholar or his/her parent/guardian do not speak the English language or is handicapped.

The hearing will be conducted by the Presiding Officer, who will call the meeting to order, introduce the parties, Board members and counsel where applicable, and swear in any witnesses called by the administration or the scholar.

A verbatim record of the hearing will be made either by a recording or by a stenographer. The charges will be introduced into the record by the School Director/designee.

Formal rules of evidence will not be followed. The Fact-Finder has the right to accept hearsay and other evidence if it deems that evidence relevant or material to its determination.

Each witness for the administration will be called and sworn. After a witness has finished testifying, he/she will be subject to cross-examination by the opposite party or his/her legal counsel and by Board members.

After the administration has presented its case, the scholar will be asked if he/she has any witnesses or evidence to present. If so, the witnesses will be sworn, will testify, and will be subject to cross-examination by the administration and to questioning by the Board. The scholar may also choose to make a statement at this time. If the scholar chooses to make a statement, he/she will be sworn and subject to cross-examination by the administration and questioning by the Board. Concluding statements will be made by the administration and then by the scholar and/or his/her representative. The parties may submit written position statements within 48 hours of the close of the hearing.

In cases where the scholar has denied the allegation, the Fact-Finder must determine whether the scholar

committed the offense(s) as charged by the School Director/designee.

The Fact-Finder must also deliberate on the disciplinary action to be imposed upon the scholar. The Fact-Finder may review the scholar's attendance record or academic record during its deliberations on the issue. The Board may ask the School Director or designee for a recommendation as to the discipline to be imposed.

Evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to the removal from a classroom, suspension or expulsion of a scholar being considered for expulsion at a disciplinary hearing may be received, but may only be considered in the determination of the length of expulsion and nature of alternative educational opportunity being offered.

Where administrators presented the case in support of the charges against the scholar, such administrative staff shall not be present during the deliberations of the Fact-Finder either on questions of evidence or on the final discipline to be imposed. The ED/designee may, after reviewing the incident with administrators, and reviewing the scholar's records, make a recommendation to the Fact-Finder as to the appropriate discipline to be applied.

The Fact-Finder shall make findings as to the truth of the charges, if the scholar has denied them, whether the school has followed proper procedures, and in all cases the disciplinary action, if any, to be imposed.

In keeping with the Gun Free Schools Act, it shall be the policy of the Board to expel a scholar for one full calendar year whenever the scholar is in the possession of a firearm. The Fact-Finder shall modify the term of the expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

The Fact-Finder shall report its final decision in writing to the scholar, the Parent or Guardian, and the Board of Directors if conducted by a Hearing Officer, within 10 days of the hearing, or if the scholar is a minor, also to the parents/guardians, stating the reasons on which the decision is based and the disciplinary action to be imposed. Said decision shall be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. Only the Board of Directors, through a designated panel of directors or the hearing officer authorized by the board, can expel a scholar.

Notice of expulsion and the conduct for which the scholar was expelled, shall be included on the scholar's cumulative educational record. Such notice, except for notice of an expulsion based upon the possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the scholar graduates from high school. When a scholar withdraws from school after having been notified that an Expulsion Hearing is pending, the hearing will naturally be canceled.

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport will maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions, including the name of the scholar, a description of the offending behavior, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a scholar has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

The Scholar/Parent may appeal an Expulsion Decision to the full Board of Directors within 10 days of the decision by submitting the Statement of Reasons for Appeal. The Board of Directors shall review the record, including all documents and recordings related to the hearing, and convene a meeting to vote to affirm or reverse the decision of the Hearing Officer. The Board's Role is not to re-hear the evidence, but to determine based on the record whether there a) is sufficient evidence to indicate that a scholar has committed an offense or a pattern of behavior that meet this policy's definition of an expellable offense and b) the school has followed the policies outlined in the handbook adequately. If the answers to a) and b) are yes, then the Board will validate the recommendation to expel.

The Board may order that the scholar return to the school, or may remand the case for further consideration by the Hearing Officer. The Board may also, at its discretion, request that the Scholar/ Parent attend the meeting to discuss the substance of the appeal and/or answer any questions that are unresolved in the record. The Board may also preside over a full fact-finding hearing if circumstances so require.

It is important that the Scholar/Parent present all evidence to the Board of Directors at the hearing, as new evidence and arguments generally may not be presented on appeal. Where additional information is discovered after

the hearing, the Scholar/Parent may request permission to present said evidence to the Hearing Officer. The Hearing Officer shall have discretion to grant or deny such requests for consideration of newly discovered evidence or for a hearing to consider such evidence.

The Scholar/Parent may submit any complaint regarding this process to the authorizer, the CT State Department of Education Charter Schools Office.

Alternative Instruction

The alternative instruction will begin no later than two days after the final decision is rendered. The alternative instruction will occur during or after the school day at the school, the scholar's home, or the nearest public library, at the discretion of the school. This alternative instruction will continue for the duration of the time the scholar awaits disposition on his or her expulsion hearing. The school will provide alternative instruction to suspended and expelled scholars to the extent required by law.

Appendix C: Discipline of Scholars with Special Needs

Scholars with disabilities may be disciplined in accordance with the procedural safeguards set forth in both federal and state law and regulations under the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of scholars with a disability including the name of the scholar, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a scholar has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

Scholars for whom the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the scholar or others if the BIP is followed with respect to the infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) or Section 504 Team for consideration of a change in the BIP and/or IEP.

If a scholar identified as or suspected of having a disability is suspended or expelled from school more than ten consecutive days, or if the student is issued a series of suspensions or removals that constitute a pattern because they add to more than 10 school days in a school year or constitute a change in placement pursuant to the IEP or Section 504 Plan, a PPT or Section 504 Team meeting shall be promptly convened to determine whether the misconduct is a manifestation of the scholar's disability.

After 10 school days of suspension (where services are not provided during the period of suspension) the child with a disability must receive educational services to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress towards meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP. In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the child's special education teacher PPT or Section 504 Team, shall make the service determination.

If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability for that particular behavioral event. The student shall receive an alternative educational plan in accordance with the IEP as modified by the PPT in light of the discipline.

Parents may request a due process hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

If the PPT finds that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the PPT and school shall consider the student's misconduct and revise the IEP/BIP to prevent a recurrence of such misconduct and to provide for the safety of the other students and staff. If there is no current behavior intervention plan, the school, in consultation with the PPT must also develop such a plan to address the behavior that led to the disciplinary action.

Provisions of Services during Removal

Those scholars removed for a period fewer than 10 consecutive days will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of his or her suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended scholar to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of such suspension.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals, equals 10 or more school days during the year, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the child's special education teacher PPT or Section 504 Team, shall make the service determination.

Appendix D: How to File a Grievance about Discrimination Non-Discrimination

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, or activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 194 (ADEA). In addition, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to Great Oaks on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. No person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges, or access to the courses of scholar offered by the school on the basis or race, sex, color, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Finally, pregnant scholars are allowed to remain in regular education classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant scholars throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave (Title IX).

Great Oaks does not condone or tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability in admission or access to, or treatment, or employment in its programs or activities. The purpose of this formal grievance procedure is to provide a simple and accessible process to address problems and claims of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability. Great Oaks will keep these proceedings as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at any level of the procedure. These policies do not limit the right of the complainant having a problem to discuss the matter informally with any appropriate member of the administration. Additionally, parents have the right to deliver the formal grievance directly to the Board.

Since it is important that grievances be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated at each level should be considered as a maximum, and every effort should be made to expedite the process. The time limits specified may, however, be extended by mutual agreement in writing.

If a complainant does not file a grievance in writing as provided herein within 60 days after the aggrieved person knew or should have known of the act or condition on which the grievance is based, then the grievance shall be considered waived. Great Oaks reserves the right to extend the 60-day limitation to file a grievance for just cause. A Great Oaks staff member will, if requested, assist in preparing any written documents described within this grievance procedure.

Internal Resolution Process:

Any student, employee, applicant to a program, or third party who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability shall contact the Title VI, Title IX or Section 504 Coordinator within 60 calendar days of the date on which he or she knew or should have known of the alleged occurrence to discuss the nature of the complaint. For Grievances concerning allegations of a violation of school charter, the complainant shall contact the Director of School Operations.

The Coordinator shall maintain a written record which shall contain the following:

- 1.** The name and address of the Complainant;
- 2.** The full name and position of person(s) who allegedly discriminated against the complainant, if applicable;
- 3.** A concise statement of the facts constituting the alleged discrimination; and
- 4.** Dates of the alleged discrimination.

At the time the alleged discrimination complaint is filed, the Coordinator shall review and explain the grievance procedures with the complainant and answer any questions. An investigation of the complaint shall begin as soon as practical, but in no case, more than ten (10) school days from the time the complaint was received. Within this time limit, the Coordinator shall meet separately with the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged. The Coordinator and/or his or her designee shall conduct a prompt, adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. The Coordinator shall provide confidential counseling where advisable and shall seek an informal agreement between the parties concerned, where appropriate. Every attempt shall be made to seek a solution and resolve the alleged discrimination complaint at this level. It is important to note, however, that the informal process can be ended, by the complainant, the individual(s) against whom

the complaint was lodged or by the Coordinator, at any time in order to begin a formal stage of the complaint process.

If the complainant is not satisfied with these initial informal procedures, within twenty (20) school days from the date of the original discussion with the Coordinator, more formal procedures may be initiated by the complainant to further explore and resolve the problem.

Formal Procedure:

Level One – Director of Culture

If a complainant is not satisfied with the disposition of the problem through informal procedures, he/she may seek review of his/her claim as a formal grievance or appeal in writing to the School Director. **Level One Grievances shall be submitted to the Office Manager on the Parent Grievance Process Form (“Grievance Form”) or by letter, who will then forward the Grievance to the School Director. The Office Manager is responsible for monitoring the implementation and documentation of the complaint system.**

The School Director shall reply in writing within three (3) school days acknowledging receipt of the Grievance to the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged. The School Director shall review the Coordinator’s investigation and information submitted by the complainant and may conduct additional

investigation as necessary. Within ten (10) school days the School Director will render a decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the complainant and the person who allegedly discriminated against the complainant, with a copy to the ED.

Level Two – Executive Director Hearing:

If the complainant or the person alleged to have discriminated against the complainant, if applicable, is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level One, or if no decision has been rendered within ten (10) school days after presentation of the grievance in writing, the complainant or the person alleged to have discriminated against the complainant may file a written appeal for a hearing by the ED of Schools within ten (10) school days. The ED shall reply in writing within three (3) school days acknowledging receipt of the Grievance to the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged. (Please note that the ED will not respond to complaints that have not, without good cause, first been addressed by the Coordinator or DSO, and the School Director).

Level Two Grievances shall be submitted to the Office Manager to forward to the ED, who will then forward the Grievance to the ED.

Within ten (10) school days after receipt of the written appeal for a hearing by the ED, he or she shall conduct a hearing with the complainant and the person alleged to have committed the discrimination for the purpose of resolving the grievance. The ED shall provide the parties an opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence. A full record of such hearing shall be kept by the ED. The ED shall within ten (10) school days of the hearing render the decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the complainant and the person who allegedly discriminated against the complainant.

Level Three – Board of Directors Hearing:

If the complainant or the person alleged to have discriminated against the complainant, if applicable, is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two, or if no decision has been rendered within ten (10) school days after first meeting with the ED, the person may file the grievance with the Board of Education within ten (10) school days. The Board shall reply in writing within three school (3) days acknowledging receipt of the Grievance to the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged. Level Three Grievances shall be submitted to the Office Manager to forward to the Board Chair.

Within fifteen (15) school days after receiving the written appeal, the Board or an Impartial Hearing Officer designated by the Board shall meet with the complainant for the purpose of resolving the grievance. The Board or Impartial Hearing Officer shall provide an opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and other evidence. A full record of such hearing shall be kept by the Board. The decision of the Board shall be rendered in writing within ten (10) school days.

Level 4 – Charter Authorizer Review:

If the parent is not satisfied with the Board's decision, the parent may present their complaint to the Charter Schools Office at the State Department of Education. **Level Four Grievances shall be submitted to the Office Manager by the Grievance Form or by letter, who will then forward the Grievance to the Office of Charter Schools.** The authorizer will investigate and respond. (Please note that the school will ask the Authorizer not respond to complaints that have not gone through Informal Resolution and Levels One through Three).

General Provisions

Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 protect complainants from retaliation for reporting allegations of discrimination and participating in an investigation. The administration will take steps to prevent retaliation and take strong responsive action should retaliation occur.

In the event that there is a finding of discrimination, the administration will take steps that are reasonably calculated to end discrimination; to prevent recurrence of any discrimination; and to correct discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, if appropriate.

The administration will contact the person raising alleged violations within a reasonable period of time following conclusion of the investigation and grievance process to assess whether there has been on-going discrimination or retaliation, and to determine whether additional supportive measures are needed.

Additional Procedures for Claims Alleging Harassment or Hostile Educational Environment

The administration, when evaluating whether there is a hostile environment for a student, will consider the effects of harassment that occurred in school and those incidents that occurred outside of school that may affect the school environment.

Alleged victims of harassment will not be required to work out the problem directly with alleged perpetrators without appropriate involvement by administration. Any informal process can be ended by an alleged victim at any time in order to begin a formal stage of the complaint process.

The administration will consider providing interim measures to an alleged victim pending the outcome of the recipient's investigation, when appropriate (such as prohibiting the alleged perpetrator to contact the alleged victim; changing the alleged perpetrator's class and bus schedule to minimize contact with the alleged victim, etc.).

The administration will maintain on-going contact with the alleged victim throughout the investigation.

The administration will provide counseling and academic services, as appropriate, to the alleged victim.

Any person may also file a complaint of illegal discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights at the same time he/she files the grievance during or after use of the grievance process, or without using the grievance process at all. If a complaint is filed with the Office for Civil Rights, it must be filed in writing no later than 180 days after the occurrence of the possible discrimination.

Complaints may be filed at <https://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm>. Complainants may also contact the Regional Office for further information as follows:

Office for Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Education 8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111

FAX: 617-289-0150; **TDD:** 800-877-8339

Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

The Social Work Intern, Ainsley Brown is the Section 504 Coordinator and may be contacted at aabrown@greatoakscharter.org or (203) 870-8188

The Director, School Culture, Charles Jones is the Title VII and Title IX Coordinator and may be contacted at cjones@greatoakscharter.org or (203) 615-4656.

Appendix E: Parent Concern Form

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport is committed to maintaining a strong partnership and ongoing dialogue between our teachers, staff, scholars, and families. If you have a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, we welcome your input and encourage you to contact the appropriate staff member at the school. Please use this form to describe an incident/issue and submit the form to the Office Manager who will ensure it reaches the appropriate administration team member.

Today's Date: _____

Your Name: _____

What is the best way to reach you?

Scholar's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Relationship to Scholar: _____

Have you discussed this issue with anyone at the school yet?

Yes____ No____

If yes, who were you in touch with?:

What was the result?

Please describe the Incident / Issue in the space below. Be sure to include the DATE of the incident and the NAMES of any people who were involved. (Please attach extra pages if you need more space).

Appendix F: Additional Information

Title I

The Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires school districts that receive federal Title I funding to notify parents of their right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child. Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport is a Title I school. As a recipient of these funds, Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport will provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to receive the following information about each of your child's

classroom teachers:

- ▶ Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- ▶ Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- ▶ The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- ▶ Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport is committed to providing quality instruction for all students and does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. Please feel free to contact the school if you wish to receive this information or if you have any questions.

Public Documents / Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport fully complies with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Any requests for school records or information from the school must be in writing and submitted to the School Director or to his/her designee(s). Within five business days of receipt of a written request, the school, depending on the requested information, responds by:

- ▶ Making the information available at the school itself during normal business hours to the person requesting it;
 - ▶ Denying the request in writing; or
 - ▶ Providing a written acknowledgment of receipt of the request that supplies an approximate date for when the request will be granted or denied.
 - ▶ If the person requesting information is denied access to a record, he/she may, within 30 days, appeal such denial to the School Director or to his/her designee(s).
Upon timely receipt of such an appeal, the school, within 10 business days of the receipt of the appeal, fully explains the reasons for further denial or provides access to the record(s) sought. The school also forwards a copy of the appeal, as well as its ultimate determination, to the Committee on Open Government. If further denied, the person requesting information may further appeal through an Article 78 proceeding.
- ▶ The school may deny access to requested records if:
 - ▶ Such records are specifically exempted from disclosure by state or federal statute;
 - ▶ Such access would constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
 - ▶ Such records, if disclosed, would impair present or imminent contract awards or collective bargaining negotiations;
 - ▶ Such records are trade secrets and which, if disclosed, would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of a commercial enterprise;
 - ▶ Such records are compiled for law enforcement purposes for which disclosure is precluded by state or federal law;

- ▶ Such records, if disclosed, would endanger the life or safety of any person;
- ▶ Such records are computer access codes; and/or
- ▶ Such records are internal materials, which are not statistical or factual tabulations of data; instructions to staff that affect the public, a final policy, nor external audits.

The school may charge a copying fee for each page that is requested to be copied. The fee can be no more than the fee allowed by state law.

Open Meetings Laws

1. All meetings of the Board of Directors and all committees of the Board (“Board meetings”) will be open to the general public.
2. A calendar of all scheduled Board meetings will be posted at the school.
3. The school will provide notice of the time and place of any Board meeting that is scheduled more than one week in advance to the news media and shall conspicuously post such notice in one or more public locations at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting.
4. The school will provide the time and place of any Board meeting that is scheduled less than one week in advance and will conspicuously post such notice in one or more public locations at a reasonable time in advance of the scheduled meeting.
5. Public notices will be placed on the bulletin board in the reception area. Public notices will reflect the location of Board meetings or any location changes.
6. To the extent possible, the school will publicly post notices of Board meetings immediately after each meeting date is determined.
7. For the purposes of determining a quorum, Directors must be physically present at the meeting; members not physically present may join discussions via electronic means but may not vote.
8. Written minutes will be recorded of all Board meetings. Minutes will include:
 - ▶ The date and time of the meeting
 - ▶ A summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions, and other matters formally voted upon
 - ▶ A record of how each Trustee voted on each matter
 - ▶ In the case of an executive session, the minutes will include a record of the final determination of any action that was taken.
9. Minutes of open sessions will be available to the public upon request from the director of operations within two weeks of the date of the meeting; minutes of executive sessions will be available within one week of the meeting.
10. All executive sessions shall be conducted as part of an open meeting; they are not considered separate meetings per se. An executive session may be called via motion and majority vote by the Board;

the motion must specifically identify the general area of areas to be considered.

- 11.** All Board members may participate in the executive session, and the Board may authorize others to be present as well.
- 12.** No public funds may be appropriated during an executive session.
- 13.** An executive session can only be conducted by the Board for consideration of one or more of the following matters:
- 14.**
 - a. Matters which imperil the public safety if disclosed;
 - b. Matters related to students about which state and federal privacy laws apply;
 - c. Any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;
 - d. Information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;
 - e. Discussions regarding proposed or pending litigation;
 - f. Matters which apply to school employees or collective negotiations which are within the scope of Article 14 of the Civil Service Law;
 - g. The medical, financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, evaluation, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation;
 - h. The preparation, grading, or administration of examinations; and
 - i. The proposed acquisition, sale, or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value.

Use of Pictures & Videos of Scholars

Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport often takes pictures and videos of scholars during regular school activities to capture the joy and excitement of learning that takes place and to celebrate the accomplishments of our teachers and scholars. Pictures and videos taken of scholars and staff are used for many purposes. We put pictures of scholars and staff in our scholar information system so that teachers and staff can identify all scholars and call them by name (internal); we publish photo directories of scholars and staff (internal); and we post pictures of scholars and staff at the school (internal). It is Great Oaks' policy to use pictures and videos of scholars for these uses. By reading the family handbook, parents are consenting to allow their child's photo to be used for internal purposes. If the parent does not want his or her child's photo to be used for such purposes, he or she should let the school's director of operations know in writing.

Great Oaks also allows pictures and videos to be used for print and broadcast media purposes (external), and includes pictures and videos of scholars and staff on our website, on social media, and in promotional materials used to recruit scholars and staff and explain Great Oaks to external audiences such as charter authorizers, researchers, and funders (external). By signing the Media/ Publications Consent and Release form, parents are consenting to allow their child's photo to be used for external purposes. If the parent does not want his or her child's photo to be used for such purposes, he or she should not sign the media release.

Scholar Records

The school administration is responsible for all scholar records. They will discuss, explain, and/or make available to an eligible scholar (18 years old or greater) or parents/guardians any records on file. If a parent would like to examine a child's record, the parent should submit a request in writing to the School Director or the director of operations. Within 10 days, the eligible scholar or parent will be allowed to inspect the file and may request a copy of some or all of the information contained in the record. There are two different types of scholar records, which will be treated differently:

- 1. Directory Information:** Directory Information is basic information about scholars such as name, address, telephone number, date of birth, participation in activities, awards received, etc. This information may be made available to others for specific use without the consent of the parent/guardian. For example, teachers may distribute class lists to everyone in the class so that scholars may help each other with homework. If a parent/guardian would not like such information released, he or she should submit a request in writing to the School Director.
- 2. Confidential Records:** Confidential Records include grades, evaluations, disciplinary actions, and health records. Confidential records will not be made available to any non-school personnel without consent by the parent/guardian.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of scholar education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funding under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the scholar when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Scholars to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible scholars."

In accordance with FERPA law:

- ▶ Parents or scholars over 18 years of age have the right to inspect and review the scholar's education records maintained by the school.
- ▶ Parents or scholars over 18 years of age have the right to request that the school correct records, which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible scholar then has the right to a formal hearing. The ED of Great Oaks or the ED's designee will first hear the issue. If the parent or eligible scholar is still not satisfied with the decision of the ED or the ED's designee, a hearing with the board of directors or a designated subcommittee of the board may be requested. The decision of the board of directors or its designated subcommittee is final.
- ▶ The school may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a scholar's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. Any parent who does not want such directory information included should contact the Director of School Operations.
- ▶ This listing in the parent handbook serves as the school's annual notification of parents and eligible scholars of their rights under FERPA.
- ▶ Generally, the school must have written permission from the parent or eligible scholar in order to release any information from a scholar's education record. However, the school may disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- a. School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- b. Other schools to which a scholar is transferring;
- c. Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- d. Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a scholar;
- e. Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- f. Accrediting organizations;
- g. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;

Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies and State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Parent Involvement

Great Oaks is committed to providing parents with regular phone updates on student progress. We need your help to succeed. Please keep the office and/or the Executive Director informed of changes in phone numbers and/or addresses.

The Parent Advisory Council is open to all parents. The meetings are announced, and all parents are invited to join or to attend. Meetings are scheduled monthly. All meetings are held at the Great Oaks Charter School. The Parent Advisory Council is a parent-run organization. A member of the school administration attends all the monthly meetings. Parents/Guardians have the opportunity to plan events and activities, raise important issues to the school leadership and also act as a sounding board on new policies and changes at Great Oaks.

As part of our commitment to partnering with families to ensure parent success, we ask parents and students to sign the attached Great Oaks Community Compact (see next page).

GREAT OAKS CHARTER SCHOOL OF BRIDGEPORT COMMUNITY COMPACT

We the faculty and staff of Great Oaks Charter School of Bridgeport commit to the following:

- ▶ We will serve as role models of hard work, consistent attendance and punctuality.
- ▶ We will hold ourselves and our scholars to the high standards necessary to prepare for high school and college. We will diagnose students' needs and do whatever it takes to ensure students make academic breakthroughs.
- ▶ We will be role models of our school's core values and will build scholars' character values.
- ▶ We will be clear and transparent with all expectations. We will expect 100% compliance.
- ▶ We will hold our scholars accountable to very high behavioral expectations. We will also make sure our rules, rewards and consequences are logical and consistent throughout the school.
- ▶ We promise to appreciate, support and respect every scholar and every family member.
- ▶ We will communicate regularly with families about their scholar's progress and will return calls and emails within 24 hours. We will meet in person whenever possible.
- ▶ We will assign productive, worthwhile homework each night.

We ask that each scholar and parent sign the below family pledge.

PARENT PLEDGE

As the **parent(s)** of a Great Oaks Scholar I/We commit to the following:

- ▶ I will make sure my child comes to school every day. I will schedule appointments, vacations, etc. for the days and times when school is not in session. I will make sure my child arrives at school every day on time (by 7:30). If my child takes the bus I will make sure he or she is at the bus stop on time. If I pick my child up I will do so on time.
- ▶ I understand Great Oaks Bridgeport's core values and very high expectations for student behavior. I will make sure my scholar follows the rules. I understand that my child may have consequences that include losing privileges and lunch or after school reflections/detentions.
- ▶ I promise to support school policies and rules and to always show respect for staff members.
- ▶ I will return phone calls within 24 hours. I will attend Back to School Night and Report Card Conferences. If I am asked to meet about my child's academics or behavior I will make every effort to do so.
- ▶ I understand Great Oaks Bridgeport has high standards and that students must pass all core classes, read at grade level and have consistent attendance to be promoted to the next grade level.
- ▶ If my child takes the bus I will support bus rules to protect the safety of all individuals. If my child violates bus rules and is suspended from the bus I will make sure he or she still arrives to school on time. If my child walks to or from school I will make sure he or she is safe, uses good judgment and travels directly to and from school.

- ▶ I will make sure my child wears the Great Oaks uniform and follows the dress code every day.
- ▶ I will support my scholar in completing daily homework assignments and long-term projects.

SCHOLAR PLEDGE

As a **Great Oaks Scholar**, I commit to the following:

- ▶ I will come to school on time every day. I will transition quickly between classes and arrive at each class on time and ready to learn.
- ▶ I understand Great Oaks Bridgeport’s Core Values and I know that Great Oaks Bridgeport has high expectations and many rules that I will do my best to follow. Everyone makes mistakes... and that’s OK as long as you learn from them. There are many rewards and consequences I can earn at Great Oaks Bridgeport. I will work to understand all of them.
- ▶ I know that Great Oaks has very high expectations and that it will take more time and more work for me to get ready for college. I am ready for this challenge. My teachers, parents and teammates are working hard to help me climb the mountain to college. I will show them all respect.
- ▶ If I ride the bus I will remain seated, facing forward and I will not distract or disrespect the bus driver or my teammates. I understand that I represent Great Oaks Bridgeport in my community and if I walk to or from school I will do so safely and quickly. I understand all Great Oaks Bridgeport rules apply during my trip to and from school.
- ▶ I will show my school pride and my pride in myself by wearing the Great Oaks uniform and making sure that I show my respect for the Great Oaks community by paying careful attention to my appearance and hygiene each day.

Please sign along with your scholar and return to GO-BPT

Parent Signature(s)

Date

Scholar Signature

Date

NOTES: What are your dreams and goals for your child for this year?
