

Family Handbook

2026-2027 Academic Year

2026-27



SCAN TO ACCESS
DIGITAL EDITION





Family Handbook 2026-2027

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Letter from the Headmaster

Dear Families,

It is with great excitement that I welcome you and your child to Great Hearts Monte Vista South, and to the community we have built over the 12 years. I am grateful you have chosen to partner with us in the liberal arts tradition, and to give your child the opportunity to participate in a rigorous curriculum that is infused with the study of virtues. At Great Hearts our students have the opportunity not only to excel in academics, but to develop their character throughout their time at Great Hearts.

Whether you are beginning your journey here at Great Hearts Monte Vista South, or continuing it, we ask that you join in enthusiastically as a part of our Monte Vista family. Through the bonds we build together as a community of learners and supporters of the philosophy of liberal arts education, we will help our students grow into lifelong learners, who immerse themselves in classical tradition. They will become individuals who see the value in rigor, in literature, and in all that is good, true, and beautiful.

Most Sincerely,

Kate Imber, Headmaster
Great Hearts Monte Vista South

Chapter 1: Academics and Accountability

Section 1.1. Classical Education and the Liberal Arts

1.1.1. Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

The academic program of Great Hearts Texas is guided by the classical understanding that education ultimately aims at the pursuit of the transcendentals: truth, goodness, and beauty. These enduring ideals have long served as guiding principles within the liberal arts tradition and reflect the belief that education should cultivate not only knowledge but also character and sound judgment.

The pursuit of truth calls students to disciplined study, careful reasoning, and intellectual honesty in the search for understanding. The pursuit of goodness concerns the formation of moral character and civic responsibility, as students reflect on the actions, decisions, and virtues encountered in history, literature, and philosophy. The pursuit of beauty invites students to recognize and appreciate the artistic and intellectual achievements of human culture, including the great works of literature, art, music, and architecture.

Through sustained engagement with the texts, ideas, and works studied throughout the curriculum, students develop habits of thought and character that support lifelong learning, responsible citizenship, and thoughtful participation in the cultural life of society.

1.1.2. Great Hearts' Approach to Classical Education

Great Hearts Texas provides a public education grounded in the classical tradition and the liberal arts. The Academy's approach to learning emphasizes the disciplined pursuit of knowledge, the cultivation of intellectual virtue, and the formation of thoughtful and responsible citizens.

In the classical tradition, the liberal arts are those branches of learning that prepare students for the thoughtful exercise of freedom and civic responsibility. Through the careful study of language, literature, history, mathematics, science, philosophy, and the fine arts, students develop habits of attention, reasoning, and reflection that support both academic achievement and lifelong learning.

As a public charter school, Great Hearts Texas operates in accordance with the laws and standards governing public education in the State of Texas. The Academy's curriculum is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and other applicable academic requirements while reflecting the principles of classical education.

Instruction within the liberal arts tradition emphasizes careful reading, thoughtful discussion, clear writing, and logical reasoning. Students are encouraged to engage seriously with enduring questions

about human nature, knowledge, and civic life while developing the intellectual discipline necessary for success in higher education and in the broader responsibilities of citizenship.

1.1.3. The Socratic Method and Teaching Through Questioning

An important feature of classical education at Great Hearts Texas is the Socratic method, a form of instruction that guides students toward deeper understanding through thoughtful questioning, attentive reading, and respectful dialogue. Named for the ancient philosopher Socrates, this approach encourages students to examine ideas carefully, consider differing perspectives, and pursue truth through reasoned inquiry.

Through guided discussion, students learn to think critically, listen attentively, articulate their ideas clearly, and evaluate arguments with fairness and precision. While especially prominent in literature, philosophy, history, and the humanities, Socratic questioning is used throughout the curriculum to cultivate intellectual curiosity, sound judgment, and a lifelong love of learning.

1.1.4. Focus on the Western Tradition

The academic program at Great Hearts Texas is rooted in the study of the great works of the Western tradition. The Academy seeks to provide students with a meaningful introduction to the texts, ideas, and achievements that have shaped Western civilization.

Through the study of literature, philosophy, history, mathematics, science, languages, and the fine arts, students encounter the intellectual and cultural foundations that have influenced the development of American institutions and civic life. These works represent a rich and diverse tradition that invites thoughtful reflection and disciplined inquiry.

This focus on the Western tradition provides students with a coherent intellectual foundation from which they may pursue lifelong learning and engage thoughtfully with cultures and ideas throughout the world.

1.1.5. Classics to Keep

Books occupy a central place in a classical liberal arts education. Throughout their years at Great Hearts Texas, students encounter enduring works of literature, history, philosophy, and other disciplines that have shaped our civilization. Families are encouraged to purchase certain texts, known as "Classics to Keep," so that students may annotate them, return to them over time, and gradually build a personal library that reflects their intellectual formation.

To support classroom instruction, the Academy publishes recommended editions of these works. Families are encouraged to purchase the designated editions so that students may readily participate in classroom discussion and shared study. Students who do not purchase a text will be provided access to a copy as part of the instructional program. School-issued books remain Academy property and should be

returned in good condition. In accordance with Texas law, required instructional materials are provided to students without charge.

1.1.6. Humane Letters

An important feature of the Great Hearts academic program is the Humane Letters course, which integrates the study of literature and history within the classical liberal arts tradition. By examining historical events alongside the literary, philosophical, and historical texts that emerged from those periods, students gain a deeper understanding of the ideas, individuals, and cultures that have shaped human civilization.

Through the study of primary sources and discussion-based instruction, including Socratic dialogue, students learn to read attentively, think critically, and engage thoughtfully with enduring questions concerning human nature, civic life, moral responsibility, and the pursuit of knowledge. Humane Letters becomes especially prominent in the upper grades, where students undertake increasingly rigorous study of the great texts and ideas of the Western tradition.

1.1.7. Classical Languages

The study of classical languages is an important component of the Great Hearts Texas curriculum. Through the study of Latin, and in some cases Ancient Greek, students deepen their understanding of language, literature, and the intellectual traditions that have shaped Western civilization.

Classical language instruction strengthens grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and analytical thinking while providing direct access to many of the texts, ideas, and cultural foundations encountered throughout the curriculum. Through careful study and translation, students develop habits of attention, precision, and intellectual discipline that support learning across the liberal arts. Modern language options are also available at many of our Academies.

Section 1.2. Academic Program and Curriculum

1.2.1. Classical Liberal Arts Curriculum

Great Hearts Texas provides a public education grounded in the classical liberal arts tradition. This approach to learning emphasizes the disciplined study of language, literature, history, mathematics, science, philosophy, and the arts in order to cultivate intellectual excellence, sound judgment, and a lifelong love of learning.

In the classical tradition, the liberal arts prepare students for thoughtful participation in civic life by developing habits of careful reading, clear reasoning, articulate expression, and disciplined inquiry. Through engagement with enduring texts and ideas, students deepen their understanding of the human experience while strengthening their intellectual capacities. As a public charter school, Great Hearts



Texas implements this classical approach within the framework of the academic standards established by the State of Texas. The curriculum is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and other applicable state requirements.

Although all academies share a common educational philosophy and academic framework, individual campuses may offer variations in course sequencing and programmatic opportunities. Families are encouraged to consult their academy's website for the most current description of the curriculum and course progression available at their campus.

1.2.2. Alignment with Texas Academic Standards (TEKS)

As a public charter school in the State of Texas, Great Hearts Texas provides instruction that is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education for all public schools. These standards establish the knowledge and skills students are expected to master at each grade level and within each subject area.

The Academy's classical liberal arts curriculum is designed to meet or exceed these state requirements while preserving the distinctive features of a classical education. Course content, instructional materials, and learning objectives are reviewed to ensure that students receive instruction that prepares them to demonstrate mastery of TEKS standards and to succeed on state-required academic assessments.

Through this alignment, Great Hearts Texas ensures that scholars receive a rigorous education consistent with the expectations of Texas public education while also benefiting from the depth, coherence, and intellectual focus of the classical liberal arts tradition.

1.2.3. Core Academic Disciplines

The Great Hearts Texas curriculum is grounded in the liberal arts tradition and ordered toward the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty. Through sustained study of literature, mathematics, history, science, the fine arts, physical education, and classical and modern languages where offered, scholars encounter the enduring ideas, great works, and intellectual disciplines that have shaped our civilization. The curriculum is designed to cultivate knowledge, wisdom, virtue, and the habits of attentive inquiry necessary for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship.

Within this tradition, the study of history, government, geography, economics, and civics invites scholars into a serious examination of the human story through significant events, enduring ideas, exemplary lives, primary sources, and the institutions that have shaped the American experience and the broader Western tradition. Instruction is grounded in the pursuit of knowledge, reasoned inquiry, and civil discourse rather than political advocacy or activism. Students are encouraged to examine important

historical and civic questions from multiple perspectives and to engage respectfully in discussion consistent with the principles of a free society and the requirements of Texas law.

Section 1.3. Academic Standards, Grading, and Interventions

1.3.1. Academic Expectations

Great Hearts Texas maintains high academic standards in order to promote intellectual growth, personal responsibility, and the pursuit of excellence. Scholars are expected to approach their studies with diligence, curiosity, discipline, and perseverance while making steady progress toward mastery of grade-level expectations.

The Academy is founded on the conviction that every student who is willing to learn can benefit from a rigorous classical education. While students differ in their abilities, interests, and rates of development, each is encouraged to pursue growth in knowledge, wisdom, and character. Teachers regularly evaluate student progress through a variety of assessments and provide feedback designed to support learning and academic development. Through sustained effort and attentive study, scholars develop the habits of mind and character necessary for lifelong learning, responsible citizenship, and human flourishing.

1.3.2. Grading, Academic Progress, and Evaluation

Grades communicate a student's progress toward mastery of course material and grade-level expectations. Teachers evaluate student learning through a variety of measures, which may include written work, quizzes, examinations, projects, class participation, and other assignments appropriate to the course. Ongoing assessment helps teachers guide instruction, identify areas of strength and improvement, and provide meaningful feedback to students and families.

Within the classical liberal arts tradition, grades are understood as important indicators of academic progress but not the sole measure of learning. Great Hearts Texas encourages students and families to focus on the pursuit of knowledge, growth in understanding, and the development of sound intellectual habits. As students mature, they are increasingly expected to assume responsibility for their own learning through attentive study, regular communication with teachers, and sustained academic effort. Parents and students are encouraged to review academic progress regularly and maintain open communication with teachers regarding student performance and growth.

1.3.3. Depth of Inquiry, Sense of Wonder, and Participation

A classical liberal arts education seeks not only academic achievement but also the cultivation of intellectual habits that support thoughtful learning and meaningful engagement with the curriculum.

Teachers may consider qualitative aspects of student growth, including depth of inquiry, sense of wonder, and participation, alongside more traditional measures of academic performance.

Students demonstrate these habits through thoughtful questioning, attentive study, intellectual curiosity, respectful engagement in discussion, and active participation in the life of the classroom. Participation is measured not merely by frequency of contribution but by the quality of a student's engagement with ideas, classmates, and course material. Through the cultivation of these habits, Great Hearts Texas seeks to form students who are knowledgeable, attentive, intellectually curious, and committed to the pursuit of truth.

1.3.4. Intervention and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

When scholars experience academic, behavioral, or other learning difficulties, the Academy may provide additional support designed to promote success within the general education program. Great Hearts Texas utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to monitor student progress, identify areas of need, and provide increasingly targeted interventions based on individual circumstances.

Through classroom performance, assessments, observations, and ongoing progress monitoring, educators may implement interventions such as differentiated instruction, tutoring, small-group support, behavioral supports, or other strategies appropriate to the scholar's needs. Families are encouraged to work in partnership with teachers and school leaders throughout this process. In some circumstances, information gathered through MTSS may contribute to consideration of additional evaluations or specialized services as permitted by law.

1.3.5. Dyslexia Identification and Services

Great Hearts Texas identifies and serves students with dyslexia in accordance with the Texas Education Code and the Texas Dyslexia Handbook adopted by the State Board of Education. Students who exhibit characteristics associated with dyslexia may be referred for screening or evaluation, and parents will be notified regarding the evaluation process and available services.

Students identified with dyslexia may receive instructional supports designed to strengthen reading and related literacy skills through structured, evidence-based interventions. When appropriate, students may also qualify for accommodations or services under Section 504 or special education in accordance with applicable law.

Section 1.4. State Assessments and Academic Accountability

1.4.1. State Assessment Program

Great Hearts Texas participates in the statewide assessment and accountability system established by the State of Texas. Students are required to participate in state-administered assessments, including the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and applicable End-of-Course (EOC) assessments, as required by law. Assessment results provide information regarding student progress and mastery of state academic standards and may be used to inform instructional planning and academic support. Students who receive special education services, Section 504 accommodations, or language supports as English Learners may receive testing accommodations in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements.

Parents or teachers may request that a STAAR or EOC assessment be administered in paper format in accordance with state law and applicable deadlines established by the Texas Education Agency. Additional information regarding paper testing requests may be obtained from the campus administration.

1.4.2. Academic Accountability

The State of Texas maintains a public accountability system designed to evaluate the performance of public schools and school districts. This system considers a variety of indicators, including scholar achievement, academic growth, and other measures of educational progress. Great Hearts Texas participates fully in the state accountability system and works continuously to improve scholar learning outcomes through rigorous instruction and ongoing evaluation of academic programs.

Each year, the Texas Education Agency publishes the Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for every public school district and campus. The TAPR provides detailed information about scholar performance, school accountability ratings, and other educational indicators. The Academy makes TAPR information available to families and the public and may present the report during a public meeting in accordance with state requirements. Parents and community members are encouraged to review these reports as part of the Academy's commitment to transparency and accountability in education.

1.4.3. Financial Accountability

Great Hearts Texas participates in the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) for charter schools, a financial accountability system administered by the Texas Education Agency. The Charter FIRST rating measures the financial management practices and overall financial health of charter school operators in Texas. The most recent Charter FIRST rating and related financial accountability



information for Great Hearts Texas are available on the Texas Education Agency website and may also be obtained by contacting the school's administrative office.

1.4.4. Accelerated Instruction

Great Hearts Texas will provide accelerated instruction in applicable subject areas to each student who fails to perform satisfactorily on the STAAR exam in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth grade or an end-of-course ("EOC") assessment. This accelerated instruction will be provided either during the subsequent summer or school year, and consist of instruction meeting the requirements of Education Code § 28.0211(a-1) and 28.0211(a-4), as applicable.

Accelerated instruction provided during the following school year may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours. Failure of a student to attend accelerated instruction may result in violations of required school attendance.

In providing this accelerated instruction, Great Hearts Texas may not remove a student, except under circumstances for which a student enrolled in the same grade level who is not receiving accelerated instruction would be removed, from: (1) instruction in the foundation and enrichment curriculum for the grade level in which the student is enrolled, or (2) recess or other physical activity that is available to other students enrolled in the same grade level.

1.4.5. Accelerated Education Plan

In accordance with Texas law, Great Hearts Texas will develop an Accelerated Education Plan (AEP) for students who do not perform satisfactorily on a STAAR or End-of-Course (EOC) assessment. The AEP will identify accelerated instruction and supports designed to help the student achieve grade-level or course-level proficiency. Parents will receive a copy of the plan and may participate in its development.

A parent who has concerns regarding the content or implementation of an AEP may address those concerns with the campus administration and may pursue the district's student and parent complaint process. For students receiving special education services, accelerated instruction and related supports will be addressed through the ARD process in accordance with applicable law.

Section 1.5. Graduation and College Counseling

1.5.1. College and Career Counseling

Great Hearts Texas provides college and career counseling services to assist students and families with academic planning, college exploration, application preparation, scholarship opportunities, and other postsecondary pathways. Each academy provides access to a College Counselor who works with students to identify opportunities that align with their academic goals, interests, and aspirations.



The Academy's rigorous classical curriculum is designed to prepare students for success in colleges, universities, technical programs, military service, and other meaningful pursuits. As part of the college application process, Great Hearts Texas provides information to help colleges and universities understand the rigor of the curriculum, course offerings, and grading practices. Through a combination of individualized counseling and a challenging academic program, Great Hearts Texas seeks to prepare students for success in higher education, productive careers, and lives of purpose and responsible citizenship.

1.5.2. Promotion and Retention

Promotion to the next grade level is based on successful completion of required coursework and satisfactory academic progress. In making promotion decisions, the Academy may consider academic performance, mastery of grade-level standards, assessment results, attendance, teacher recommendations, and other relevant educational information. When a scholar experiences academic difficulty, the Academy may work with the scholar and family to develop appropriate support strategies.

Except where a parent is granted a specific right under Texas law to elect retention, decisions regarding promotion and retention are made by the Academy based on the student's academic readiness and overall best interests. Parents may have certain rights under Texas law to request grade retention or course repetition, which may require review by a Retention Committee. Each campus shall maintain a Retention Committee in accordance with Texas law and district procedures. The committee reviews retention requests and provides recommendations based on the student's educational progress and readiness for advancement.

1.5.3. Foundation High School Program and Personal Graduation Plans

In accordance with Texas law, students enrolled in Great Hearts Texas high schools graduate under the Foundation High School Program (FHSP). Great Hearts Texas has received approval from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to implement an alternative course sequence aligned with its classical curriculum while satisfying applicable graduation requirements. Students and parents will receive information regarding graduation requirements, endorsements, Distinguished Level of Achievement opportunities, and Personal Graduation Plans (PGPs) in accordance with Texas law. Current graduation requirements and course sequences are available on the Great Hearts Texas website and through campus academic advising offices.

1.5.4. End-of-Course Assessments

Texas law requires high school students to participate in State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in designated subjects, including English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History. These assessments are generally administered during the school year in which a student completes the corresponding course.

To graduate, students must satisfy applicable state requirements for coursework and assessments. Students who do not achieve satisfactory performance on an EOC assessment may have opportunities to retest, and certain students may qualify for alternative graduation procedures as permitted by Texas law. Eligible students may receive assessment accommodations in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements.

1.5.5. Additional State Graduation Requirements

In addition to required coursework and state assessments, students must satisfy certain graduation requirements established by Texas law and State Board of Education rules. These requirements may include instruction or demonstrations related to effective communication, CPR awareness, interactions with law enforcement, and other topics required for graduation.

Texas law also requires students to complete and submit either the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA), unless the student qualifies for and submits an approved exemption or opt-out form. Additional information regarding graduation requirements is available through campus academic advising offices and on the district website.

1.5.6. Transcripts, GPA, and Academic Records

Great Hearts Texas maintains official transcripts documenting student coursework, grades, and credits earned. All high school credit-bearing courses taken at Great Hearts Texas remain part of the student's permanent academic record. Grade point averages (GPA) are calculated based on coursework completed and include both weighted and unweighted GPA values when reported to colleges and universities.

Credit recovery courses will appear on the transcript along with the grade earned. When credit recovery occurs within a Great Hearts program, both the original and replacement grades may factor into GPA calculations. Credit recovered through external programs may follow different GPA calculation rules in accordance with school policy.

1.5.7. Graduation Honors, Academic Distinctions, and Class Rank

Great Hearts Texas recognizes exceptional academic achievement through graduation honors and academic distinctions. These recognitions may include honors designations based on academic performance, distinctions awarded for exemplary academic work such as the Senior Thesis, and the selection of valedictorian, salutatorian, and the Highest Ranking Graduate (HRG). Specific eligibility requirements and recognition criteria are established by district procedures and communicated to students and families.

Great Hearts Texas does not assign numerical class rank for routine reporting purposes. However, the Academy will identify and report students who qualify within the top ten percent of their graduating class and provide any ranking information required by Texas law. In accordance with applicable state

requirements, the Academy will also designate a Highest Ranking Graduate and complete any required scholarship or reporting documentation. All honors, distinctions, and rankings are awarded in a fair and non-discriminatory manner consistent with applicable law.

1.5.8. Certificates of Coursework Completion

In accordance with the Texas Education Code, a Certificate of Coursework Completion may be issued to a student who successfully completes all required coursework but does not pass all required state assessments. This certificate acknowledges completion of academic coursework but is not equivalent to a high school diploma and does not qualify the student as a graduate under Texas Education Agency accountability standards. Parents or guardians will receive written notification if their student is being considered for this certificate.

1.5.9. Texas First Early High School Completion Program

In accordance with state law, Great Hearts Texas provides notice regarding the Texas First Early High School Completion Program and related scholarship opportunities. Eligible students may qualify to graduate early under state-established criteria and accelerate their pathway to college. Additional information is available through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website.

1.5.10. Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test

Each Great Hearts Academy will offer the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) annually to students in grades 10-12. The Great Hearts Academy will provide students and their parents with a notice of date, time and location of the scheduled administration of the ASVAB along with registration instructions.

1.5.11. State Reporting and Accountability

Great Hearts Texas reports student graduation data and postsecondary outcomes to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in accordance with state and federal accountability requirements. Graduation and postsecondary indicators are reported through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and contribute to the state's College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) accountability measures.

Section 1.6. Special Programs

1.6.1. Student Support Services

Great Hearts Texas provides a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to assist students who experience academic, behavioral, or other learning difficulties. Through this process, students may receive interventions and supports designed to promote success in the general education setting. Parents who believe their child may have a disability or require accommodations may request an evaluation for special education services or Section 504 accommodations by contacting the campus

administration or the district's Special Education Department. Great Hearts Texas will respond to requests for evaluation and conduct evaluations, when appropriate, in accordance with applicable federal and state law. Parents of referred students will receive information regarding their procedural rights, the evaluation process, and any required consent.

1.6.2. Special Education Referrals

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or to an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, such as a campus Headmaster, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards, and a copy of the Overview of Special Education for Parents form created by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard and form requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If the district or charter school conducts a special education evaluation for a student, it must complete the student's evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days following the date it receives a parent's written consent to evaluate the student. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period can be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is another exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If a district or charter school receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the evaluation report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30th due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply. If a district or charter school receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation less than 35 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, the general timeline of 45 school days applies to the date the written report of the initial evaluation must be completed, with the same extension for three or more absences during the evaluation period.



Upon completing the evaluation, the district or charter school must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report as soon as possible, but no later than five school days prior to the initial admission, review and determination (ARD) committee meeting, which will determine a student's initial eligibility or no later than June 30 if the parent consent was received at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year. The copy of the evaluation must be provided to the parent at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the district or charter school in a companion document titled Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process. For more information, visit spedsupport.tea.texas.gov or spedtex.org.

All concerns regarding MTSS may be directed to:

Manjola Koci
Network Director of MTSS
Great Hearts Texas, 310 W. Ashby Pl., San Antonio, TX 78212
manjola.koci@greatheartstxschools.org
(210) 888-9475

All concerns regarding Section 504 Referrals may be directed to:

Monet Lessner
Executive Director of Special Student Services
Great Hearts Texas, 310 W. Ashby Pl., San Antonio, TX 78212
monet.lessner@greatheartstxschools.org
(210) 888-9475

All concerns regarding Special Education Referrals may be directed to:

Darla Jackson Hernandez
LSSP Supervisor
Great Hearts Texas, 310 W. Ashby Pl., San Antonio, TX 78212
darla.jackson@greatheartstxschools.org
(210) 888-9475

Section 1.7. English Learners and Language Programs

1.7.1. English Learners and Language Services

Great Hearts Texas provides language instruction services for students identified as English Learners (ELs) in accordance with state and federal law. Students whose home language is identified as a

language other than English may be assessed to determine English language proficiency using state-approved procedures.

The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) reviews assessment results, determines eligibility for language services, monitors student progress, and makes recommendations regarding instructional supports and placement. Parents will be notified of assessment results, recommended services, and program options and may participate in decisions regarding their child's language instruction program.

1.7.2. English as a Second Language (ESL) Program

Great Hearts Texas provides English as a Second Language (ESL) services designed to support the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English while enabling students to participate successfully in the academic program. Parents have the right to accept or decline language instruction services in accordance with applicable law.

Section 1.8. Educational Access and Stability

1.8.1. McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Great Hearts Texas complies with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and provides educational services and supports for students experiencing homelessness. Eligible students may have the right to immediate enrollment, continued attendance at the school of origin when feasible, transportation assistance, and access to educational services without barriers caused by homelessness. Families who believe they may qualify for assistance should contact the district's Homeless Liaison for information regarding available services and protections.

1.8.2. Foster Care Education Rights

Great Hearts Texas complies with federal and state laws designed to promote educational stability for students in foster care. Eligible students may be entitled to immediate enrollment, continued attendance at the school of origin when appropriate, school placement decisions made in the student's best interest, assistance with records transfers, transportation support when required, and coordinated services between the school and child welfare agencies. Great Hearts Texas has designated a Foster Care Liaison to assist students and families and to support compliance with applicable foster care protections.

1.8.3. Scholars of Parents in the Military

Great Hearts Texas supports students of military families and complies with the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. Eligible students may receive assistance with enrollment, records transfers, course placement, and graduation requirements to help ensure educational continuity during military-related transitions.

Section 1.9. Federal Program Rights and Notices

1.9.1. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Parent Notices

Great Hearts Texas participates in federal education programs designed to support scholar achievement and promote meaningful family engagement. Federal law requires schools receiving federal funding to provide certain notifications to parents regarding program participation and educational rights. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires school districts receiving federal funding to provide specific notifications to parents.

Right to Request Teacher Qualifications

Parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers, including:

- certification status
- subject-area licensure
- whether instruction is provided by a paraprofessional

Notification of Non-Certified Teachers

When applicable, parents will be notified if a child has been assigned to or taught by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification requirements for four or more consecutive weeks.

Scholar Assessments

Parents will receive information regarding state academic assessments used to measure scholar progress and school accountability.

1.9.2. Parent and Family Engagement (Title I)

When applicable, Great Hearts Texas participates in federal education programs authorized under Title I, Part A of ESSA, which provide additional support to schools serving scholars with identified academic needs. Title I recognizes parents and families as essential partners in education. Campuses receiving Title I funds will provide opportunities for parents to participate in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs and will provide information regarding the school's curriculum, academic standards, and assessments used to measure scholar progress. Parents will receive timely information regarding Title I programs offered at their child's campus and are encouraged to remain actively engaged in their child's education through regular communication with teachers and participation in school activities that support scholar learning.

1.9.3. English Learner Identification (Title III)

Great Hearts Texas provides language instruction services for eligible English Learners (ELs) in accordance with state and federal law. Parents of identified English Learners will be notified regarding their child's English language proficiency, recommended services, and program options and may accept or decline participation in language instruction services as permitted by law.

Section 1.10. Scholar Surveys and Instructional Materials

1.10.1. Notice Regarding Instructional Materials

Parents have the right to review instructional materials used in the classroom as part of the school's educational program. Requests to inspect instructional materials may be submitted to campus administration. Instructional materials are selected in accordance with the Academy's classical curriculum and applicable state standards. Federal law provides parents with certain rights regarding scholar participation in surveys and access to instructional materials used in the educational program.

1.10.2. Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) provides parents with certain rights regarding student surveys, instructional materials, and the collection of information for research or marketing purposes. Parents may inspect certain survey instruments and instructional materials and may opt their child out of participation in activities involving protected information as permitted by law. Great Hearts Texas will provide notice and obtain consent when required by applicable federal law.

Chapter 2: Campus Procedures

Section 2.1. Academics and Accountability

2.1.1. Roles of the Student, Parent, and Teacher

The academy believes that the student should be the primary agent in his or her education. Our first priority in this regard is to encourage student responsibility by establishing an open line of communication between students and their individual teachers. Timely and effective communication between teachers, students, and parents is essential in fostering academic growth.

Students

Students are responsible for tracking assignments, understanding stated course requirements, and for meeting deadlines. It is also the job of the student to communicate honestly to their parents about their day-to-day performance and academic standing. Students are provided a maximal amount of agency and responsibility in the day-to-day communication about their academics in accordance with what is

developmentally appropriate for each child. This responsibility is only devolved back to the parent when the student has been demonstrated to not be trustworthy in relaying information accurately or otherwise has shown that they are not ready or capable of that responsibility. Even in these cases, our priority is to prepare that student to take up those responsibilities as soon as they are able.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for clearly communicating to the student what is expected of him or her. Teachers are also responsible for notifying parents when their student is struggling considerably with the material or is not performing as expected. Behavior information goes home on a daily basis through your child's behavior charts/logs and academic information goes home on a rolling basis as individual assignments are graded.

Teachers compose weekly lesson plans and prepare students for daily instruction. They participate in a daily, asynchronous communication cycle (see below) to make sure parents are regularly informed on routine matters. Prior to tests, teachers provide study guides and other forms of review so that students can prepare. They also monitor student performance and provide additional scaffolding and differentiation for students that are either below or above grade level performance.

Parents

The primary means by which parents can assist their children are:

- encouraging their children in their development of academy goals, namely the growth of character and wisdom,
- providing a distraction-free study environment
- Participating in the daily asynchronous communication cycle (such as signing behavior charts, reading logs, reviewing planners, etc)

When students are experiencing significant academic struggles, parents should generally seek to assist the student according to these guidelines:

1. First, student communicates specific difficulties with their teacher.
2. Teacher meets with student to come up with solutions and provide advice
3. If difficulty persists, parents contact teacher or vice versa
4. Teacher, parents, and possibly teacher meet to discuss the issue, or exchange emails
5. If difficulty persists, parents and/or teacher may reach to a member of administration for further guidance
6. Administration facilitates conference with parents and teacher

The best way for parents to get in touch with their child's teacher is by sending them an email directly. Individual emails are listed on the school website. Teachers will return correspondence not later than the end of the next school day.

Note: Stopping by before or after school without an appointment is not a good time to meet with teachers or a member of administration. Please send an email and we can set up a good time for a phone call or a conference either in person or on Zoom. When emailing administration about an issue, it is helpful to include your child's full name and grade level.

While on campus, parents should always conduct themselves in a civil manner. Hostility, disrespectful speech, and vulgarity that Great Hearts determines to be disruptive to the educational environment will not be permitted on campus, including the parking lot.

2.1.2. The Daily Communication Cycle

The academy uses a number of regular methods of asynchronous communication to keep parents in the loop of how their child has been doing behaviorally and academically. These procedures also exist to help students develop good habits around executive function and developing a robust sense of personal responsibility for meeting campus expectations. This is the typical communication cycle, which complements emails when specific issues arise:

Every student has a take-home or homework folder. It comes to school and goes home every single day. It will contain any homework assignments students are expected to complete, as well as other important matters of communication such as the student's behavior log/chart, paperwork for the parent to fill out, graded work being sent home (or for signature in the case of tests), and the weekly grade level newsletter. Every student also records their homework assignments in a planner (except kindergarten). This enables the parent to understand exactly what work needs to be completed and will help them help their child find the assignment and keep their folder organized.

When a student arrives home, the parent is expected to provide the following baseline of support:

- Review your child's planner and ensure that they know what homework they are responsible for completing. Initial the planner, so that the next day the teacher can see that the planner was reviewed.
- Look in the "bring back" section of the homework folder for tests that need to be signed or other paperwork that needs to be returned. Complete it, and put it back in the "bring back" pocket.
- Look in the "leave at home" pocket. Remove these items – they are typically graded assignments.

- Check and initial the behavior log/chart. Remember that a day with no notes is not just a neutral day, it is a *good* day, because it means that your child has met already high expectations of behavior.
- Finally, ensure that your child has a suitable place for the completion of homework that is not overly distracting.

When the child is at school, the teacher provides these supports:

- They remind students to turn in work that should have been completed. Some work is turned in at the start of the day; other assignments are held until that subject and checked in class.
- The teacher checks behavior charts to ensure that 1) the parent is in the loop and that 2) the student is discharging *their responsibility* for communicating accurately their day to their parents.
- The teacher checks the planner to 1) ensure that parents were made aware of what work the student was responsible for and 2) that the student is discharging *their responsibility* for staying on top of assignments and communicating with their parents what their obligations were.
- Time is set aside each day specifically for writing in the day's planner. This is not a task that teachers expect students to do on their own. At the end of the day, the teacher verifies that the planner is accurate.
- Students are sent home with a completed behavior chart. For K-2, that means recording their final position on the clip chart. For 3-5, that means providing a record of the day's commendations or infractions.
- Students are provided their homework. Some assignments are handed out at the end of the day, and others are given to students in sequence with that subject's class procedures.

These procedures are laid out in some detail, but they take only a few minutes of a parent's attention each day, and ensures that any problems are noticed and can be acted on quickly. These procedures also allow the teacher and parent to communicate regularly in a way that is fully integrated to both the school day and homework time, with the student and their folder at the center, cutting down on the need for extensive additional communication. This frees the teacher's time that can be dedicated to parent communication regarding larger issues in need of that attention and ensures that the parent has nearly automatic access to all of the smaller details of their child's school day, without the need to ask for it.

2.1.3. Homework Expectations

At the academy, we believe that the majority of class time should be spent in the *collective* pursuit of the true, the good, the beautiful in each academic subject. Homework time, then, is reserved primarily for reading and for meaningful *independent* activities that support the curricular objectives of each course. Students should expect to do meaningful homework each night.

The issuing of homework is an important pillar to the nature of the work that students accomplish on our campus, as through it students are accustomed to, and habituated in, the practice of learning outside a formal school environment. If students are expected to become life-long learners, it is paramount that the home become a place where organized study feels natural and where the habits and byways of intellectual leisure, contemplation, and disciplined research live right alongside other important matters in family life such as dinner and personal hobbies.

Homework is also one of the primary avenues through which parents have direct access to observe the quality of their child's academic progress and the nature of our curricular offerings. **As a result, the active participation of the parent in the supervision of dedicated and effective homework practices is an important component of the parent-academy partnership.** Without homework, that shared work is significantly impoverished, and a student's intellectual development stands at risk of being something that happens "at school" and not "in the real world."

The average time each student is expected, on average, to spend on homework each night is

- Kindergarten: 20 minutes + 20 minutes reading
- 1st Grade: 30 minutes + 20 minutes reading
- 2nd Grade: 35 minutes + 20 minutes reading
- 3rd Grade: 45 minutes + 20 minutes reading
- 4th Grade: 55 minutes + 20 minutes reading
- 5th Grade: 65 minutes + 20 minutes reading

The additional reading each day is tracked on a weekly reading log and can be done with any text of the student's choice, including pop culture. Its purpose is to develop a habit of reading for pleasure, outside the formal school environment, and as a self-initiated activity outside the burden of coursework and grades on comprehension quizzes. We encourage all families to develop traditions where they read to their children and have their children read to them. The single most effective thing a parent can do to ensure academic success and success beyond school is to ensure that their home is a home in which people read.

The amount of time spent on homework is an *average*, with some students naturally finishing their work earlier and some needing more time than others. The times indicated above do not include time spent studying for upcoming tests, which will vary from student to student, according to their needs. Additional studying is *optional*, in the sense that it is not assigned or graded, with the understanding that student test scores are a reflection of that time spent studying. Homework is typically lessened a day or two before major tests so that students can focus on preparing.

If your family is facing significant frustration at home or homework is taking significantly longer, assignments can be excused on a limited basis by parent signature and communication with your child's teacher as we work on identifying the underlying issues. The academy is not able to make ongoing or regular adjustments to a student's homework load in order to accommodate outside extra-curricular activities or busy family schedules, but we will work closely with families to identify problems and propose solutions.

Rest & Relaxation Weekends

R&R Weekends are issued around major breaks and holidays. Homework is not given during these times. Homework is also not issued for afternoons during which there is an evening school event that requires student participation such as the winter and spring concerts.

Questions About Homework

It sometimes happens that questions arise during homework time (What was the assignment supposed to be? Shouldn't this assignment have been done earlier this week? Where did that worksheet go? How does your teacher expect you to solve that problem?). Answers to these questions from campus staff should not be expected that same afternoon. We encourage parents to help their child identify what the issue was, and come to school the next morning prepared to ask their teacher about it. We also encourage parents to make use of our network of peer families. Your child might be missing a worksheet that another parent can take a picture of so that your child can still complete the assignment before its deadline.

If your child is consistently unable to explain to you what their homework obligations are, or their planner is not neat or adequately detailed, please reach out to your child's teacher or administration and we can look into whether a more personally accommodated process is needed to help your child be successful.

2.1.4. Late Work Policy

Work that is turned in late will be subjected to a 10% penalty. Work that is over a week late will not be accepted. Work is considered late when it is not provided to the teacher at the time it is collected, which for some assignments is the start of the school day. If it is found, completed, later that day it is still potentially subject to a late penalty.

2.1.5. Make-up Work Policy

For each day a student is absent, they are permitted not less than one extra day to complete the work for full credit. In practice, and especially for extended absences, deadlines and exemptions are discussed

and agreed to between the teacher and the child, and with the parent when warranted / developmentally necessary. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain and complete make-up work in a timely manner and within the time specified by their teacher.

For example, a student who was absent on Monday and Tuesday will receive their makeup work on Wednesday and should have that work ready to be turned in no later than Friday, unless otherwise instructed by their teacher.

Students should expect to take a missed test the next day they are back on campus.

Additional make-up time is not given for long-term assignments, e.g. poetry recitations, independent study, science fair etc.

Teachers are not required to provide lesson plans, assignments, or any other materials before a student leaves for a planned or unplanned unexcused absence, although it may be provided at the discretion of the teacher and school administration. Please note that some portion of the work that students do each day is done within the learning community of the classroom, and that all classwork and participation activities and assignments are not always able to be substituted or recreated for student credit. Classwork that is missed due to an unexcused absence that, due to its nature, cannot be made up will result in a zero.

2.1.6. Classics to Keep

Books are at the heart of a liberal arts education. At Great Hearts, it has always been the tradition for students to develop a personal library of books that they mark in, keep, and return to during their time at Great Hearts, and treasure for years to come. We call these books “Classics to Keep.” Your child’s class will utilize these novels during the upcoming school year as the central pillar of their literature class. Parents are strongly encouraged to purchase these books so that students can mark and keep them, allowing students to develop their own personal library of classics over the course of their academic career at Great Hearts.

For families who do not purchase the texts, students will be given a loan copy for use during that unit, but will not be allowed to write in them. We ask that loaned copies be returned in good condition once that unit is over.

Financial assistance is available for qualifying families.

2.1.7. Tardies

Students are issued a tardy if they arrive on campus later than 8:00am. When a student arrives late, they should be signed in at the front desk and then are issued a tardy pass to class. If their class is in the Koehler House or at recess, they will be escorted to class.

Students are allowed five tardies each calendar month. When they receive a sixth tardy, they will be issued a consequence such as a lunch detention, and another lunch detention for every additional sixth tardy. This number resets on the first day of each calendar month.

Tardy #1	Tardy #2	Tardy #3	Tardy #4	Tardy #5	Tardy #1 Lunch Detention	Tardy #2	Tardy #3	Tardy #4	Tardy #5	Tardy #1 Lunch Detention	Tardy #2
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Parents should be aware that excessive tardies have implications for student academic performance and are considered when discussing potential plans for student retention.

2.1.8. Independent Study

At the beginning of the second semester, students are expected to participate in a week-long research project. During this week, students do not attend school and stay at home and work on this project; meanwhile teachers are scheduled to meet with each family for parent-teacher conferences.

Assignments for Independent Study projects go home prior to Thanksgiving Break, giving families ample time to prepare for the project and work around winter travel plans for the holidays. While students have the week of Independent Study itself off to work on their project, it is expected that families use the previous 6 weeks to review the project and communicate any questions to their child's teacher.

Independent Study Week serves as an opportunity for students to study a topic in-depth on their own, manage their time in a more independent setting, and experience more serious work of an intellectual nature in the home setting. The primary goal of this exercise is to help habituate young students to the processes natural to life-long learning which should persist long after students leave a formal classroom environment. Parents may be tempted to over-assist with such projects, but we stress that the work that students produce should reflect their independent efforts.

Parents are still expected to be actively involved in this research project, especially in helping their children use the internet and look for appropriate sources. We recommend that parents use this as an opportunity to acquire a library card if they haven't done so already. During this process, parents should

strive to guide their children like teachers – helping students find their own ways to solutions, rather than giving them the solution.

2.1.9. Grades & Student Evaluation

The school year is split into four quarters, at the end of which families will be issued a quarterly report card with their student's grade averages. The report card indicates the overall average that the student achieved in each subject, as well as sub-category breakdowns for homework/classwork, participation, and tests.

Progress Reports for Grades K-2

If, halfway through a quarter, a student is failing a course or is in danger of failing the course by the end of the quarter, they will receive a letter of deficiency. This letter outlines the specific academic deficiencies the student is struggling with as well as recommended changes for supporting your child's academic progress. If your child is doing well academically, no letters are issued.

Progress Reports for Grades 3-5

At the end of the third and sixth weeks of each quarter, parents will receive a progress report indicating the overall average that each student has currently earned for each of their courses. Students in Grades 3-5 are not issued deficiency letters like K-2 are.

The academy does not keep an open gradebook for parents to view online. This is a deliberate choice meant to keep the student at the center of the academic conversation and to help them to build the skills required to be an independent and active agent in their own academic career. Graded work is always sent home for parents to review and all tests are sent home to be signed by parents and returned.

As students leave as 6th graders, they are expected to be able to communicate effectively with their teachers about their grades, with the parent serving in a supplemental role in these kinds of academic conversations. It is for this reason that across all grades, we place the student's agency in the center of academic conversations, so that students can build the habits and confidence required for these sorts of conversations, with the understanding that at the earliest grade levels this is an imperfect process because students are still learning. In academic matters, the first question the campus will ask is "Have you asked your child, and what did they say?" (Their response is not always accurate, but we do believe it is the right place to begin that conversation.) Every effort is made to ensure that academic conversations are not exclusively between parents and teachers, as this does not assist in developing the independence and skills students will need later as they mature.

In addition to traditional quantitative grades (ESNU for K-1 and specials and A-F for 2-5), students are also sometimes evaluated in depth of inquiry and sense of wonder. These are qualitative assessments, (which is not to say that they are subjective assessments), that speak to a student's active and personal engagement with the academic material. These elements are best addressed during conferences and through prose narrative evaluations. We would want to address, for example, a student who receives excellent grades but appears "checked out" in class or uninterested developing agency over their own education.

2.1.10. Search & Seizure of Student Property

Teachers reserve the right to temporarily confiscate any student property that is an active distraction to themselves or others. Students are occasionally given permission by their teacher to bring items from home either for class or recess, but these items should only be out and in use as approved by that teacher. A confiscated item will either be returned to the student at the end of the day or brought to the front desk for parent pick-up. Students who bring a previously-confiscated item back to school are subject to additional disciplinary consequences.

Students who have been approved a fidget for use during class, either by teacher discretion or as the part of a formal plan, may also have that fidget confiscated temporarily if it is not being used appropriately or is an undue distraction to others.

As a part of an investigation, it is sometimes necessary to search student belongings. Searches are only authorized when there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is violating campus policy, state/federal law, or is otherwise in possession of an item which is detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the school community. The search will be narrowly tailored to the reason for the search.

There is no expectation of privacy concerning the contents of cubbies, desks, or other school property. Lockers and desks assigned to students remain at all times under the control and jurisdiction of the campus and the campus may make periodic inspection of lockers and desks at any time, with or without notice or student/parent consent.

2.1.11. Requesting Parent Conferences

The campus schedules a round of parent conferences during fall break in October and again in January before the start of the 2nd semester. For these events, parents will receive information on how to sign up for a conference. Outside of that, parents can request a conference with their teachers at any time by email. Teachers are only available to meet with parents during their planning periods. In person and online options (Zoom, typically) are available.

We cannot meet any requests for meetings to take place the same day.

2.1.12. Multi-Tier Student Supports (MTSS)

MTSS is our internal system for identifying students with additional behavioral or academic needs. This process determines if students would benefit from additional accommodations that do not arise either from disability (SPED) or another circumstance that interferes with major life activities (504). This is also the process through which students are identified for pull-out support with our math or reading interventionist.

Intervention takes place during Lyceum, a period of the day specifically designed for additional supports so that students can be pulled from the classroom for a variety of services without missing new instruction. Students who remain in the classroom are given work that scales to their individual academic level so that even if a student is working at above grade level, they have some opportunities throughout the year for more challenging work. In 3rd – 5th grade, for example, students are assigned a novel at their reading level wherever that happens to be.

Inclusion on interventionists' rosters is dependent on academic need and availability. Staff regularly review student work and make internal recommendations for the MTSS program. Every student regardless of academic performance qualifies under Tier I of MTSS. A student with academic or behavioral struggles may qualify under Tier II, where additional accommodations are tried out and implemented. A student does not qualify for resource time with an interventionist until they are included in Tier III, which, due to availability and scheduling, typically includes students who are failing one or more courses.

- Tier I: All students, automatically. Regular classroom instruction.
- Tier II: Additional scrutiny applied to student progress, trial and application of specific accommodations, increased communication to parents and recommendations to assist in attending to deficits. More involvement from the classroom teacher during regular instruction to provide additional scaffolds and differentiation.
- Tier III: Accommodations of a stronger nature, potential inclusion in pull-out lessons with the interventionist to directly address deficits.

Questions about your child's MTSS status, or whether they would benefit from this kind of additional support, should be directed to your classroom teacher and/or our onsite MTSS coordinator. Eligibility for MTSS is exclusively held by our MTSS coordinator, in consultation with school staff.

2.1.13. 504 Referrals

If your child has a physical or mental impairment that interferes with one or more major life activities, they may qualify for a 504 plan. There is no defined list of qualifying conditions, but they most commonly include ADHD, vision/hearing deficits, mobility issues, and other medical conditions that might require additional obligations or training from staff such as a student with a history of seizures, or gastro-intestinal issues.

Referrals can be made to a member of administration, your child's teacher, or directly to our onsite 504 coordinator. Eligibility is determined by the student's qualifying condition and the accommodations put in place are subject to the decisions of a 504 committee. Parents are included as a standard member of this committee, but after securing consent for an initial evaluation, parent involvement and approval is not a requirement for the student to be provided with services.

2.1.14. Special Education Referrals

All staff are obligated under Child Find to identify and refer students suspected of a disability to our onsite SPED coordinator. If your child has a disability, or you suspect your child may have a disability, you can make a referral to your child's teacher, a member of administration, or directly to our coordinator.

Eligibility for special education services is subject to an initial evaluation, and then re-evaluation every three years. Specific services and accommodations are decided on a consensus basis by the ARD committee after evaluation has been completed. ARD committees are composed of the parent, a school administrator, one of the child's teachers, and any relevant support staff such as speech pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors etc.

To qualify for special education services, a student must meet two criteria: 1) They must have a recognized disability. 2) that disability must adversely impact their education in such a way that specialized instruction is required. A student with a recognized disability, but does not require specialized instruction, may not qualify for special education services. They may, however, still qualify for a 504 plan.

Section 2.2. General Information

2.2.1. Volunteer Training

In order to be present on campus during the school day, parents must successfully complete a background check and volunteer training. Information on completing this training is provided at New Family Orientation and is available upon request.

Volunteer training is also required in order to be eligible for chaperoning on field trips and volunteering for quarter parties.

2.2.2. Dress Code

Just as the campus has high expectations in academics, it has high expectations for student hygiene and deportment. We require students to attend school each day in uniform (see below for details) that should be clean, neat, reasonably pressed, and in properly fitting condition. If a student is out of dress code, and the issue cannot be fixed by the student, then a change of clothing may be required for attendance for the day. If there are any questions about whether a particular item clears the campus dress code, we encourage families to inquire at the front desk before making purchases.

Exceptions to the dress code will be made for religious accommodation and for other similar circumstances as outlined in applicable state and federal law.

Required Dress Code for Boys

Students must attend school wearing the following:

- An officially branded short-sleeve or long-sleeve polo in either white or light blue, purchased through Flynn O'Hara.
- Navy pants or shorts, purchased through any vendor
- All white or all black athletic shoes
- Solid color crew-cut or ankle-length socks in navy or white
- A belt

Required Dress Code for Girls

- The above, with the following potential substitutions:
 - An officially branded navy & beige plaid skirt, purchased through Flynn O'Hara
 - An officially branded navy & beige plaid jumper, purchased through Flynn O'Hara (Kinder-2nd grade only)

Pants

Pants should be full-length, reaching the shoe but not dragging on the ground. Pants must have belt-loops. Pants should be plain and unadorned: no cargo pants, no extra pockets, or extra zippers. If pants need to be repaired or patched, they should be reinforced in a non-visible way; no external patches. In addition to being of appropriate length, they should also fit appropriately at the waist and through the leg; exceptionally baggy garments are not allowed. Leggings are not an acceptable alternative to pants.

Shorts

Shorts length should go to just above the knee (within 2 inches), and should follow all other requirements listed above for pants.

Skirts

Skirt length should fall just above the knee (within 2 inches) in both the front and the back.

Outerwear

While inside the building, students may wear any navy officially-branded GH outerwear. They must still attend with a dress-code compliant uniform underneath, even if it will not be visible. At recess, students may wear any outerwear brought from home for warmth as long as it does not violate pop-culture policies.

Shoes

Students should wear all white or all black athletic shoes with flat soles and laces and should be absent any design elements such as images and large branding displays.

Accessories

Students may wear a single necklace (worn under the collar) and a watch. Earrings, rings, and other jewelry are not permitted for male students. Female students may wear a single pair of earrings that may hang no more than .5 inches from the earlobe, and a small bow, barrette or headband that coordinates with the rest of the uniform. Students should not have any other accessories in their hair such as tinsel.

Hair

Hair should be neatly combed or styled. Any coloring must be a natural hair color and should resemble natural hair patterns – no bleaching, unnatural streaking / highlighting, artificial jet-black coloring, or other unnatural colors. Parents will receive a note home if students are overdue for a haircut. Male hair that is over the ears / past the collar should be worn up in a ponytail or in a bun while at school.

Makeup

No students are permitted to wear makeup of any kind. Girls may wear nail polish of a natural color such as light pink or beige. Shades of red, blue, green, purple, black etc are not permissible, nor are additional effects such as glitter, speckling, or patterns. No nail or eyelash applications are permitted.

Miscellaneous

Hats and sunglasses may not be worn in the building. No tattoos, temporary or permanent, are permitted.

Kindergarten Exceptions

Students in Kindergarten do not need to wear a belt and may wear shoes that have Velcro fixtures. It is recommended that they move to laces and belts as soon as they have the physical dexterity to manage them independently.

Dress Code for Spirit Days

On specific days of the year, students are allowed to “dress down” from the typical required dress code. On these spirit days, students can make the following substitution:

- Instead of their usual polo, students may wear any official GHMVS-branded T-shirt. This includes T-shirts provided as part of the house system and any shirts purchased through school fundraisers or the annual carnival.

Dress Code for Athletic Field Day

For Athletic field day, students must attend in their ordinary school uniform that they wear each day for P.E. class. The only substitution allowed is that students may wear a non-standard pair of sneakers or running shoes. Students who arrive out of dress code for Athletic Field Day may be required to change outfits, have a new outfit brought to school, or sent home for the day.

Dress Code for Literary Character Day

All changes to student attire for Literary Character day should adhere to our no pop-culture rule and be directly applicable to the student’s costume for that day.

Students may come attired in a costume depicting a character from a work of fiction or a historical figure. Costume proposals are subject to pre-approval by their classroom teacher. If the student’s top or bottom is not part of the costume itself, they should still be attired in their school uniform underneath the costume elements. Students will still go outside to recess on this day so students should wear their normal shoes and the costume itself should allow freedom of movement for play.

Prop weapons such as swords are not permitted, and other props may be required to be stored in the student's cubby for the day, at teacher discretion.

Students are allowed to bring hats, masks, and helmets as part of their costume but they should not be worn during the day.

Costumes that amount to a circumvention of our dress-code (such as picking a character from a book so that the student can attend in jeans and a t-shirt) will not be approved.

Students who are not participating with a costume should come to school in their normal school uniform.

2.2.3. Library Use

Throughout the year, students will have access to the school library to check out books to take home and are responsible for adhering to any communicated rules regarding checkout limits, due dates, fines, and other matters.

Library titles are curated to support the academic mission of the campus as well as a source of recreation for students. What students may be allowed to check out is up to each individual family and it is the responsibility of the student and their parents to be in open communication with each other about check-out decisions. The campus will not be removing titles from the collection over a personal objection to its content that does not otherwise violate district policy or state and federal law.

The campus reserves the right to revoke library access to students due to mistreatment of library property, chronic issues with losing books, and failure to pay overdue fines. The campus reserves the right to impose fines for books returned late and for books that are not returned at all.

2.2.4. Early Pickup Near Dismissal

The end of each school day has a great amount of operational complexity; as a result, we do not allow parents to pick up their child after 3:00pm. If you are picking up your child early for an afternoon appointment, the parent or guardian checking the student out must be at the front desk no later than 3:00pm (1:00pm on early release days). Weather and traffic-related concerns are not a valid exemption from this policy.

Parents who come to pick up their child after 3:00 pm (or 1:00pm on early release days), barring



extenuating circumstances such as family emergencies, will be instructed to leave their placard, and the child will be in the first wave of walkers to leave the building at 3:45 pm.

2.2.5. Campus Access

The campus is open for normal school operations each day it is in session from 7:20am until 4:30pm, (from 7:20am to 2:00pm on early release days), after which, staffing shifts to Athenaeum which runs until 6:00pm. For security purposes, visitors will need to ring the doorbell to announce the reason for their visit before being let into the vestibule where they will need to wait for a second set of electromagnetically sealed doors to unlock. No other entrances or exits except for the front, main entrances are permitted for visitor use, under any circumstances, including school events.

No visitors are allowed past the front desk without checking in and being issued a badge, including parents who have passed volunteer training.

No visitors are permitted to the Koehler House, except as a guest of the Lead Office on the 2nd or 3rd floors.

Parents and visitors must not hold or prop the door open for safety reasons. Every visitor must be individually buzzed in by the building.

2.2.6. Teacher Communication

Email is the primary and preferred way to communicate with your child's teachers. Teachers are expected to check their emails daily, and respond to any inquiries or concerns by the end of the next business day at the latest.

If something requires immediate attention, or action same-day, we recommend that parents call the front desk. We are not able to honor requests for meetings the same day as the request.

2.2.7. Exemption from P.E. & Recess

Students may, from time to time, find themselves in need of a temporary exception to participating in physical activity during school. A doctor's note is required to implement accommodations to a student's P.E. activities or to keep a student inside from recess.

2.2.8. Elevator Use

Students are not permitted to use the campus elevator without adult supervision. If a student needs to use the elevator for disability/accessibility/injury reasons, a doctor's note should be provided.

2.2.9. Parent Visitors for Lunch

Parents are not permitted to stay on campus and eat lunch with their students. The campus is also unable to accept deliveries of food from outside vendors. Parents may drop off food meant for their own children only, and they may drop off treats for their child's class / grade level to celebrate birthdays.

2.2.10. Drop-off & Dismissal

Drop Off

Doors open to students at 7:20 am. Families who arrive and park earlier than this must remain with their child until the door opens. At 7:30 am, carline begins. Cars will queue facing west along Courtland Road, pulling into Rosenberg Way. Staff members will assist in opening car doors and helping students into the building. Students getting out on the left lane should wait until the crosswalk captain gives the go-ahead before crossing to the doors of the school. If your child is riding in the passenger seat, or you have other obstructions (like a baby-seat in the back) we encourage you to self-select the appropriate lane so that students will not need to exit into the middle of the street.

From 7:20 am until 7:40 am all students are sent directly to Barshop and those eating breakfast can begin their meal. Starting at 7:40 am, students are allowed to go to their classrooms. Kindergarten parents may escort their child to their classroom on the first day of school only.

Dismissal

Dismissal begins at 3:45 pm and runs until 4:20 pm. When students' names are called, they are staged at the front of the building and students are not sent outside to carline or as walkers unless they and all present siblings are accounted for. A student waiting on a sibling will not leave until they are first united with that sibling (if they are both leaving and neither have an after-school activity).

Carline

If students are departing by car, families should queue on Courtland, placing their pickup placard in an easily distinguishable place on their dashboard or hanging from their rearview mirror. Staff stationed alongside Courtland will use this information to have students ready to go at the vestibule by the time the vehicle arrives at the front of the line. For security reasons, families in car line without a placard will be instructed to park and pick up their child as a walker so that we can verify ID.

Walkers

If students are departing on foot into the parking lot, parents queue the sidewalk along Rosenberg way and their placards are collected by staff and brought inside. In waves every few minutes, students are brought across the crosswalk and united with their family. If the parent or guardian picking up the child does not have their placard, they will have to come inside and prove ID before being issued a temporary pick-up slip.

Pickup Placards and Approved Pickups

We will release your child to anyone who you have selected as an approved pickup in our student information system. They will still need to borrow your placard or will need to come inside and be issued a temporary slip. We do not release any students without either the presence of that placard or ID verification. Additional placards can be requested at the front desk if you have multiple family members who pick up frequently, or if a friend of the family picks up frequently in order to carpool. Any adjustments to pickup should be communicated in advance to the front desk.

2.2.11. Clubs

Clubs are made available after school each semester, running from the end of school at 3:45 pm to 4:30 pm. Applications are processed on a first-come-first-serve basis after the payment of any applicable fees.

If a student has an academic need and has been invited to tutoring, they will be ineligible to attend clubs during the time in which tutoring is required.

2.2.12. Food & Drink on Campus

Students are encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle to school each day and our campus is outfitted with bottle-friendly refill stations. The only drinks they should be bringing in their water-bottle is water.

Students in grades K-2 have scheduled time for snack. Please send them with something small, that does not make a mess, and that your child can open independently.

We encourage families to make health-conscious decisions when deciding what to send their child to school with, especially in reducing the amount of sugar and caffeine in students' lunch and snacks. This is important for both establishing a good, healthy relationship between your child and their diet as well as being important for classroom management. Energy drinks will be confiscated by the classroom teacher, as the amount of caffeine present in a single serving is not appropriate for an elementary-aged student.

Students may bring their own lunch from home or purchase a hot lunch. The calendar of hot lunch options is included in the school newsletter. Students who re-enter the line to ask for seconds are subject to additional charges, including if the student was eligible for a free or reduced lunch for their first serving. While teachers can assist in identifying and preventing unauthorized purchases, it is ultimately on the student to only spend the money in their accounts as approved by their parents.

To avoid accidental allergen exposure, and to respect the dietary choices of families, the campus has a strict policy that students should not share food with each other.

Any class / grade-level treats that are brought in to celebrate birthdays or for school events should be commercially packaged and clearly labelled for dietary information an allergens. Home-cooked or baked food will not be served to students and returned to the family which brought it.

2.2.13. Lost & Found

If an item has been left behind on campus and school staff are unable to determine the classroom where it came from or the person to which it belongs, it will be delivered to the school lost and found at the front desk. At the end of each semester, any unclaimed items will either be donated or thrown away.

2.2.14. Release of Students from School Without a Guardian

The campus will not release a student to walk home or ride the public bus without a parent or guardian present.

2.2.15. Indoor Recess

Some circumstances, prevent students from enjoying recess outside. When this occurs, alternate activities are provided and students have recess in their classrooms.

In an attempt to ensure students can enjoy recess outside as frequently as possible, the decision to cancel outdoor recess is made as close to that grade level's recess time as possible. Reasons why recess may be have to take place indoors include temperatures too hot or too cold for play (based off a matrix of temperature & humidity) or inclement weather.

Rare scheduling conflicts with school or Temple events can also result in a change to indoor recess for the day.

Section 2.3. Safety and Security

2.3.1. Information on Emergency Drills

Great Hearts participates in regular drills covering the following emergency scenarios: fires, tornadoes, campus lockdowns, train derailment/hazmat, and gas leaks. Teachers do everything that they can to manage any student anxiety during these experiences so that students can learn the routines that they will need in a legitimate emergency scenario, and all instructions are modified to fit what is developmentally appropriate for each grade level. We do not entertain extended “what-if” scenarios in these discussions, and focus on the procedures and expected student behavior in order for everyone to stay safe.

2.3.2. Crossing Belknap

Students cross Belknap each day to go to recess, attend music and art, and utilize the school library. The school schedule has been modified to reduce the number of crossings as much as possible.

When students cross the street, they cross together as a grade with a teacher serving as a crosswalk captain with a stop sign.

2.3.3. Police Officers

The campus employs two police officers who are present each day. A police officer is always present with students while they are outside on the recess field and also assists with street crossings and with the Koehler House. The other officer patrols Temple Bethel.

2.3.4. Security Cameras

Both Temple Beth-El and the Kohler House are outfitted with security cameras that monitor points of entry, the external perimeter, and common areas inside the building. Footage from these cameras are used as a normal part of operations to maintain campus security, as well as to assist with disciplinary investigations involving students.

Section 2.4. Discipline

2.4.1. Clip Charts & Behavior Logs

Students in grades K-2 are still working on the kinds of pro-social classroom behavior that are foundational to an academic environment. Therefore, their formal behavior system – the “clip chart” has

several steps before true consequences begin accruing.

The Behavior Log

Every student begins each day with a fresh slate on “Ready to Learn.” At the end of each day, a student’s position on the clip chart is noted on their behavior log by the teacher. Just as the teacher makes a behavior note every day, it is expected that the parent review and sign the log each day as well. The log itself is largely a *communication tool* and should not itself be viewed as a disciplinary consequence.

Clipping Up

Teachers are always on the lookout for opportunities to clip up students and the clip chart is used as an active component in helping students learn and implement classroom routines and ordinary student behavior. Students can receive clip-ups for extra-ordinary behavior such as being an excellent role model to other students, being an exceptional friend to a peer, and for more ordinary classroom behaviors such as remembering to turn work in independently, having classroom supplies ready on their desk at the start of class, or keeping their personal space neatly organized and ready for learning. From Ready to Learn, students can clip up to Good, Great, and then Excellent.

Clipping Down

Students can receive a clip down for a single act (such as being unkind to a peer) or for more persistent low-level behavior (such as talking out of turn) if verbal reminders and redirection have proved insufficient. When students are first clipped down, they move to “stop and think.” This is a formal – and visible – reminder that they are not meeting classroom expectations for behavior. If misbehavior continues without clipping back up, they move to “Stop and Reflect” which has three steps. On the first step, students are asked to stand in the back of the classroom for 5 minutes. On the second step, they are invited to the hallway for a private conference with their teacher. On the third step, they are issued a lunch detention during which they will have additional time to reflect on their behavior. If behavior still has not improved, and without any intervening clip-ups, the student is clipped down to “Visit the Headmaster” for a more serious conversation.

Clip-ups and Clip-downs cancel each other out. So, for example, a student who receives 2 clip-downs (to “Time-to-Reflect”) and then clips back up to “Ready to Learn” before receiving 2 more clip-downs, will go back to “Time-To-Reflect” instead of being issued a lunch detention. Students are always able to “undo” any mistakes or misbehavior that resulted in a clip down by changing their behaviors and earning a clip-up.

The only exception to this is that if a student clips all the way down to “Visit the Headmaster,” this will be indicated on the behavior log regardless of how many clip-ups are earned afterward to ensure that the parent knows the day was a particularly hard one for the student.

2.4.2. Infractions & Behavior Charts

Students in grades 3-5 are expected to be more independent and responsible for their behavior in the classroom. They are issued a behavior chart each month that serves as an asynchronous way for teachers to keep parents informed on their child's behavior. Just as the teacher fills it out each day with relevant information, it is expected that the parent also checks and signs the document each day so that the teacher can see that the communication was received. On their behavior chart, students can receive commendations (a good note) or infractions (a note indicating misbehavior). Non-behavior related communication will occur through other channels, primarily through email. The behavior chart is not an effective instrument for communicating other concerns or sending questions to the teacher.

Classroom expectations are high on campus, so no notes on a behavior chart should be taken to indicate good behavior.

Commendations

A commendation indicates that your student's behavior was above the norm or beyond the typical expectations of their grade level. Examples include being an exceptional friend to a peer or being a particularly good role model in class. "Scholar of the Day" awards are also indicated in this manner on their behavior chart, which are typically awarded to an excellently behaved student each day in their specials class.

Infractions

Infractions are notes indicating that your child's behavior was either below the norm or below the typical expectations of their grade level. On its own, an infraction is not any kind of "consequence" – it is a piece of communication between the teacher and the parent, and a reminder of the student to assess their behavior in the development of their metacognitive skills. It is not expected for any additional consequences be given at home for an infraction beyond a conversation with your child about their school day. Chronic infractions, even when they do not rise to the level of detention, may warrant additional scrutiny and additional consequences at home to support student behavior at school. There are three types of infractions:

- **IFL (Interfering with Learning):** This is the most common form of infraction and is earned by students who are off task or have distracted others to be off task. Students can also earn IFL's for behavior that breaks classroom rules, and as a result, interferes with the learning process in the classroom.
- **DRB (Disrespectful Behavior):** Students earn this infraction by arguing inappropriately with an adult, name-calling, lying, etc. It is not in itself any worse or better than receiving an IFL;

generally it just means that the infraction was related to a social concern, rather than an academic one.

- USB (Unsafe Behavior): Students earn this infraction by engaging in dangerous or risky behavior such as jumping down stairs, causing injuries or accidents (that could be reasonably foreseen by the student), or using toys and school supplies in an unsafe manner.

Students who receive 3 or more infractions in one day receive an automatic detention and depending on the nature of the incident, a visit to the headmaster's office. Commendations do not "cancel out" infractions, so a student with 2 commendations in a single day will still receive a detention on their third infraction.

2.4.3. Detention

Students in grades 3-5 earn an after-school detention after earning their third infraction in a single day, or for a single, serious misbehavior. Detentions are held after-school on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:45 pm – 4:30 pm.

Detentions will not be rescheduled by parent request due to conflicts with school clubs or other extra-curricular activities; detentions are by their very nature inconvenient, and students should view the inconvenience that detention causes to be a direct result of their misbehavior. As multiple incidents of misbehavior can accumulate to warrant a detention, multiple detentions over similar behavior may also accumulate to warrant a suspension, at the discretion of the headmaster and in accordance with other stated disciplinary policies.

Students in grades K-5 can be issued a "lunch-detention" for flagrant misbehavior, and as a consequence for having to visit the headmaster. Students serving a lunch detention sit at a separate table during the lunch period, have increased supervision, and reduced privileges.

Students in grades 3-5 can also be issued a lunch detention for more serious misbehavior that warrants a more immediate consequence than just a note in their chart, but does not rise to the level of an after-school detention.

Students in all grades can be issued a lunch detention as a consequence for tardies. Please see the tardy policy for this threshold.

Students who are absent for either lunch or after-school detentions will have their detention automatically rescheduled for the next available day that they are on campus.

2.4.4. Visits to the Headmaster

A “Visit to the Headmaster” means that a student’s misbehavior has eclipsed what is expected of a teacher to have to handle in the classroom, and warrants a temporary removal for a conversation with an administrator and potentially, further consequences. Especially for our youngest students, the walk to the office is sometimes consequential enough and no further action is needed. Every office visit does not necessarily result in a phone call home, and many visits are handled by either a dean or the assistant headmaster.

Students are also invited to the headmaster’s office to deliver and receive good news so that the office itself does not take on an overly-disciplinary environment.

Chapter 3: General Information

Section 3.1. Admissions

3.1.1. Great Hearts Texas as an Open-Enrollment Charter School

The Family Handbook provides families with essential information regarding the policies, procedures, and expectations that guide the life of the Academy. This handbook is intended to support a shared understanding between the school and families concerning the structure, operation, and responsibilities of the school community.

Great Hearts Texas operates as an open-enrollment public charter school authorized by the Texas Education Agency. As such, the Academy is governed by applicable provisions of the Texas Education Code, the terms of its charter contract with the State of Texas, and applicable federal law. This chapter describes the operational policies and procedures that govern enrollment, attendance, school operations, and parent communication. It is intended to provide families with important information regarding the day-to-day administration of the Academy.

The policies contained in this handbook apply to all Great Hearts Texas academies unless otherwise noted. As an open-enrollment charter school, tuition is not charged for admission, and enrollment is open to eligible students residing in the State of Texas. Admission is determined through a public lottery when applications exceed available seats.

Great Hearts Texas operates independently from local independent school districts while remaining subject to certain state and federal education laws. The Academy admits students without regard to race,



color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, disability or ability, academic, artistic, athletic or otherwise. Admission is also not determined based on the geographic district the student would otherwise attend.

3.1.2. Eligibility for Admission

To be eligible for admission to Great Hearts Texas, a student must reside in the State of Texas and meet applicable age requirements for the requested grade level. Completed applications must be submitted during the designated open enrollment period. Admission is subject to space availability and compliance with applicable provisions of the Texas Education Code governing open-enrollment charter schools.

3.1.3. Open Enrollment Period

Great Hearts Texas establishes an annual open enrollment period during which families may submit applications for admission. The dates of this enrollment period are publicly announced through the Great Hearts Texas website, campus communications, and community outreach efforts. Applications submitted during this window are eligible to participate in the annual admissions lottery if necessary.

3.1.4. Admissions Lottery

If the number of applications received during the open enrollment period exceeds the number of available seats, admission will be determined through a random admissions lottery. Each eligible applicant is assigned a unique identifier, and applicants are randomly selected for available seats. Following the lottery, remaining applicants are placed on a waitlist in the order drawn. The lottery is conducted in a fair and transparent manner and does not consider academic ability, test scores, athletic ability, or any selective criteria.

3.1.5. Admissions Preferences

State law allows open-enrollment charter schools to grant limited enrollment preferences if authorized by the school's charter. These preferences are applied prior to the general lottery drawing. Consistent with the Great Hearts Texas charter, preference may be given to siblings of students who are already admitted or attending a particular Great Hearts Texas campus. Children of Great Hearts Texas employees are also given preference, so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of Great Hearts Texas' total enrollment. Current Great Hearts Texas students applying for transfer to a different Great Hearts Texas academy may also be given preference.

3.1.6. Waitlists

Applicants who are not offered admission during the lottery are placed on a grade-level waitlist in the order determined by the lottery drawing. If a vacancy occurs, admission is offered to the next student on the waitlist, and families are contacted using the information provided in the application. Waitlists remain active only for the school year for which the application was submitted.

3.1.7. Denial or Rescission of Admission

Under limited circumstances permitted by law, Great Hearts Texas may deny admission or rescind an offer of admission if enrollment documentation is falsified or specified residency requirements are not satisfied. Admission may also be denied if a student has engaged in conduct outlined in the Texas Education Code Chapter 37 related to placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or a juvenile justice alternative education program. A student may be denied admission if they have engaged in conduct outlined in Education Code 37.007 related to expulsion, or if convicted of a criminal offense or has a juvenile court adjudication. Families will receive written notice if an offer of admission is rescinded.

Section 3.2. Enrollment

3.2.1. Enrollment Process

Admission to Great Hearts Texas does not constitute enrollment. Enrollment occurs only after all required documentation has been submitted and verified. Following acceptance of an offer of admission, families must complete the registration process. Enrollment is confirmed once all required forms are submitted, required documentation has been verified, and registration deadlines are met. Failure to complete registration within the designated timeframe may result in forfeiture of the admission offer.

3.2.2. Enrollment Documentation

State law requires families to provide documentation verifying student identity, age, residency, and health records. Required documents typically include documentation of identity and age (such as a birth certificate, passport, or similar document), parent or guardian identification, proof of Texas residency, immunization records or exemption documentation, and previous school records, when applicable. Additional documentation may be requested to ensure compliance with state law.

3.2.3. Residency Verification

In accordance with the Texas Education Code, Great Hearts Texas must record the name, address, and date of birth of the person enrolling the student at the time of enrollment. As with all public schools in Texas, charter schools are required to obtain and maintain verifiable documentation of a student's Texas state residency upon enrollment. Residency documents are different from citizenship or immigration documents. Great Hearts Texas ***cannot and does not*** request or require documentation regarding a student's citizenship or immigration status in connection with enrollment or at any other time; enrollment is not in any way conditioned on whether a child is legally admitted into the United States.

Proof of Texas residency and residency within the geographic boundaries in which Great Hearts Texas operates may be demonstrated by one item from the list below:

- Mortgage statement
- Rental agreement or lease (including Section 8 agreement). The parent or enrolling guardian must be listed as the lease holder or occupant.
- Utility bill (water, electric, gas)
- Cable bill
- Internet service bill
- Bank or credit card statement (account numbers may be redacted)
- Payroll stub showing current address
- Homeowner's/Renter's insurance bill
- Military orders, plus proof of residence within 90 days

3.2.4. Immediate Enrollment Protections

Certain federal law requires immediate enrollment of students even when typical documentation is unavailable. Students may be enrolled immediately if they are experiencing homelessness, in foster care, or transferring between schools where records are pending. The Academy will work with families and prior schools to obtain necessary records. While enrollment should be immediate upon an enrollment offer, enrollment for students in these categories does not bypass the lottery system.

3.2.5. Re-Enrollment of Returning Students

Students currently enrolled in Great Hearts Texas must complete an annual re-enrollment process in order to secure placement for the following academic year. Failure to complete re-enrollment within the designated window may result in loss of seat availability or requirement to reapply through the general admissions process. For more information, please visit our website for the full GHTX Enrollment Policy, <https://texas.greatheartsamerica.org/enroll/policies-and-procedures/>

Section 3.3. Attendance

3.3.1. Compulsory Attendance

Students enrolled in Great Hearts Texas are expected to attend school regularly and arrive on time each day. In accordance with Texas law, most students between the ages of six and nineteen are subject to compulsory attendance requirements. Regular attendance is essential to academic progress and participation in the Academy's educational program.

Parents and guardians may be notified when a student accumulates unexcused absences, and the Academy may implement truancy prevention measures and other interventions as permitted by law. Students who voluntarily enroll after their nineteenth birthday remain subject to applicable attendance

requirements and may be subject to enrollment consequences for excessive unexcused absences in accordance with Texas law and district procedures.

3.3.2. Excused and Unexcused Absences

Absences may be classified as excused or unexcused in accordance with state law and district procedures. Excused absences generally include illness, medical appointments, religious holy days, court appearances, and other circumstances authorized by law. Parents may be required to provide documentation to verify an absence, particularly when absences are frequent or extend over multiple school days.

3.3.3. Attendance for Credit

In accordance with Texas law, students must attend at least 90 percent of the days a class is offered in order to receive credit for a course or grade level. Students who fall below required attendance thresholds may be required to complete an attendance recovery plan or satisfy other requirements established by the Academy.

Each campus shall maintain an Attendance Committee in accordance with state law and district procedures. Attendance Committees generally consist of three to five members and may include relevant teachers, campus administration, and the registrar. The committee is responsible for reviewing attendance matters for students who do not meet attendance requirements and determining eligibility for credit, promotion, or attendance recovery. Committee decisions will be made in accordance with applicable law, district policy, and the student's educational interests.

3.3.4. Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive at school on time and prepared for instruction. Because tardiness disrupts the orderly operation of the classroom and may interfere with student learning, repeated tardiness may result in appropriate administrative intervention in accordance with district procedures. Students are encouraged to arrive before the campus's official attendance-taking time (OATT).

3.3.5. Truancy

Regular school attendance is required by Texas law. When a student accumulates unexcused absences, Great Hearts Texas may implement truancy prevention measures and other interventions designed to improve attendance and support student success.

Under Texas law, if a student is absent from school without excuse on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the parent may be subject to prosecution, and the student may be referred to truancy court. Great Hearts Texas will provide notice to a parent when a student has accumulated three unexcused absences within a four-week period and may require a conference to discuss attendance concerns and applicable truancy prevention measures.

3.3.6. Release of Students from School

For the safety and security of students, a student may be released during the school day only to a parent, legal guardian, an individual authorized by the parent or guardian, or emergency personnel acting in accordance with law. Identification may be required before a student is released from the Academy.

Section 3.4. Withdrawal

3.4.1. Voluntary Withdrawal

Parents or guardians may withdraw a scholar from Great Hearts Texas at any time. A voluntary withdrawal may occur when a scholar transfers to another school, relocates, or otherwise discontinues enrollment. Parents should notify the campus office as soon as possible and complete required withdrawal procedures so that student records may be transferred promptly to the receiving school.

Withdrawal from the Academy does not relieve families of responsibility for outstanding obligations related to school-issued materials, lost items, or program fees.

3.4.2. Student Records Transfer

In accordance with state and federal law, the Academy will transfer scholar records to another school or educational institution in which the student seeks to enroll. Parents may be asked to complete withdrawal documentation to facilitate the timely release of records. Scholars withdrawing from the Academy must return all school-issued materials, including textbooks, technology devices, identification cards, and other school property.

Section 3.5. Student Records

3.5.1. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and eligible students certain rights regarding student education records, including the right to inspect and review education records, request amendment of inaccurate records, consent to certain disclosures of personally identifiable information, and file a complaint concerning alleged violations of FERPA. Additional information regarding these rights may be obtained from the Academy upon request.

Great Hearts Texas designates the following as directory information: student name, grade level, participation in officially recognized activities and athletics, honors and awards received, dates of attendance, photograph, and the most recent school previously attended. Directory information may be disclosed as permitted by law unless a parent or eligible student submits a timely written request to withhold such information. Information regarding the directory information opt-out process is available on the Great Hearts Texas website.

3.5.2. Student Recruitment and Military Access

Federal law requires public schools to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education access to certain student contact information unless a parent or eligible student requests otherwise. Parents wishing to prohibit the release of such information may submit the applicable opt-out form available on the Great Hearts Texas website.

3.5.3. Student Privacy and Online Data Protection

Great Hearts Texas is committed to protecting student information and promoting the responsible use of educational technology. Student data collected through digital learning platforms is used only for legitimate educational purposes and is protected in accordance with applicable law, including FERPA, COPPA, and CIPA.

The Academy utilizes technology safeguards, including internet filtering and monitoring systems, to help protect student information and restrict access to online content that is unlawful, obscene, pornographic, harmful to minors, or otherwise inappropriate for educational use. School-issued devices and network resources are subject to these protections and may be monitored in accordance with district policy.

Section 3.6. Transportation

3.6.1. School-Sponsored Transportation

Public charter schools in Texas are not required to provide transportation to and from school for students. As a result, Great Hearts Texas does not provide daily bus transportation or other routine transportation for scholars to and from school. Parents or guardians are responsible for arranging transportation and ensuring that students arrive on time and are picked up promptly at the end of the school day. Unless a scholar is participating in a supervised school program or activity, such as Athenaeum, the Academy does not provide supervision outside designated school hours.

3.6.2. General Traffic Guidelines and Vehicles on Campus

To promote the safety of students, staff, and families, each Academy maintains procedures governing student arrival, dismissal, vehicle access, and traffic flow. Families are expected to follow all traffic, parking, and student release procedures established by their campus. Students may be released only to a parent, legal guardian, or an individual authorized by the parent in accordance with district procedures. Once a student has arrived on campus, the student may not leave except as authorized by the Academy.

All persons operating vehicles on school property must comply with posted signs, directions from school personnel, and applicable traffic laws. Drivers must operate vehicles safely, yield to pedestrians, park only in designated areas, and keep fire lanes and emergency access routes clear at all times. Local

law enforcement retains jurisdiction over public roadways and may enforce applicable traffic and safety laws on and around school property. For more information related to traffic guidelines at your Academy, see the chapter on Campus Procedures.

3.6.3. Student Trips Away from Campus

Scholars may have opportunities to participate in school-sponsored trips, events, or activities that take place away from campus. Written parental consent is required for any scholar to participate in a school-sponsored trip. Scholars will not be permitted to participate in an off-campus activity without a signed permission form on file, except in emergencies as permitted by law. Transportation for school-sponsored trips may be provided by chartered buses, school vehicles, or other approved transportation providers. In certain circumstances, approved parent drivers may assist with transportation in accordance with school procedures.

All school-sponsored trips will be supervised by school staff and authorized adult chaperones. While participating in off-campus activities, students remain subject to the Student Code of Conduct and all school policies. Failure to follow conduct expectations during a school-sponsored trip may result in disciplinary action and/or exclusion from future activities.

Section 3.7. Facilities Management

3.7.1. Pest Management Notice

Great Hearts Texas utilizes Integrated Pest Management (IPM) procedures in accordance with Texas law to manage pests in a manner that minimizes risks to students, staff, and the environment. Pest management activities on campus are conducted under the supervision of a licensed applicator. Parents and guardians may request advance notification of pesticide applications that may occur on campus. Requests for notification may be submitted to the campus administration.

3.7.2. Asbestos Management Notice (AHERA)

Great Hearts Texas is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students, staff, and visitors. In accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) and applicable state guidance, school facilities have been inspected for asbestos-containing materials by a licensed AHERA inspector.

An Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) has been developed for applicable campus facilities to identify, monitor, and manage any asbestos-containing materials present in school buildings. The AMP outlines procedures for response actions and maintenance designed to minimize disturbance of asbestos and protect building occupants. Copies of the AMP are maintained by the Academy and are available for review upon request during normal school hours.

3.7.3. Environmental Safety and Hazard Reporting

Great Hearts Texas is committed to maintaining school facilities that are safe and well maintained. Facilities personnel routinely inspect buildings, grounds, and equipment to identify potential environmental or safety concerns. Scholars, parents, and staff are encouraged to report facility-related concerns, such as water leaks, structural hazards, or environmental conditions to campus administration so that they may be addressed promptly.

Section 3.8. Civil Rights and Nondiscrimination

3.8.1. Great Hearts Texas Nondiscrimination Statement

Great Hearts Texas is committed to providing an educational environment in which all students are treated with dignity and respect. In accordance with federal and state law, the Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, or any other status protected by law in its educational programs, services, or activities.

This commitment to equal educational opportunity applies to all aspects of school operations, including admissions, academic programs, extracurricular activities, and access to school services and facilities.

Great Hearts Texas complies with applicable civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as well as the nondiscrimination provisions governing open-enrollment charter schools under the Texas Education Code.

Retaliation against individuals who report discrimination or participate in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Great Hearts Texas will take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to school information for parents and guardians with limited English proficiency, including providing translation or interpretation services when feasible.

3.8.2. Disability Access and Accommodations

Great Hearts Texas is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities have equal access to educational programs and services. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Academy provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and services to eligible students with disabilities so that they may participate fully in the educational program.

Parents who believe their child may require accommodations or specialized services should contact campus administration to request an evaluation or to discuss available supports. The Academy will



review such requests in accordance with applicable law and established procedures. Great Hearts Texas seeks to work in partnership with families to ensure that all students are afforded meaningful access to educational opportunities.

3.8.3. Sexual Harassment and Sex-Based Harassment

Great Hearts Texas prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity and responds promptly and equitably to reports of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and other conduct prohibited under Title IX. This non-discrimination requirement applies to admission and employment with Great Hearts Texas. Any student, parent, employee, or third party may report concerns to a campus administrator or the District Title IX Coordinator. Reports may be made at any time, including outside normal business hours. Upon receiving a report, Great Hearts Texas will conduct an initial assessment to determine the appropriate response under applicable law and District policy.

Great Hearts Texas may offer supportive measures designed to preserve equal access to the educational environment and support student safety and well-being. Supportive measures may be provided regardless of whether a formal complaint or investigation proceeds. When appropriate, the district will conduct a prompt, fair, and impartial investigation using trained personnel free from conflicts of interest or bias. Both parties will have an equal opportunity to present relevant information and respond to evidence gathered during the process. The respondent is presumed not responsible unless and until a determination is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

Great Hearts Texas uses the preponderance of the evidence standard when determining responsibility under Title IX. Retaliation against any individual for reporting concerns or participating in a Title IX process is strictly prohibited. The district may resolve certain matters through an informal resolution process when permitted by law and agreed upon by the parties. Both parties will also be informed of available appeal procedures following a determination or dismissal. Additional information regarding the district's complete Title IX grievance procedures, reporting options, supportive measures, and contact information for the District Title IX Coordinator is available on the Great Hearts Texas website.

Inquires on issues related to Title IX may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator identified below, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both. Questions or concerns about the school's compliance with these non-discrimination requirements should be brought to the attention of the following persons designated as responsible for coordinating compliance by Great Hearts Texas.

All concerns regarding discrimination may be directed to:
Brandon Aniol



Senior Manager of Governance and Compliance
Great Hearts Texas, 310 W. Ashby Pl., San Antonio, TX 78212
brandon.aniol@greatheartstxschools.org
(210) 888-9475

Individuals who believe they have experienced discrimination or unequal treatment may report concerns through the appropriate compliance coordinator listed above or through the grievance procedures described in this handbook.

Section 3.9. Grievances and Formal Complaints

3.9.1. Formal Grievance Process

Great Hearts Texas encourages families to share concerns informally with the appropriate administrator as an initial step toward resolving issues at the lowest appropriate level whenever possible. Many concerns can be resolved promptly through a collaborative conversation with the campus. If a parent disagrees with a campus-level action or decision, the parent may submit a formal complaint in accordance with Great Hearts Texas grievance process. Formal complaints and grievances are addressed through a structured process that includes multiple levels of review.

The grievance process is an administrative review of the concerns presented and is intended to provide a fair and orderly process for resolving disputes. It is not a disciplinary investigation, employee misconduct proceeding, or formal evidentiary hearing, and therefore may not require a response to every allegation raised. Determinations issued through the grievance process will address the concerns presented and provide an overall conclusion based on the totality of the information available. In reaching a determination, the reviewing administrator will consider whether the information presented substantiates a violation of Great Hearts Texas policy or applicable law, and whether any corrective action or additional response is warranted. Great Hearts Texas reserves the right to determine the scope and manner of review reasonably necessary to address the concerns presented. The Great Hearts Texas grievance process is designed to provide a fair, structured, and good-faith review of the issues raised.

3.9.2. Level 1: Campus-Level Grievance

At Level 1, the Headmaster has an opportunity to review the issue in question and provide a determination. All formal complaints must be submitted in writing using the official district grievance form, available on the Great Hearts Texas website, within ten (10) business days of the decision or action that led to the concern.

- Great Hearts Texas seeks to resolve grievances as promptly as reasonably possible without unnecessary delay. Upon receipt, the Headmaster will review the concern and issue a determination letter within ten (10) business days upon receipt of the formal complaint.
- If appropriate, the Headmaster may schedule a conference with the complainant to better understand the concerns raised and allow the complainant to provide additional information for the record. The conference may be scheduled for up to thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the formal complaint. If a conference is held, the timeline is then extended, and a determination will be issued within ten (10) business days of the conference. Regardless of whether a conference is held, the reviewing administrator will issue a written determination in a timely manner.
- Formal complaints should first be reviewed at Level 1 by the campus Headmaster before advancing to the next level. However, the District reserves the discretion to admit a complaint beginning at Level 2 when appropriate based on the nature of the allegations, the individuals involved, or other relevant circumstances.

3.9.3. Level 2: Appeal to the Executive Director

If the complainant disagrees with the outcome after having received the Level 1 decision from the campus Headmaster, the matter may then be appealed to the Executive Director at Level 2. All appeals must be submitted in writing within ten (10) business days of the previous administrative decision using the official district grievance form available on the Great Hearts Texas website.

- The appeal will be reviewed by the Executive Director or designee and will be limited to the issues previously raised and considered in the prior grievance record. Any new concerns or allegations raised during the appeal process, even if related to an existing grievance, must be submitted separately and admitted as a new formal complaint.
- If appropriate, the Executive Director or designee may schedule a conference with the complainant to better understand the concerns raised and allow the complainant to provide additional information for the record. The conference may be scheduled for up to thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the appeal. If a conference is held, the timeline is then extended, and a determination will be issued within ten (10) business days of the conference. Regardless of whether a conference is held, the reviewing administrator will issue a written determination in a timely manner. Any recordings made during the conference, if applicable, will be kept as part of the official grievance record.

3.9.4. Level 3: Appeal to the Superintendent

If the complainant disagrees with the outcome after having received the Level 2 decision from the Executive Director, the matter may then be appealed to the Superintendent at Level 3. A formal complaint may be appealed to Level 3 only after the complainant has first fully exhausted all other available administrative levels of the grievance process. All appeals must be submitted in writing within ten (10) business days of the previous administrative decision using the official district grievance form available on the Great Hearts Texas website.

- The appeal must be submitted in writing within ten (10) business days of the Level 2 decision. The appeal will be reviewed by the Superintendent and will be limited to the issues previously raised and considered in the prior grievance record. Any new concerns or allegations raised during the appeal process, even if related to an existing grievance, must be submitted separately and admitted as a new formal complaint.
- The Superintendent will issue a written decision within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. The Level 3 determination constitutes the Great Hearts Texas's final administrative decision unless timely appealed to the Board of Directors in accordance with District policy.

3.9.5. Level 4: Appeal to the Board of Directors

If the complainant disagrees with the outcome after having received the Level 3 decision from the Superintendent, the matter may then be appealed to the Great Hearts Texas Board of Directors. A formal complaint may be appealed to Level 4 only after the complainant has first fully exhausted all other available administrative levels of the grievance process. All appeals must be submitted in writing within ten (10) business days of the previous administrative decision using the official district grievance form available on the Great Hearts Texas website.

- Great Hearts Texas will determine whether the appeal will be presented in open or closed session in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. The Superintendent or designee will inform the parent of the date, time, and place of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting at which the appeal will be placed on the agenda for consideration by the Board.
- If the Board requests a presentation by the parent and the administration, the presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for any presentation of evidence, including an opportunity for the student or parent and administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board of Directors.
- The Board of Directors will communicate its decision, if any, orally or in writing before or during the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If no decision is made by the end of the next



regularly scheduled Board meeting, the decision being appealed shall be upheld. The Board of Directors may not delegate its authority to issue a decision. Any decision by the Board of Directors is final and may not be appealed through any other Great Hearts Texas review process.

Chapter 4: Safety and Security

Section 4.1. Safety and Security at Great Hearts Texas

4.1.1. Safety and Security Measures

Great Hearts Texas is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is safe, orderly, and conducive to intellectual and moral development. Academy security measures are designed to promote vigilance while preserving an orderly and nurturing campus essential to the Academy's educational mission. Depending on the campus, security practices may include perimeter fencing, secured vestibules, controlled access to school buildings, locked exterior doors during instructional hours, and security camera systems. All campus visitors are required to follow sign-in procedures through the Raptor Technologies visitor management system. Academies also utilize classroom emergency response resources, anonymous reporting systems, and emergency communication and notification systems. All Great Hearts Texas academies appoint personnel as trained campus safety coordinators along with commissioned peace officers or other school resource officers that work in coordination with local law enforcement and emergency responders.

Some operational details of campus security procedures are not publicly disclosed for safety reasons. Security protocols are maintained in Board policy and administrative regulations consistent with Texas law and Texas School Safety Center guidance.

Safety is sustained through the shared vigilance and cooperation of scholars, families, faculty, and staff. Scholars are expected to follow safety procedures and contribute to an orderly school environment. Disruption of school operations is prohibited and may result in disciplinary consequences or referral to law enforcement. Certain criminal offenses, including gang-related crimes, may be subject to enhanced penalties under applicable law when committed within a gang-free zone.

In accordance with Texas law, Great Hearts Texas maintains a comprehensive school safety program that includes emergency operations planning, regular safety audits, and staff training. State law requires criminal history background checks for employees, contractors, and certain volunteers who have direct contact with students. These measures are intended to ensure the safety and well-being of students entrusted to the Academy's care.

4.1.2. Threat Assessment and Safe and Supportive School Team

Each Academy maintains a Threat Assessment and Safe and Supportive School Team in accordance with Texas law. The team works to identify and assess potential safety concerns, recommend appropriate interventions and support services, and promote a safe and supportive school environment. Threat assessment is preventive in nature and is intended to facilitate early identification and intervention rather

than punishment. As required by Texas law, each campus also designates a Campus Behavior Coordinator (CBC), who may be the Headmaster or another campus administrator. The CBC is responsible for coordinating student discipline and implementing applicable provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with Texas law, the Board has established duties and responsibilities for campus security personnel. Great Hearts Texas utilizes off-duty, local peace officers or other authorized security personnel to assist in protecting scholars, staff, and property. Security personnel operate within the scope of authority established by law and Board policy. Through prudent planning, lawful authority, and shared responsibility, the Academy seeks to maintain a campus environment where scholars may grow in safety, confidence, and virtue.

Before conducting a threat assessment of a student, the Safe and Supportive School Team will provide notice to the student's parent and an opportunity to participate in the process and share relevant information regarding the student. Upon completion of the assessment, the team will communicate its findings and recommendations to the parent in accordance with applicable law and district procedures.

Section 4.2. Emergency Procedures and Crisis Response

4.2.1. Multi-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

Great Hearts Texas exists for the formation of young minds and hearts, and such formation requires an environment characterized by safety, order, and calm. Prudence therefore requires thoughtful preparation for emergencies. In accordance with Texas law, the district and each Academy maintain a comprehensive Multi-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) designed to protect scholars, staff, and visitors and to support an effective response to critical incidents.

The EOP addresses prevention and mitigation strategies, threat assessment and behavioral intervention procedures, emergency response protocols, coordination with law enforcement and first responders, crisis communication, family reunification, and recovery following significant events. These plans are developed in alignment with guidance from the Texas School Safety Center and are reviewed and updated as required by law. For the security of the school community, certain operational details of the EOP are confidential and are not publicly disclosed.

4.2.2. Standard Response Protocol (SRP)

Great Hearts Texas utilizes the Standard Response Protocol (SRP), developed by the *I Love U Guys Foundation* and adopted by the Texas School Safety Center, to provide a common language for emergency response. The SRP consists of five standard actions: Hold ("In Your Room or Area"), Secure

("Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors."), Lockdown ("Locks, Lights, Out of Sight."), Evacuate ("To a Location"), and Shelter ("For a Hazard Using a Safety Strategy").

Through periodic safety drills and established procedures, students and staff learn to respond calmly and consistently during emergencies. Campuses conduct drills and safety exercises throughout the school year in accordance with Texas law, Texas Education Agency requirements, and guidance from the Texas School Safety Center.

4.2.3. Reporting Safety Concerns

Great Hearts Texas encourages students, families, and employees to report concerns regarding threats, violence, bullying, unsafe behavior, self-harm, or other situations that may affect the safety of the school community. Reports may be made to a teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school employee, or through anonymous reporting systems adopted by the Academy, including the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System (SS-ARS).

All reports will be reviewed and addressed in accordance with district procedures and applicable law. Early reporting allows the Academy to respond proactively, provide appropriate support, and help prevent harm. Retaliation against any individual who reports a concern in good faith is prohibited.

4.2.4. Emergency Communication and Alerts

Great Hearts Texas utilizes multiple communication systems to provide emergency notifications and updates to families. Depending on the circumstances, communications may be distributed through text messages, automated phone calls, email, emergency notification systems, district or campus websites, telephone hotlines, and official media statements.

During an emergency, families may be instructed not to approach the campus until emergency personnel have secured the site. When necessary, the Academy will implement student reunification procedures and provide instructions regarding reunification locations, identification requirements, and student pickup. Families are asked to follow official communications and directions from school personnel and emergency responders.

4.2.5. Employee Safety and Emergency Response Training

Preparedness depends not only upon written plans, but upon well-trained adults who understand their duties in moments of urgency. For this reason, the Academy maintains ongoing training and compliance programs to ensure that all employees are equipped to protect and serve students responsibly.

All employees receive training appropriate to their role in the Academy's emergency operations plan. Local campus administrators and designated safety personnel receive additional training in emergency

management, incident command structures, and post-incident recovery planning in accordance with Texas School Safety Center guidance.

Section 4.3. Freedom from Bullying and Cyberbullying

4.3.1. Great Hearts Texas and No Tolerance for Bullying

Great Hearts Texas is committed to cultivating a community ordered toward what is true, good, and beautiful. Bullying is contrary to the formation of virtuous character and undermines the peace and dignity necessary for learning. In accordance with Texas law and district policy, bullying is prohibited in all forms.

Each Academy strives to prevent bullying by promoting a culture of respect through fostering healthy relationships between faculty and scholars. We encourage prompt reporting, including anonymous reporting, and investigating and addressing concerns with seriousness and care.

4.3.2. Definition of Bullying in Texas

Great Hearts Texas is committed to maintaining a school environment marked by dignity, respect, and charity toward others. Under Texas law, bullying is defined as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves written, verbal, electronic, or physical conduct that causes harm, creates a threatening or abusive educational environment, substantially disrupts school operations, or infringes upon a student's rights at school. Bullying may occur on campus, at school-sponsored activities, in school vehicles, or through electronic means when the conduct affects a student's educational environment.

4.3.3. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying carried out through electronic communication, including text messages, email, social media, websites, online platforms, or other digital technologies. Because electronic communications can be rapidly shared, widely distributed, and permanently preserved, cyberbullying may cause significant harm and will be addressed with appropriate seriousness.

Prohibited conduct may include threats, harassment, hazing, taunting, teasing, assault, extortion, destruction or theft of property, rumor-spreading, social exclusion, or other conduct that meets the definition of bullying under Texas law.

4.3.4. Bullying Prevention, Reporting, and Response

Great Hearts Texas prohibits bullying and will promptly investigate reports of alleged bullying in accordance with district policy and applicable law. Students and families who believe they have experienced or witnessed bullying should report the concern to a teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school employee as soon as possible. Reports may also be submitted through reporting procedures established by the district, including anonymous reports where permitted.

The Academy will review reported concerns, conduct appropriate investigations, and provide notice to the parents of students involved as required by law. When bullying is substantiated, the Academy may implement appropriate disciplinary, corrective, and supportive measures designed to protect students and maintain a safe educational environment. The Academy may also provide guidance and other preventive measures designed to promote respectful conduct, responsible citizenship, and a positive school culture.

The district's anti-bullying policy applies to conduct occurring on school property, at school-sponsored activities, in school vehicles, and to certain off-campus electronic conduct as provided by Texas law.

4.3.5. Investigating Reports of Bullying

Reports of bullying will be investigated promptly by the Headmaster or designee in accordance with district policy and applicable law. During the investigation, the Academy may implement interim measures reasonably designed to protect students and maintain a safe educational environment. When appropriate, parents will be notified and law enforcement may be contacted.

If bullying or other misconduct is substantiated, the Academy may implement disciplinary, corrective, restorative, or supportive measures, including counseling and other interventions for students involved. Responses involving students with disabilities will be administered in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

To the extent permitted by law, the Academy will respect the privacy of students and witnesses involved in an investigation. Retaliation against any individual who reports bullying, participates in an investigation, or provides information in good faith is prohibited. A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may utilize the district's grievance procedures.

Section 4.4. Student Protection and Safeguards

4.4.1. Hazing

Hazing is incompatible with the dignity of the human person and the orderly life of the Academy. Great Hearts Texas strictly prohibits hazing in any form. In accordance with Texas law, hazing includes intentional, knowing, or reckless acts directed against a student for the purpose of initiation into, affiliation with, or membership in a student organization that endanger a student's physical or mental health or safety. Consent, acquiescence, or a student's willingness to participate does not excuse or justify hazing. Reports of hazing will be investigated promptly. Students who engage in hazing may be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and, when appropriate, referral to law enforcement.

4.4.2. Dating Violence

Scholars flourish in an environment ordered toward justice, respect, and personal dignity. Great Hearts Texas prohibits dating violence and will respond to reports of dating violence in accordance with applicable law and district procedures.

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, or psychological abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person. Reports of dating violence will be investigated promptly, and parents of involved students will be notified as required by law.

4.4.3. Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children

In accordance with Texas Education Code §38.0041, Great Hearts Texas has adopted and implemented policies addressing child sexual abuse, trafficking, neglect, and other maltreatment of children. All district employees receive training regarding the prevention, recognition, and reporting of suspected abuse, trafficking, neglect, and other maltreatment in accordance with applicable law. Students may receive age-appropriate safety guidance related to abuse prevention, trafficking awareness, and reporting concerns in accordance with Texas law. Any person who suspects that a child has been abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal duty under Texas law to make a report to law enforcement or the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Reports may be made by calling the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or online at www.txabuseshotline.org. Additional information regarding district procedures and available resources may be obtained from the Headmaster or district administration.

Section 4.5. Health Services and Emergency Care

4.5.1. The Health of Our Scholars

Great Hearts Texas recognizes that care for the body supports the cultivation of the mind and the formation of character. The Academy maintains health services and procedures designed to safeguard student well-being while recognizing that parents bear primary responsibility for their child's health and medical care.

Parents are responsible for providing current emergency contact and health information and for notifying the Academy of significant medical conditions, allergies, or other health concerns. In the event of a medical emergency, school personnel will seek appropriate medical assistance and notify a parent or emergency contact as soon as practicable.

Students who become ill during the school day may be evaluated by the school nurse or designated health personnel and, when appropriate, may be sent home. Parents are expected to keep students home

when illness would interfere with learning or pose a risk of spreading illness to others. Students may be excluded from school or required to satisfy applicable readmission criteria in accordance with public health guidance, district procedures, and the judgment of the school nurse or other qualified health personnel.

4.5.2. Preparedness Training

In accordance with Texas law, Great Hearts Texas provides instruction on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and bleeding control techniques. Students will receive CPR and AED instruction before graduation, and students in grades 7–12 will be offered annual instruction on bleeding control and response to traumatic injury.

To support student safety and emergency preparedness, employees receive training in emergency medical response and related health and safety procedures, which may include CPR, AED use, bleeding control, bloodborne pathogens, anaphylaxis response, naloxone administration, and other trainings required by law or district policy.

4.5.3. Alcohol, Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, Drugs, and Anabolic Steroids

Great Hearts Texas is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and substance-free learning environment. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, giving, delivering, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco products, e-cigarettes or other vaping devices, as defined by Section 161.081 of Health and Safety Code, illicit drugs, controlled substances, look-alike substances, synthetic substances, or other prohibited intoxicants on school property or at any school-sponsored or school-related activity. As such, all Great Hearts Texas campuses are Alcohol-Free, Tobacco and E-Cigarette Free, and Drug-Free Zones.

In accordance with Texas Education Code § 38.006, students may not possess, use, sell, give, or deliver tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or other vaping devices on school property or at school-related activities. State law also prohibits the possession, dispensing, delivery, or administration of anabolic steroids except as prescribed by a licensed physician for a valid medical purpose. Great Hearts Texas does not permit the unlawful use of anabolic steroids and will post notices regarding anabolic steroid use in locations required by law.

Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct and, when appropriate, referral to law enforcement as permitted by law.

Section 4.6. Immunizations and Communicable Disease

4.6.1. Immunizations and Communicable Disease

To protect the health and safety of the school community, students must comply with immunization requirements established by Texas law unless a lawful exemption applies. Parents are responsible for

notifying the Academy of communicable diseases when required and for providing health information necessary to protect student's well-being.

Students with certain communicable diseases may be excluded from school and may be required to satisfy applicable readmission criteria established by public health authorities or state law. During a communicable disease outbreak, the Academy may implement health and safety measures and exclude students when required or recommended by applicable health authorities.

4.6.2. Required Documentation

The person enrolling a scholar must provide a valid immunization record reflecting required doses, proof of lawful exemption, or documentation qualifying the scholar for provisional enrollment. Scholars may not attend school until acceptable immunization documentation has been submitted, unless the scholar qualifies for provisional enrollment under state law.

Immunization records must include the vaccine name and the day, month, and year administered. Acceptable documentation includes a physician's signature or stamp, official registry records, or certified school records. Immunization compliance is reviewed and monitored by school health personnel in accordance with Texas Department of State Health Services requirements. Immunization records may be inspected by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), local health departments, and TDSHS, and may be transferred when a scholar enrolls in another school. A scholar may be provisionally enrolled if the record shows at least one dose of each required vaccine and the scholar continues to receive subsequent doses on schedule and as medically feasible.

Immunization status of provisionally enrolled scholars will be reviewed at least every 30 days. Failure to remain compliant results in exclusion from attendance until compliance is restored. Temporary 30-day provisional enrollment is also permitted for scholars experiencing homelessness, scholars in foster care, military dependents awaiting records, or transfer students awaiting immunization documentation.

4.6.3. Vaccine Exemptions

Texas law permits exemptions from immunization requirements for certain medical reasons, reasons of conscience (including religious beliefs), and other circumstances authorized by law. Parents seeking an exemption must provide the documentation required by the Texas Department of State Health Services and applicable law. Students who receive an exemption remain subject to applicable public health requirements and may be excluded from school during an outbreak, epidemic, or other public health emergency as permitted by law.

4.6.4. Bacterial Meningitis

In accordance with state law, Great Hearts Texas provides information regarding bacterial meningitis, including symptoms, transmission, prevention, and vaccine requirements for certain grade levels and for college enrollment. Parents are encouraged to consult their physician or local health authority with questions.

4.6.5. Head Lice

Head lice are common among school-aged children and are not considered a communicable disease. In alignment with current public health guidance, scholars are not automatically excluded solely due to the presence of lice or nits. Parents will be notified and expected to initiate prompt treatment using FDA-approved products.

Section 4.7. Medications and Medical Supports

4.7.1. General Medication Requirements

The Academy affirms that parents bear primary responsibility for the medical care of their children. Medication should be administered at home whenever possible. When a student's medical needs require medication to be administered during the school day, Great Hearts Texas will do so in accordance with applicable law and district procedures. All medications must be delivered to the nurse or designated health office in the original, properly labeled container, and be stored in the health office unless authorized for student self-carry under district policy.

Medications sent in unlabeled containers, envelopes, or plastic bags will not be administered, and only the amount necessary for the specified period should be provided. Any changes in medication will require written physician instruction along with written parental authorization. Medications prescribed or filled outside the United States will not be administered in accordance with Texas nursing regulations. Medication remaining at the end of the school year must be retrieved by a parent or will be disposed of in accordance with applicable guidelines.

4.7.2. Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medications

A designated employee may administer prescription medication when a written parental request is on file. The medication must be prescribed by a licensed physician or advanced practice nurse. The container must include the scholar's name, medication identification, dosage and time, prescribing physician, pharmacy, and date filled.

Controlled substances must be delivered directly to the nurse by a parent or guardian and will be counted upon receipt. Non-prescription medication requires written parental authorization and, when required by campus policy, healthcare provider authorization. All medications must be FDA-approved.

The Academy does not administer herbal remedies or dietary supplements except when required by a scholar's IEP or Section 504 plan.

4.7.3. Self-Administration of Medication

Only medications specifically authorized by law and district policy may be carried and self-administered by scholars. The medication must remain with the student and may not be stored in lockers, backpacks, or other locations unless authorized by the school nurse. Students may not share or administer their medication to another person. The school nurse may revoke self-carry privileges if the medication is used improperly or if the student is unable to safely self-administer. In accordance with Texas law, scholars with asthma or anaphylaxis may possess and self-administer prescribed inhalers or epinephrine auto-injectors if the physician and parent provide written authorization, the scholar demonstrates the ability to self-administer, and the medication remains in its original labeled container.

Texas law also permits trained school personnel to administer certain emergency medications maintained by the school for individuals reasonably believed to be experiencing a medical emergency. Consistent with the Texas Education Code, authorized and trained personnel may administer albuterol or other designated medication to individuals reasonably believed to be experiencing respiratory distress. Trained personnel may administer epinephrine to a person reasonably believed to be experiencing anaphylaxis. Authorized personnel may administer an opioid antagonist to a person reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related overdose. Each campus maintains trained personnel present during regular school hours.

4.7.4. Seizure Management Plan

In accordance with the Texas Education Code, a parent of a scholar with a seizure disorder may submit a Seizure Action Plan (SAP) developed and signed by the physician responsible for the scholar's care. Upon receipt of a Seizure Action Plan, the Academy will implement the plan through an appropriate individualized health plan. The SAP must outline the type of seizures experienced, required accommodations, emergency response procedures, and whether emergency medication is prescribed.

A scholar may possess and self-administer prescribed seizure medication on campus, at school-sponsored activities, and while in transit, if authorized by the physician and parent in the Seizure Action Plan and in compliance with district medication procedures. The Academy will ensure that trained personnel are available during regular school hours to respond appropriately to seizure-related emergencies as required by law. A seizure management and treatment plan must be submitted on the Seizure Management and Treatment Plan Form adopted by the Texas Education Agency.

4.7.5. Diabetes Management Plan

In accordance with the Texas Education Code, a parent of a scholar with diabetes should submit a Diabetes Management and Treatment Plan (DMTP) developed and signed by the physician responsible for the scholar's diabetes care. Upon receipt of a DMTP, the Academy will implement the plan through an appropriate individualized health plan. The DMTP must outline required care, including blood glucose monitoring, insulin administration, and emergency response instructions.

A scholar may perform diabetes self-care tasks and possess necessary supplies, including insulin and glucose monitoring equipment, in the classroom, on campus, at school-sponsored activities, and while in transit, if authorized by the physician and parent in the DMTP. The Academy will ensure that trained personnel are available during regular school hours to provide care as required by law.

Section 4.8. Mental Health and Counseling

4.8.1. Mental Health and Counseling

Great Hearts Texas recognizes that education concerns not only the cultivation of the intellect but also the formation of the whole person. A rightly ordered education attends to reason and conduct. When scholars are strengthened in mind and heart, they are better prepared to pursue truth, love what is good, and live in harmony with others.

The Great Hearts Texas approach to mental health counseling exists to support scholars whose emotional or social challenges impede their ability to flourish within the life of the school. Grounded in the classical tradition and informed by best practices, the program seeks to promote resilience, sound judgment, and self-governance.

School-based counseling is not a substitute for parental guidance. Families remain the primary educators of their children and are essential partners in any counseling process.

4.8.2. School Counseling Services

Each Academy provides access to school-based counseling services designed to support students' social, emotional, behavioral, and academic well-being. Counseling services may include short-term support, crisis intervention, consultation with families and staff, and referrals to community-based providers when appropriate.

School-based counseling is intended to support students in the educational setting and is not a substitute for long-term therapy or clinical treatment. Parental consent is required before counseling services are

provided. Students receiving special education services may receive counseling as a related service when determined appropriate through the ARD process in accordance with applicable law.

4.8.3. Crisis Intervention and Risk Assessment

Great Hearts Texas maintains procedures for responding to students who may be at risk of harm to themselves or others. Reports or behaviors suggesting suicide risk, self-harm, or threats of violence are taken seriously and addressed promptly by trained personnel in accordance with applicable law, district procedures, and recognized safety practices. When concerns arise, the Academy may implement appropriate interventions, including risk assessment, safety planning, increased supervision, parent notification, referral to community-based providers, behavioral threat assessment procedures, and re-entry planning following a crisis. Students identified as being at risk will be provided appropriate support and monitoring during the assessment process.

Staff receive training in suicide awareness, prevention, and response as required by law. Families are encouraged to seek immediate assistance during a mental health emergency by calling 911 or contacting the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Threats or behaviors suggesting harm to others may also be addressed through the Academy's behavioral threat assessment process. The formation of young people is a shared endeavor. Families, educators, and counselors work together to promote student well-being, resilience, and safety so that students may flourish in their academic and personal development.

Section 4.9. Required Screenings and Physical Assessments

4.9.1. Vision and Hearing Screenings

All children enrolled in Texas schools must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems in accordance with regulations issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Scholars at designated grade levels shall be screened annually or as required by state regulations. Vision screening may include standard eye charts, photo screening, and electronic visual acuity testing devices. Hearing screening is conducted using state-approved methods, and screening records may be inspected by the Texas Department of State Health Services or a local health department. Screening records may be transferred to another school without parental consent as permitted by law.

Parents will be notified of any abnormal results and encouraged to seek professional evaluation. School screenings are not diagnostic and do not replace evaluation by a licensed healthcare provider. A scholar is exempt from vision or hearing screening if the screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination. To qualify, the parent, managing conservator, or guardian must submit a signed affidavit stating the objection on or before the date of admission or screening.

4.9.2. Screening Notice and Communication

If a parent chooses to rely on a private health-care provider for examination in place of a school screening, documentation of the examination must be submitted to the school nurse prior to the scheduled screening date. The district respects parental authority while fulfilling its statutory obligations to safeguard student health. The Academy affirms that physical health supports academic excellence and character formation. Health screenings, fitness assessments, and medical clearance requirements are intended not as burdens, but as prudent safeguards. By identifying potential concerns early, the Academy and families together promote the long-term well-being of each scholar. Parents may request additional information regarding procedures or results. When required screenings are conducted, parents are notified of the screening schedule and will receive notification of any abnormal findings.

4.9.3. Scoliosis Spinal Screening

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature and refer them for appropriate medical follow-up. In accordance with Texas Health and Safety Code and Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) guidelines, scholars in designated grade levels will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. The screening is non-invasive and conducted according to nationally accepted, peer-reviewed standards.

Early detection is important. When identified early, spinal curvature may be monitored or treated to prevent progression. Parents will be notified of any abnormal findings and advised to seek further medical evaluation. A parent who declines participation in school-provided spinal screening must submit documentation of a professional examination for spinal curvature conducted by a licensed healthcare provider. This documentation must be submitted during the year the scholar is scheduled for screening or, if obtained during the summer, at the beginning of the following school year.

4.9.4. Acanthosis Nigricans Screening, Diabetes Risk Indicator

In accordance with Texas Health and Safety Code and DSHS requirements, scholars in certain grades must be screened for warning signs associated with Type 2 diabetes risk, including acanthosis nigricans. This screening is visual and non-invasive, identifies potential risk factors for further medical evaluation, but does not constitute a medical diagnosis. Parents will be notified if signs are observed and advised to consult a health-care provider.

4.9.5. Physical Fitness Assessment

In accordance with the Texas Education Code and related state requirements, the district annually assesses the physical fitness of scholars enrolled in grade levels designated by law. The assessment evaluates health-related fitness components, is administered in a manner consistent with state guidelines, and may be adapted for students with disabilities or medical conditions when appropriate.

A scholar is not required to participate if, due to disability or another condition identified by law or rule, the assessment is inappropriate. Exemptions from participation are determined for each component of the assessment so that students are given the opportunity to participate as far as possible. Results of fitness assessments are reported in aggregate by campus in accordance with state requirements and may be used to guide campus wellness initiatives.

Section 4.10. Nutrition, Health, and Physical Activity

4.10.1. Great Hearts and Student Health

Great Hearts Texas recognizes that the proper education of a child concerns the whole person. Care of the body supports the work of the intellect and the steady formation of character. Orderly habits of nourishment, rest, and physical activity contribute to attentiveness in study, firmness of spirit, and readiness for the duties of both scholarship and citizenship.

In fulfillment of its obligations under federal and state law, Great Hearts Texas maintains a Local Wellness Policy and accompanying Wellness Plan to guide practices related to nutrition, physical activity, and scholar health. Oversight of this policy is entrusted to the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and designated representatives, who review and recommend measures consistent with law and the mission of the Academy.

4.10.2. School Meal Programs

Scholars and staff have access to free, safe drinking water throughout the school day, including in cafeterias and other designated areas. All campuses participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the Federal Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program (FRL). Meals served through the district's food services program comply with USDA meal pattern standards, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the ages served. School meals are designed to promote scholar health, prepared in accordance with Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) requirements, and offered in environments intended to encourage participation.

Meals are provided in accordance with applicable federal and state nutrition standards and are designed to support student health and well-being. Scholars are provided sufficient time to eat meals in clean, safe, and orderly facilities, and have access to free drinking water during the school day as required by law. A Negative Balance Policy is implemented when a scholar's meal account carries an outstanding balance, ensuring that the scholar continues to receive access to a nutritious meal while the account is brought current.

4.10.3. Smart Snacks and Competitive Foods

All foods and beverages sold to scholars during the school day on district property must comply with USDA Smart Snacks in School standards, which includes any a la carte offerings, school stores, fundraisers during the school day, and items marketed to scholars.

Nutrition information for products offered is readily available to families and scholars. No vending machines accessible to scholars will operate on campus unless all items meet Smart Snack standards. Soft drinks are not available for purchase on school grounds. Concession stands operating outside the instructional day may offer items otherwise restricted during the school day.

4.10.4. Physical Activity Requirements

Great Hearts Texas provides physical activity and physical education opportunities in accordance with applicable Texas law and graduation requirements. Students are expected to participate in physical education and related activities unless exempted or otherwise authorized by law. Physical activity is an important component of a well-ordered education. Through exercise, recreation, and physical discipline, students develop habits of health, perseverance, self-mastery, and teamwork that support both academic success and personal flourishing.

4.10.5. Participation in Athletics and Certain Extracurricular Activities

Scholars participating in certain extracurricular activities must submit certification from an authorized health-care provider stating that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate. The medical examination must comply with applicable University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules and Texas law.

Parents and students should be aware of the rare but serious possibility of sudden cardiac arrest in youth athletes, which is often associated with previously undiagnosed heart conditions. Families are encouraged to consult their health-care provider regarding any cardiac history, symptoms, or concerns prior to participation in strenuous activities. Participation may be withheld until appropriate documentation is submitted.

Chapter 5: Code of Conduct and Discipline

Section 5.1. Virtue and Moral Formation of Character

5.1.1. Living Well Together Towards the Common Good

Great Hearts Texas believes an Academy is ordered toward both the formation of intellect and, inseparably, toward the cultivation of a community in which all may learn to live well together. Genuine education and human flourishing require an ordered, communal life oriented toward truth, not merely technical instruction. Such a community is formed through daily acts in service to others in pursuit of relentless goodwill. To live well in a community is to recognize that we belong to something greater than ourselves, rooted in the Western tradition and affirmed by ancient wisdom echoed across the ages. In this spirit, Great Hearts Texas seeks to foster a place where truth is honored, charity is practiced, and each member learns to give what he or she can for the greater good. Within this shared life, the formation of virtue becomes both personal and communal to all who walk the halls of a Great Hearts Texas Academy. Scholars discover that the habits of a good life take root when nurtured together.

5.1.2. The Formation of Habits and Virtues

Academic excellence and moral virtue are intertwined like strands of a single rope, distinct in purpose yet braided together in pursuit of the common good. Knowledge divorced from goodness fails to serve both the individual and the society. The Academy therefore unites intellectual rigor with moral purpose so that every scholar learns not only how to think, but how to will what is good. Great Hearts Texas teachers, deans, and Headmasters guide scholars in the formation of intellectual and moral habits by modeling prudence, integrity, courage, and respect, thereby demonstrating that virtue leads to both academic success and nourishing relationships with teachers, friends, and family.

In the Lower School, scholars build a foundation in the core virtues of responsibility, perseverance, integrity, and friendship, learning the meaning of citizenship and community life. In the Upper School, their affections are refined through the fine arts and their reason strengthened through the practice of courage and humility. Through this marriage of intellect and character, scholars come to understand the formation of virtue into habit. Happiness and human flourishing arise from ordered desires governed by reason and expressed in service to others.

In classical education, the formation of moral character is pursued through cultivation. Its approach is largely indirect, shaping the heart and mind by creating habits of virtue through thoughtful conversation and the study of the great works of literature. Scholars encounter virtue in action within their teachers, their peers, and the enduring voices of history. Mimesis, a Greek term used by Plato and Aristotle, is the

purposeful imitation of noble individuals or deeds in pursuit of excellence. Through imitation and reflection, moral understanding matures into habit, and habit into character.

5.1.3. Ordered Joy and the Role of Discipline

The harmony between order and joy is pursued every day at a Great Hearts Texas Academy. Discipline, rightly understood, trains desire toward the good rather than suppressing freedom of thought. Predictable routines, clear expectations, and consistent boundaries create safety in which curiosity and wonder can flourish. Habits of personal order create habits of intellectual order. External order cultivates internal order, which establishes habits of prudence, perseverance, and peace. Discipline serves a formative rather than punitive purpose. Scholars learn that freedom is achieved through self-governance and that obedience and reverence are not obstacles to happiness but its foundations.

All of the following expectations serve the common good of a Great Hearts Academy and support its mission as a place of learning and moral formation. We believe that habits of behavior shape habits of mind, and our teachers will enforce these standards with consistency, clarity, and mercy for each scholar's well-being. Scholars, parents, and faculty together sustain an environment of encouragement, respect, courtesy, and helpfulness. While the Academy is a joyful place to learn, scholars being young and human will make mistakes. Many missteps require correction rather than punishment; others, when disruptive, necessitate appropriate consequences for the sake of order and a productive community.

Clear expectations and graduated responses, when appropriate, provide a framework for conduct that supports a wholesome academic environment and each scholar's confidence and success. Scholars are young adults in formation and will learn civil and respectful behavior through the example of teachers and other adults. Accordingly, they are treated with courtesy and are expected to extend the same respect to peers and faculty. Respect is shown through attentive listening, care for property, charitable speech, and a readiness to seek and grant forgiveness. In partnership with families, the Academy aims to cultivate both scholarly habits and the virtues of responsibility, diligence, courage, generosity, and self-control. While good behavior is expected of all, the Academy reserves the right to exercise sound judgment in disciplining inappropriate conduct.

Section 5.2. Student Code of Conduct

5.2.1. In Pursuit of the Good

Great Hearts Texas holds that virtue is cultivated through habit, discipline, and ordered joy. Every classroom becomes a place where scholars actively practice respect and courage for the good of the community. Predictable and just boundaries create the safety in which a sense of wonder and curiosity may flourish. In this shared pursuit, scholars are called to uphold the dignity of others and to strengthen the integrity of the learning environment so that all may thrive.

Each scholar is encouraged to act with honesty and civility to promote the safety and well-being of others. Scholars support the community by bringing integrity to their academic work, adhering to attendance and dress expectations, following established procedures, and contributing to the cleanliness and order of the campus. By practicing these daily habits, scholars help to sustain an Academy where learning, virtue, and joy take root.

Living well together requires attention to conduct that protects instruction and supports the common good. The Academy therefore addresses behavior that disrupts learning or threatens safety, guiding scholars toward responsibility and renewed commitment to the virtues that define our community. The Code of Conduct safeguards the rights and responsibilities of all members of the Great Hearts Texas community and aims to prepare scholars for self-government.

5.2.2. Great Hearts Texas Honor Code

At Great Hearts Texas, each scholar pledges to uphold integrity through the habits of virtue. The Honor Code serves to promote academic honesty and bolster moral fortitude, while establishing the moral and academic foundation of community life. It affirms the harmony between scholarship and virtue, that authentic learning depends upon honesty and responsibility in every pursuit of knowledge.

*I pledge, upon my honor, to live and study with **Integrity** and **Honesty**. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I seek advantage through deceit or dishonor.*

*I will demonstrate **Responsibility** in all my endeavors, laboring diligently and faithfully to produce work that reflects my own mind and effort. In scholarship, I will give due credit to the thoughts of others and guard against the corruption of plagiarism, which erodes both truth and character.*

*I will approach every task with **Perseverance** and **Humility**, striving not for ease of effort but for excellence. When confronted with wrongdoing, I will act with **Courage** and discernment, upholding justice and the trust of this community.*

*As a member of this Academy, I will practice **Citizenship** and **Friendship**, honoring the dignity of others and contributing to the harmony of our shared pursuit of learning.*

*In all things, I will seek **Wisdom**, joining knowledge with virtue so that truth may flourish, character may be strengthened, and the common good be served.*

5.2.3. Guiding Virtues of the Honor Code

Virtue is formed through the repeated practice of right action until it becomes second nature. When virtue becomes second nature, the will and the good are no longer in conflict, and one acts rightly with ease, grace, and joy.

While there are many virtues worthy of practice, scholars in the Lower School focus on nine core virtues.

Responsibility teaches scholars to recognize their obligations and to fulfill them with diligence and accountability. **Perseverance** strengthens them to meet difficulty without despair, completing what they begin with courage and resourcefulness. **Integrity** anchors their choices in moral truth, forming a character that acts rightly even when unseen. **Honesty** trains them to speak and act without deception, upholding trust in every circumstance. **Courage** emboldens them to do what is just despite fear, hardship, or opposition. **Citizenship** inspires respect for lawful authority and devotion to the common good through service and civic understanding. **Humility** forms a spirit free from vanity, teaching scholars to strive for excellence without seeking praise. **Friendship** nurtures kindness, compassion, and respect for the dignity of others. **Wisdom** guides them to learn from experience, think before acting, and draw insight from the great minds of the past. Together, these nine virtues shape scholars into young men and women capable of sound judgment, noble action, and a life oriented toward truth and goodness.

Scholars in the Upper School give deliberate attention to the cardinal virtues, which form the foundation of moral character in the Western tradition. Long honored by philosophers and educators, the cardinal virtues serve as “hinges” upon which the moral life turns, guiding scholars toward right judgment, steadfast courage, and ordered desire. Through study, practice, and reflection, scholars learn to recognize **Prudence** as wisdom in choosing the good; **Justice** as giving to others what is due; **Fortitude** as the courage to persevere in difficulty; and **Temperance** as the self-command that governs appetites and passions. These virtues are not taught merely as abstract ideals but are cultivated through literature, history, imitation of noble examples, thoughtful conversation, and the daily routines of school life.

By holding the cardinal virtues before scholars as both models and aims, classical schools seek to shape not only the intellect but the whole person. The goal is a graduate guided by character, one who thinks clearly, acts honorably, and contributes with integrity to the common good. Scholars and families consent to the Honor Code and virtues through enrollment and receipt of the Great Hearts Texas Family Handbook. The Honor Code binds scholars, faculty, and families in a common pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty.

5.2.4. Behavioral Standards and Expectations

At Great Hearts Texas, behavioral standards arise from the conviction that a thriving Academy depends upon a community devoted to truth, charity, and the common good. Because moral character and education are inseparable, scholars are expected to act in ways that strengthen both their own formation and the well-being of others. Habits of conduct become habits of mind, and ordered thought cultivates the virtues on which human flourishing depends.

The Student Code of Conduct therefore unites behavior, self-discipline, and citizenship in service of the school's moral and academic life. Discipline is not merely the correction of wrongdoing but the cultivation of virtue through reflection, responsibility, and habit. Scholars learn that liberty is sustained by just laws and that civility supports community. Clear, consistent expectations guide scholars toward right action. Teachers model these virtues, while families partner with the Academy to help scholars grow in self-command and generosity, contributing honorably to the common good.

5.2.5. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of genuine scholarship at Great Hearts Texas. Because truth is the aim of all learning, scholars are expected to complete their work with honesty, diligence, and personal responsibility. Academic tasks must reflect a scholar's own thinking and effort; giving proper credit to the ideas of others is an essential act of intellectual humility and respect. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and any form of deceit undermine both character and community, eroding the trust upon which a flourishing Academy depends.

Integrity is strengthened through habits. Teachers guide scholars in the disciplined practice of careful research, accurate citation, and thoughtful collaboration, helping them cultivate prudence, perseverance, and sound judgment. When scholars act with integrity, they honor the dignity of their peers, uphold the pursuit of truth, and contribute to an environment where wisdom may flourish. Academic integrity thus unites moral purpose with rigorous study in the formation of character.

5.2.6. Student Use of Technology and Artificial Intelligence

Great Hearts Texas is not opposed to technology. Indeed, books, writing, and accumulated wisdom preserved through the written word are among humanity's most important technologies. The Academy seeks instead to cultivate thoughtful and disciplined use of modern technologies in service of learning. Consistent with its commitment to intellectual formation and a distraction-free educational environment, Great Hearts Texas encourages students to use technology as a tool for the pursuit of knowledge rather than as a substitute for attention, effort, or genuine understanding.

Great Hearts Texas provides students access to technology resources, devices, networks, and internet services to support teaching and learning. Use of these resources is a privilege, not a right, and must be

consistent with the Academy's educational mission, the Student Code of Conduct, and applicable law. School technology resources are provided primarily for educational purposes. Students are expected to use technology responsibly, respectfully, and safely. The Academy may monitor, access, and review activity conducted on school-owned devices, networks, and systems, and users should have no expectation of privacy when using such resources.

Students are prohibited from using technology in a manner that is unlawful, disruptive, threatening, harassing, defamatory, sexually explicit, harmful to minors, or otherwise inconsistent with school expectations. This prohibition includes cyberbullying, unauthorized access to technology systems, interference with network operations, and the creation, possession, or distribution of obscene, sexually explicit, or unlawful digital content, including digitally altered or artificially generated images intended to depict another person in a false or inappropriate manner, in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Electronic conduct occurring off campus may be subject to school discipline when it materially and substantially disrupts the educational environment or interferes with the rights, safety, or well-being of students or staff. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) to complete, assist with, generate, revise, or otherwise facilitate student work is strictly prohibited. Any use of AI in connection with an assignment, assessment, or other academic activity constitutes academic dishonesty. Violations of this section may result in the restriction or revocation of technology privileges, disciplinary action, or referral to law enforcement when appropriate.

5.2.7. Personal Communication Devices

Great Hearts Texas seeks to cultivate habits of attention, presence, and meaningful human interaction by limiting the use of personal communication devices during the school day. Personal communication devices include cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, and other devices capable of electronic communication. Students may bring personal communication devices to school, but devices must remain powered off and stored in a backpack, locker, or other designated location while on school property and during school-sponsored activities. Students should not have personal communication devices in their possession or use them during the school day.

Great Hearts Texas defines the term school day as the period beginning when a student arrives on school property and ending when a student leaves school property. Personal communication devices used in violation of this policy may be confiscated, and disciplinary consequences may be imposed in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Limited exceptions may be authorized when required by a student's educational plan, documented medical need, or other circumstances permitted by law and

district policy. Great Hearts Texas is not responsible for personal communication devices that are lost, stolen, or damaged while on school property or at school-sponsored activities.

Section 5.3. Dress Code and Uniform Guidelines

5.3.1. Uniforms and Citizenship

Great Hearts Texas seeks to cultivate a community of learners dedicated to high standards of character, scholarship, and citizenship. The school uniform is an important expression of this shared life, promoting dignity, unity, and an orderly environment conducive to learning. By reducing distractions in attire, the uniform helps direct attention toward academic and personal formation rather than outward appearance.

Students are expected to comply with uniform and grooming standards while on campus, at school-sponsored events, and whenever representing the Academy. Parents share responsibility for ensuring that students arrive at school in the proper uniform and maintain a neat and appropriate appearance. Students who do not meet uniform expectations may be required to correct the deficiency before participating in school activities.

The Academy will make reasonable accommodations for religious observance, medical needs, and protected hairstyles as required by law. The Headmaster may authorize modified attire for special events, field trips, athletic activities, or other school purposes. Families experiencing financial hardship may contact the Academy regarding available assistance. Specific uniform expectations for your Academy are featured in the chapter entitled Campus Procedures.

5.3.2. No Pop-Culture Rule

Great Hearts Texas is very intentional about creating a common and civil community among its scholars and in preserving an educational environment free from distractions. This includes manners of speech, habits of respect during discussions with others, attention to the content of the curriculum to the exclusion of references either to current pop-culture personalities, music, movies, and even politics and current events. To further this educational environment, Great Hearts Texas also requires scholars to use back-packs, lunch bags, and other accessories that are free from such images or references.

This policy is intended to move scholars beyond the limited perspectives of contemporary peer culture and to engage them with the enduring truths and lasting concerns of the shared intellectual inheritance of humanity. In this environment of learning, scholars will take authors and artists of historical times and different cultures seriously and better envision and entertain ideas such as goodness, virtue, and heroism from many prior historical and cultural contexts within which they have arisen.

Great Hearts Texas also seeks to avoid cultivating a “chronological snobbery” in our scholars, and in furtherance of this, we avoid contemporary comparisons during classes and school activities. Overall, Great Hearts Texas asks and challenges scholars to step out of themselves and to step out of their times, their familiar idioms, even their preferred styles in art and music, in order to appreciate the goods and virtues of other times and places. This is the essence of classical education.

Great Hearts Texas seeks to develop the unique character and quality of each scholar; however, this uniqueness and true self is not encouraged through participation in consumerism and mass marketing. Great Hearts Texas desires to free the educational environment from consumerism and external marketing influences through this policy of “no pop culture” in school. Its purpose includes:

- To give young people an educational space free from popular examples that may be merely superficial and time-bound, while we try to introduce them to more permanent and universal aspects of human nature and the human community.
- To give them educational space from the peer pressure to be media and celebrity “literate.”
- To elevate their imaginations and their thoughts above the low, the base, and the mediocre.
- To create points of reference and a common ground for conversation that transcends the scholar’s age, experience, and the biases of his peer group.
- To give them the broadest range of images and ideas from which they will eventually address the concerns of their own time and place.

This policy creates and preserves the desired educational environment and improves the educational process for the benefit of all scholars, and acts as a shield against what is shallow and temporary in popular culture on behalf of what is serious and permanent. Scholars will learn to think for themselves and develop deep critical thinking skills and analytical ability. It is in that ability that we hope to see meaningful distinctions in our scholars and not in clothing or accessories. It is also the intention of this policy to improve scholar learning, to reduce disciplinary referrals, to improve morale, and to instill self-worth and self-confidence in scholars that are lasting traits.

Section 5.4. Parental Responsibility and Partnership

5.4.1. The Role of Primary Educator

Great Hearts Texas values the vital role of parents and guardians as the primary educators and moral guides of their children. The education of a child is a shared moral and civic partnership between the school and the family. While Great Hearts Texas serves as a partner in intellectual and character formation, the ultimate responsibility for a child’s education rests with the parent. In accordance with the Texas Education Code, parents retain the right to direct the moral training of their child, make decisions



concerning their child’s education, access educational records, and be informed about academic programs, disciplinary matters, and scholar well-being.

Parents also serve as the primary models of civility and respect for their children. Great Hearts Texas asks parents to practice the same habits of prudence and temperance along with their scholars while on school property or at school-sponsored events. Parents and faculty model virtue together for scholars, thereby strengthening the character and harmony of the school community overall. In accordance with Texas Education Code, Great Hearts Texas may restrict access to its campus or events when an individual’s behavior endangers the safety of others, disrupts the work of the school, or undermines the dignity of the educational environment. When conduct becomes inappropriate for a school setting, disrespectful or even hostile, the individual may be directed to leave the premises. Great Hearts Texas also has authority to issue a temporary or long-term notice of restricted access with discretion. Such measures, though seldom necessary, are taken to preserve the order, harmony, and common good of the school community. Great Hearts Texas asks all parents to join in this work as exemplars of calm leadership and civility, supporting teachers and staff as they guide scholars toward truth, goodness, and virtue.

As partners in education, parents are encouraged to take an active interest in their scholar’s studies and in the life of the school, to discuss report cards and assignments, to communicate regularly with teachers and administrators regarding conduct and progress, and to bring to the school’s attention any circumstance that may affect the scholar’s well-being or performance. Families are expected to maintain current contact information, to cooperate with faculty and administration in sustaining a disciplined and orderly environment, and to respond promptly when called upon for matters of health, safety, or discipline. In fulfilling these duties, parents affirm the shared calling of home and school to cultivate wisdom, virtue, and a lifelong love of learning in every scholar entrusted to Great Hearts Texas.

5.4.2. Responsibility to Uphold a Safe Learning Environment

Great Hearts Texas believes that a strong partnership between home and school is essential to each scholar’s formation. During the school day and at all school-sponsored events, Great Hearts Texas is granted the authority to act *in loco parentis*, exercising the responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all scholars, as would a parent. Great Hearts Texas also has the authority to remove scholars whose conduct disturbs the harmony of the classroom, affirming the state’s recognition that schools must wield a parent’s rightful charge in upholding discipline and order. This delegated authority exists to provide all scholars with an orderly and wholesome learning environment, and it requires scholars to respond respectfully and promptly to the direction of teachers and staff.

Section 5.5. Jurisdiction and Scope of Authority

5.5.1. Scholar Rights and Responsibilities

Each scholar at Great Hearts Texas is a member of a civic community and therefore enjoys certain rights with corresponding responsibilities. Everyone has the right to learn in a safe and orderly environment, to be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. Scholars will receive due process before any major disciplinary action to participate fully in a school life free from discrimination or harassment. In turn, scholars are expected to honor the rights of others by ensuring that learning proceeds without disruption, to comply with the Honor Code, classroom expectations, and teacher directives, and to conduct themselves with honesty and civility both on and off campus. They are also entrusted with the care of school property and the duty to uphold the virtues that form the heart of our classical community.

5.5.2. Code of Conduct and Jurisdiction

The Code of Conduct specifies the standards for scholar behavior, outlines disciplinary consequences, and authorizes teachers and administrators to enforce discipline as defined by the Texas Education Code. This jurisdiction includes disciplinary authority over a scholar:

1. During lunch periods in which a scholar is allowed to leave campus;
2. During the regular school day and while the scholar is going to and from school on Great Hearts Texas transportation;
3. For any expulsion offense committed away from Great Hearts Texas property (including but not limited to cyberbullying or other prohibited use of technology away from school) and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the misconduct creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment;
4. For any expulsion offense committed while on Great Hearts Texas property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of Great Hearts Texas or another school in Texas;
5. For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location;
6. When criminal mischief is committed on or off Great Hearts Texas property or at a school-related event;
7. When retaliation against a school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
8. When the scholar commits a felony, including those provided by Texas Education Code §§ 37.006 or 37.0081, regardless of time or location;
9. While a scholar is participating in any remote / virtual classroom or other period of online instruction provided by Great Hearts Texas;
10. While the scholar is attending any school-related activity, regardless of time or location; and
11. While the scholar is in transit to or from school or to or from school-related activities or events;

The school shall report criminal acts occurring on campus or at school events to law enforcement and will make any additional reports required by state law when electronic or off-campus misconduct presents a threat to scholar safety.

5.5.3. Due Process and Fair Treatment

Before any removal or suspension, scholars shall receive fair treatment and due process when required by law. No scholar shall be disciplined, denied access to educational opportunities, or subjected to different treatment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or any other status protected by law.

In accordance with Title IX, the Academy prohibits all forms of sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. Any report of such conduct shall be referred promptly to the Title IX Coordinator and addressed through the Academy's formal grievance procedures.

Teachers and administrators will attempt to employ preventive and restorative interventions as the first step in addressing misconduct, when appropriate. However, please note that progressive discipline is not appropriate in all circumstances, and Great Hearts Texas may recommend more serious disciplinary consequences, up to an including potential expulsion, for serious misconduct.

Great Hearts Texas **prohibits** any form of corporal punishment for scholar misconduct.

All employees share responsibility for ensuring just, consistent, and lawful discipline and for maintaining open and timely communication with families.

5.5.4. Compliance with State and Federal Law

Great Hearts Texas is an open-enrollment public charter school established under Texas Education Code Chapter 12 and is therefore subject to applicable state and federal laws governing public charter schools. These laws ensure that every scholar is provided with a safe, equitable, and high-quality educational environment, grounded in both the rule of law and the pursuit of moral and intellectual virtue. As a classical public charter school, Great Hearts Texas affirms both its autonomy in educational mission and its fidelity to the legal frameworks that safeguard the integrity of the learning environment.

Section 5.6. Prohibited Conduct and Items

5.6.1. Prohibited Conduct

Great Hearts Texas upholds an environment ordered toward learning, virtue, and the common good. Therefore, scholars and visitors shall refrain from any conduct that disrupts instruction, threatens the safety or dignity of others, or violates state or federal law or local policy. Acts that undermine the

educational environment or impede the scholarly mission of the school community are strictly prohibited. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Physical aggression, fighting, or threats of violence.
- Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing, including conduct prohibited under the Texas Education Code and Title IX regulations concerning sex-based harassment.
- Possession, use, or distribution of weapons, dangerous instruments, or any item reasonably perceived as a weapon.
- Possession or use of controlled substances, alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, or related paraphernalia.
- Academic dishonesty, forgery, or falsification of records.
- Vandalism, theft, or misuse of property, public or private.
- Defiance of lawful authority, failure to comply with reasonable directives, or conduct that obstructs school functions.
- Obscene, profane, or abusive language, gestures, or materials.
- Unauthorized recording, publishing, or transmission of images, audio, or digital content that is defamatory, invasive, disruptive, or unlawful.
- Any behavior that violates local, state, or federal law or endangers the orderly operations of the Academy.

5.6.2. Prohibited Items

Students may not possess, use, distribute, or bring onto school property, school transportation, school-sponsored activities, or other locations where they are representing the Academy any item prohibited by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to:

- Firearms, knives, clubs, explosives, ammunition, weapons, or look-alike weapons.
- Tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, nicotine products, and related paraphernalia.
- Alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, counterfeit or simulated drugs, and other prohibited intoxicants.
- Pornographic, obscene, discriminatory, unlawful, or otherwise harmful materials.
- Electronic devices or digital media used to create, store, access, or distribute unlawful, harassing, sexually explicit, or otherwise prohibited content.

Possession of a prohibited item may result in confiscation, disciplinary action, removal from school activities, and referral to law enforcement when appropriate.

Section 5.7. Levels of Offenses and Consequences

5.7.1. Behavioral Supports and Restorative Practices

Great Hearts Texas seeks not only to correct misconduct but also to cultivate character through just, restorative, and educational responses. Consistent with the Academy's commitment to virtue and human flourishing, disciplinary interventions may be designed to promote personal responsibility, repair harm, restore relationships, and strengthen habits of good citizenship. When appropriate, the Academy may utilize restorative practices, behavioral supports, counseling, mentorship, reflective activities, restitution, behavior agreements, loss of privileges, or other educational interventions intended to support student growth and accountability.

5.7.2. Procedures for Use of Restraint and Time-Out

Great Hearts Texas is committed to maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment while respecting the dignity and well-being of every student. In accordance with Texas law, restraint may be used only in emergency situations when necessary to prevent imminent physical harm to a student or others or to prevent serious property damage. Any use of restraint will be implemented in a manner designed to protect the health and safety of all involved and will be documented and reported as required by law.

Time-out may be used as a behavior management intervention in accordance with applicable law and, when required, a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). Time-out may not be used in a manner that deprives a student of basic rights, prevents participation in the educational program, or otherwise violates state or federal requirements. Additional procedures governing the use of restraint and time-out are maintained in district policy and administrative regulations.

In accordance with Texas law, Great Hearts Texas will not withhold recess or other physical activity required as part of the physical education curriculum as a disciplinary consequence for academic performance or student behavior.

5.7.3. Participation in School Activities During Suspension

Students assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) may not participate in or attend extracurricular activities, athletic events, field trips, competitions, performances, clubs, ceremonies, or other school-sponsored activities during the period of suspension unless on any day for which the student is assigned ISS or OSS unless participation is required as part of the student's academic program or expressly authorized by the Headmaster or designee.

A student assigned OSS may not be present at any school-sponsored activity, whether on or off campus,

during the suspension period. on any day of the suspension. Eligibility to resume participation in school-sponsored activities is restored on the first school day after completion of the assigned consequence, unless otherwise directed by the Academy.

5.7.4. Levels of Offenses

In the formation of character and the preservation of order, justice requires that offenses be judged with discernment and addressed in proportion to their gravity. For this purpose, the Code of Conduct establishes three (3) levels of offenses, each corresponding to the seriousness of the act and the moral development of the scholar.

Level 1 offenses are considered minor to moderate infractions and typically reflect lapses in judgment or self-discipline. Level 1 offenses are met with corrective guidance designed to restore responsibility and reflection.

Level 2 offenses are more severe in nature and often involve repeated misconduct or more deliberate disregard for others. Level 2 offenses call for structured intervention, uniting accountability with the opportunity for moral growth.

Level 3 offenses constitute grave violations of safety or the law, or represent persistent and egregious level 2 offenses. Level 3 offenses demand formal disciplinary action to uphold the integrity of the community and safeguard the common good.

Through this tiered response framework, discipline becomes not an instrument of punishment, but a means of instruction towards the good. Each response seeks to balance justice with mercy, correction with compassion, so that consequence may lead to restoration, and order may serve the higher purpose of virtue.

Every employee shares responsibility for maintaining order and respect. Parents are essential partners in this process. Administrators shall notify parents of all Level 2 infractions or patterns of Level 1 misconduct and collaborate to restore consistent expectations between home and school. Scholars develop habits of virtue through reflection and choice.

5.7.5. Level 1 Offenses

Level 1 offenses involve minor misconduct that disrupts the orderly operation of the classroom or school environment but does not pose a significant threat to the safety, well-being, or property of others. Level 1 offenses include, but are not limited to:

1. Dress code, uniform, grooming, or appearance violations.

2. Tardiness, truancy, or other attendance-related violations.
3. Being in an unauthorized area or leaving an assigned area without permission.
4. Failure to follow classroom rules, campus procedures, or reasonable directives from school personnel.
5. Disruptive, distracting, or unruly behavior that interferes with instruction, school activities, or the learning environment.
6. Minor disrespect, inappropriate language, profanity, rude gestures, or discourteous conduct toward others.
7. Unauthorized possession or use of a cell phone, smartwatch, personal communication device, or other electronic device.
8. Minor misuse of district technology resources or violation of technology procedures.
9. Minor inappropriate public displays of affection.
10. Minor damage to school property or the property of others.
11. Unauthorized selling, trading, or distribution of non-prohibited items on campus.
12. Failure to participate appropriately in safety drills, assemblies, or other school activities.
13. Violations of in-school suspension procedures or other disciplinary expectations.
14. Unauthorized use of skateboards, scooters, bicycles, or similar devices on school property.
15. Any other conduct that disrupts the orderly operation of the classroom or school but does not rise to the level of a Level 2 or Level 3 offense.

The Academy reserves the right to classify conduct as a Level 1 offense when the nature, severity, and circumstances of the misconduct warrant corrective intervention but do not require more serious disciplinary consequences.

5.7.6. Level 1 Consequences

Disciplinary consequences for Level 1 offenses are discretionary and are not required to follow a specific sequence. Progressive discipline may be used when appropriate; however, the administration reserves the right to impose consequences based on the nature, severity, frequency, and circumstances of the misconduct. Repeated or disruptive Level 1 offenses may result in Level 2 consequences when deemed appropriate by school administration. Consequences for Level 1 offenses may include:

1. Verbal warning, correction, or redirection.
2. Reteaching behavioral expectations.
3. Parent or guardian contact or conference.
4. Classroom management interventions, including seat changes or other corrective measures.
5. Temporary removal from class.
6. Confiscation of prohibited items when appropriate.
7. Loss of privileges or participation in school-sponsored activities.

8. Detention.
9. Restitution for minor property damage.
10. Community service, campus beautification, or other restorative measures.
11. In-School Suspension (ISS), generally up to two (2) days, with longer assignments possible for repeated or disruptive behavior.
12. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), generally up to one (1) day, with longer assignments possible for repeated or disruptive behavior.
13. Any other corrective measure authorized by district policy or the Student Code of Conduct.

Commented [BA1]: ISS to 3, OSS 3

The Academy may consider a student's age, disciplinary history, intent, degree of disruption, and other relevant factors when determining an appropriate consequence.

5.7.7. Level 2 Offenses

Level 2 offenses involve serious misconduct that substantially disrupts the educational environment, threatens the safety or well-being of others, or demonstrates a significant disregard for school rules and expectations. Level 2 offenses include, but are not limited to:

1. Repeated or persistent Level 1 offenses.
2. Academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI), forgery, falsification of records, or false accusations against another person.
3. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, retaliation, dating violence, or other conduct that causes substantial emotional distress or interferes with a student's educational opportunities that does not constitute a Level 3 offense.
4. Fighting, mutual combat, arranging a fight, threatening conduct, or other behavior that endangers the health, safety, or welfare of others but does not rise to the level of a Level 3 offense.
5. Possession, use, misuse, or distribution of prescription medication, over-the-counter medication, drug paraphernalia, fireworks, pepper spray, mace, ammunition, or other prohibited items not requiring expulsion.
6. Theft, possession of stolen property, extortion, coercion, blackmail, criminal mischief, vandalism, graffiti, or damage to school or personal property that does not constitute a Level 3 offense.
7. Insubordination, refusal to comply with reasonable directives from school personnel, failure to comply with disciplinary consequences, or interference with school operations, safety procedures, or disciplinary processes.
8. Possession, viewing, creation, transmission, or distribution of inappropriate, obscene, sexually explicit, harassing, or otherwise prohibited materials, whether in physical or electronic form, that does not constitute a Level 3 offense.

9. Sexual harassment, offensive sexual conduct, indecent exposure, public lewdness, or other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature that does not constitute a Level 3 offense.
10. Unauthorized access to, misuse of, or interference with district technology systems, networks, accounts, data, or internet resources, including attempts to bypass security measures.
11. Sending, posting, or distributing abusive, threatening, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, or disruptive electronic communications.
12. Gambling, unauthorized exchange of money or property, trespassing, gang-related activity, secret-society activity, or other conduct inconsistent with the orderly operation of the Academy.
13. Conduct related to a criminal offense that does not constitute a Level 3 offense but nevertheless substantially disrupts the educational environment or threatens the safety of others.

The Academy reserves the right to classify conduct as a Level 2 offense when the nature, severity, or circumstances of the misconduct warrant a more serious response than a Level 1 consequence but do not rise to the level of a Level 3 offense.

5.7.8. Level 2 Consequences

Disciplinary consequences for Level 2 offenses are discretionary and not required to follow a specific sequence. A Level 2 offense may also include one or more related Level 1 violations arising from the same incident or pattern of behavior. When this occurs, Great Hearts Texas may impose consequences for both the primary Level 2 offense and any associated Level 1 violations. Depending on the nature, severity, and circumstances of the misconduct, consequences for Level 2 offenses may include:

1. Behavioral contracts, behavior intervention plans, or other corrective measures.
2. Revocation of campus, extracurricular, transportation, or technology privileges.
3. In-School Suspension (ISS), generally up to three (3) days, with longer assignments possible for repeated or disruptive behavior.
4. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), generally up to three (3) days, with longer assignments possible for repeated or disruptive behavior.
5. Restitution for damaged or stolen property.
6. Referral to counseling, behavioral supports, or other student services.
7. Referral to law enforcement when required or appropriate.
8. Any applicable Level 1 consequence.
9. Any other consequence authorized by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.

Commented [BA2]: ISS to 3, OSS 3

Certain serious Level 2 offenses may result in Level 3 disciplinary consequences, including expulsion, when permitted or required by law.

5.7.9. Level 3 Offenses

Level 3 offenses involve the most serious violations of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in expulsion, referral to law enforcement, or other significant disciplinary consequences authorized by law. Level 3 offenses include, but are not limited to:

1. Possession, use, exhibition, sale, or distribution of a firearm, prohibited weapon, explosive device, ammunition, or other dangerous object.
2. Aggravated assault, sexual assault, indecency with a child, arson, or other serious criminal offenses.
3. Conduct punishable as a felony or conduct for which expulsion is authorized or required by the Texas Education Code.
4. Possession, use, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, controlled substances, dangerous drugs, prescription medications used improperly, intoxicants, or related paraphernalia.
5. Abuse of volatile chemicals or similar substances.
6. Terroristic threats, bomb threats, false alarms, hoaxes, or conduct intended to cause fear, panic, or disruption.
7. Conduct that endangers the health, safety, or welfare of students, employees, or others.
8. Serious acts of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, dating violence, retaliation, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, stalking, or intimidation.
9. Creation or participation in a hit list, gang-related activity, or organized misconduct involving threats, violence, or intimidation.
10. Criminal mischief, burglary, theft, vandalism, destruction of property, or unauthorized access to district facilities, systems, or records.
11. Online impersonation, release of intimate visual material, unlawful recording of another person, deepfake sexual imagery, revenge-porn offenses, or other serious misuse of technology.
12. Deliberate destruction of, interference with, or unauthorized access to district technology systems, networks, or data.
13. Repeated or persistent misconduct that demonstrates a substantial disregard for school rules, safety, or the educational environment.
14. Any other conduct for which expulsion is authorized or required by federal or state law.

The Academy reserves the right to classify conduct as a Level 3 offense when the nature, severity, or circumstances of the misconduct substantially threaten the safety of individuals, disrupt the educational environment or otherwise warrant the most serious disciplinary response permitted by law.

5.7.10. Level 3 Consequences

Level 3 offenses involve the most serious violations of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in expulsion in accordance with the Texas Education Code and applicable due process procedures. Any Level 3 offense may also include one or more associated Level 1 or Level 2 violations arising from the same incident, and the Academy may impose consequences for all applicable misconduct.

Certain offenses require expulsion under Texas law, including possession, use, or exhibition of a firearm, prohibited weapon, or explosive device, as well as certain serious criminal offenses committed on school property or at school-sponsored activities. Other serious misconduct may result in discretionary expulsion as permitted by law. Consequences for Level 3 offenses may include:

1. In-School Suspension (ISS), generally up to five (5) days, with longer assignments possible for repeated or disruptive behavior, pending disciplinary proceedings or as otherwise permitted by law.
2. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), generally up to five (5) days, with longer assignments possible for repeated or disruptive behavior, pending disciplinary proceedings or as otherwise permitted by law.
3. Expulsion.
4. Referral to law enforcement or other governmental authorities when required or appropriate.
5. Restitution for damaged or stolen property.
6. Loss of privileges, participation restrictions, or exclusion from extracurricular and school-sponsored activities.
7. Any other disciplinary consequence authorized by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.
8. Students receiving special education services will be disciplined in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

Commented [BA3]: ISS 5, OSS 5