

GreatHearts[®]

Online

TEXAS

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024 - 2025

Pending Board Approval and District Additions

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LETTER TO FAMILIES

Dear Great Hearts Online Families,

Welcome to *Great Hearts Online - Texas*, a Great Hearts Texas Academy!

We are honored that you have chosen our academy for your family and are eager for you to join us in the pursuit of the true, the good, and the beautiful.

Parents/guardians, please take the time to read through our entire handbook. We encourage you to read pertinent portions with your scholars, such as the mission statement and honor code. Please note that we revise and improve the handbook annually, so re-reading is important for returning families as well. The following pages clarify many of the essential details that a family must understand to participate fully in our Great Hearts Online community. In effect, knowing the handbook helps your family to join the broader community as we share common values and expectations of one another. When you have finished reading the handbook, parents/guardians and the scholar(s) should use the link in the Welcome Letter to complete and sign the mandatory signature page (and other required pages).

The center of our school is the classroom and the mentoring relationship between the teacher and the scholar. Every family supports and participates in this relationship by shepherding their children through their learning process and a variety of exercises, assignments, and growth opportunities throughout the school year. And yet, our community needs to extend beyond the classroom to reach its full potential. As such, I urge every parent, scholar, and teacher to become wholeheartedly involved in at least one Great Hearts Online activity outside of the classroom each year. For a parent, this might mean volunteering as a “lunch bunch” or in-person school event leader; assisting with online reading groups, leading or serving on a parent committee, or chaperoning a field trip; for a teacher, this could mean coaching a sport or organizing a club; and for a scholar, this could mean playing a sport, signing up to be an Academy Ambassador, or being a leader in an extracurricular arena. Through good work and friendship, let us continue to build up one other’s spirit and develop our community.

Before you turn the page, I would like to quote from The Athenian Oath. The young men of ancient Athens

took this oath when they reached the age of seventeen:

"We will revere and obey the City's laws, and will do our best to incite a like reverence and respect in those above and below us ... We will strive to quicken the public's sense of civic duty. Thus, in all these ways we will transmit this City, not only, not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

What a powerful call to service from one of the great cities of the Western tradition! Each of us, as free citizens of Great Hearts Online - Texas, should equally strive to make our school a better place - a city of truth, goodness, and beauty - for those scholars, parents/guardians, and teachers who will follow after us.

Warmest regards,

Mr. Brian Daigle

Headmaster

OUR MISSION

The mission of Great Hearts Online is to cultivate the minds and hearts of scholars through the pursuit of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty.

The Academy graduate has a foundation in the liberal arts of grammar and rhetoric, logic and mathematics, history, natural science, and philosophy. The graduate has also practiced the fine arts of music, poetry, drawing and painting, and drama. The graduate is thus prepared for every career, every course of advanced or specialized study, and every kind of leisure. In short, the Academy graduate is ready to live the lifetime of learning that is possible for a human being.

The Academy will fulfill its mission by the following means:

- Service to a rigorous, core liberal arts curriculum in the Western tradition that is the same for all scholars.
- Small class size.
- Dedicated, enthusiastic, and intellectually excellent teachers who serve as models of learning and of character.
- Detailed scholar evaluation, with an emphasis upon written, narrative evaluation of learning rather than upon grades and percentages.
- Regular and meaningful asynchronous work assignments.
- High standards of personal conduct and comportment for scholars.

Though the curriculum is rigorous, and expectations of scholars are high, the Academy is not a school only for the best and the brightest. We provide an environment that allows every scholar who is curious and diligent the opportunity to fulfill his or her potential.

OUR CHARTER, ACCREDITATION, AND AFFILIATIONS

Great Hearts Online is a campus of Great Hearts Texas, the holder of an open-enrollment charter issued by the State of Texas and a 501(c)(3) organization. It is accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) approved by the Cognia Global Commission.

Great Hearts Texas supports its schools with curriculum, data management, faculty orientation and professional development, human resources services, business management (such as accounting), special education services, and the development of funding and facility opportunities.

Great Hearts Texas is a subsidiary corporation of Great Hearts Academies, a non-profit charter management organization.

COMMUNICATION

Please see the GHO website for the specific contact information of people who currently fill the following roles:

ACADEMY LEADERSHIP TEAM

The **Headmaster** reports to the Great Hearts Executive Director's office and is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the school. The directly oversees the implementation of GHO Texas's curriculum and has sole authority to manage all teachers and staff at GHO Texas.

The **Assistant Headmaster** supports the Headmaster in the day-to-day operations of the school, disciplinary actions, curriculum oversight, and technology and pedagogical needs. The AHM is most responsible for the teacher experience.

The **Dean** oversees areas related to scholar growth, academics, discipline, and curriculum. The Dean also regularly coaches and trains our faculty. The Dean is most responsible for the scholar and parent experience.

Other **Coordinators** oversee all areas of additional scholar support. This includes Special Education, 504, MTSS, English Language support, College Advisor, etc. Questions or concerns related to Title IX should be first directed to the Community Engagement Coordinator.

Questions or concerns about **curriculum, scholar conduct, or discipline** should be directed to the Teacher and when necessary, escalated to the grade-level Dean.

OPERATIONS TEAM

The **Operations Manager** oversees all Operations staff and functions. The Operations Manager works closely with the Headmaster in communicating information to the families. The operations team also assists families with records and school business unrelated to scholar discipline, curriculum, or the classroom.

The **Registrar and SIS** manage all attendance records, transcripts, and scholar records. All absence notifications and doctor notes should be sent to AttendanceTX@greatheartsonline.org.

The **Testing Coordinator** oversees all areas of required state testing. This includes STAAR AND TELPAS.

The **Community Engagement Coordinator** oversees community events, parent engagement, at-risk scholars, and special projects.

General questions regarding the **school operations** should be directed to the Operations Manager.

ENROLLMENT ADVISORS

The **Enrollment Advisor** provides regular check-ins and direct assistance for our families or connects families with the correct support person. The Enrollment Advisor team works closely with the Headmaster and school leadership in efforts to support our community and to ensure every family has a quick contact at the school.

GREAT HEARTS TEXAS SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Great Hearts Texas Superintendent and GTX Board of Directors work with the Headmaster and academies and offer essential support. For more information about Great Hearts Texas and the governing Board, please visit the website, <https://texas.greatheartsonline.org/>.

Note to Parents: Copies of resumes and fingerprint clearance cards for all Academy faculty, Great Hearts leadership and Academy board members are available upon request. Please direct your request to the Assistant Headmaster for assistance.

COMMUNICATION ROLES

A brief email, first through Canvas and then to the teacher's email, is the preferred method for communicating with faculty members. If a longer conversation is necessary, it will take place on a Zoom meeting or phone call.

As a preparatory school, the Academy believes that scholars should be the primary agent in their education. The Academy's first priority in this regard is to encourage scholar responsibility by establishing an open line of communication between scholars and their individual teachers. Timely and effective communication between teachers, scholars, and parents/guardians is essential in fostering academic growth.

Scholar: Scholars are responsible for tracking assignments, understanding stated course requirements, and meeting deadlines. The Academy strongly encourages scholars to meet with their teachers regularly for tutoring if they are having difficulty understanding specific concepts or material. It is also the job of the scholars to communicate honestly to their parents/guardians about their day-to-day performance and academic standing.

Teacher: Teachers are responsible for clearly communicating scholar expectations. Teachers are also responsible for notifying parents/guardians when their scholar is struggling considerably with the material or is not performing as expected.

Parent/Guardian: Parents/guardians are responsible for clearly communicating with teachers any conditions that may affect their scholar's ability to learn and focus in-class. We ask parents to consider school culture, including the practice of virtue in all their written and spoken communications with staff. Parents may reach out to teachers directly, through Canvas or email, when the communications include proper decorum, an assumption of good will, professional civility, and a respectful tone. Screaming, vulgarity, and other forms of incivility will not be permitted. Repeated misuse of this privilege, or excessive emails that prevent our faculty from focusing on their teacher or administrative duties, or that disrupts the well-curated and beloved culture of our institution, will result in a temporary "freeze" of communication with faculty, and a requirement that communication goes through selected administration (selected by the school). Your needs will still be addressed, but not directly from the teacher.

The primary means by which parents/guardians can assist their scholar are:

1. Encouraging their scholar in their development in academy goals, namely the growth of character and wisdom.
2. Providing a distraction-free study environment.
3. Create an observer account in Canvas to monitor their scholar's grades and teacher feedback.

When scholars are experiencing significant academic struggles, parents/guardians should generally seek to assist the scholar according to these guidelines:

1. First, scholar communicates specific difficulty directly to teacher.
2. Teacher meets with scholar to create action plan.
3. If difficulty persists, parents/guardians contact teacher or vice versa.
4. Teacher, parents/guardians, and possibly scholar meet to discuss and address issue.
5. If difficulty persists, parents/guardians and/or teacher may contact the grade level Dean.
6. Deans facilitate conference with parents/guardians and teacher.

OFFICIAL SCHOOL CALENDAR

The official school calendar for each academic year is posted on the school website (www.online.greatheartsamerica.org) and distributed to each family prior to the start of school. Any updates and revisions will also be found on the web version of the calendar, which is updated as needed.

This calendar should be carefully coordinated with each family's own calendar and should be consulted on a regular basis throughout the year. The calendar identifies school holidays, special events, etc.

IMPORTANT: Annual in-person state testing is a requirement for all 3rd grade through high school scholars. This is mandated by the state and scholars may not opt-out, even for health reasons. In-person state testing will take place in mid-April to early May. Please plan ahead for this and make sure you are in state during this window of time. Additionally, there are required in-person testing dates for kindergarten through high school English Language Learners which will be communicated early in the school year.

OFFICIAL SCHOOL WEBSITE

The Academy's website is an important tool for communication. Families are encouraged to visit the website regularly to view communiqués, faculty contact information, updates on athletic and extra-curricular schedules and locations, and other school related events and information. Great Hearts is committed to making our websites usable by all people, including those with disabilities.

Great Hearts is dedicated to meeting the accessibility needs of all scholars, parents/guardians, and members of the public. For specific questions or concerns about the accessibility of the website or need assistance in using it, please contact the Operations Manager or send us an email (feedback@GreatHeartsAmerica.org).

DISPLAYING STUDENT ARTWORK, PROJECTS, PHOTOS, AND OTHER ORIGINAL WORK

Teachers may display scholar work in Lyceum as recognition of scholar achievement. However, the Academy will seek parental consent before displaying scholar artwork, special projects, photographs taken by scholars, and other original works on the Academy website, on any campus or classroom website, in printed materials, by video, or by any other method of mass communication or any other external website. The Academy will also seek consent before displaying or publishing an original video or voice recording in this manner.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The primary way that parents/guardians/at-home learning facilitators are involved in the school is by supporting their scholar(s) in their journey through the Academy. Parents/guardians/at-home learning facilitators will want to have an established plan for listening to, and then encouraging, their scholars when they are working hard. Frequent communication with teachers helps develop an understanding of the Academy's expectations of how preparatory-level, liberal arts studies form habits of learning. For younger scholars, parents/guardians/at-home learning facilitators will likely need to support with technology, as well as the set up and initiation for live classes. Parents/guardians should be mindful of scholar class times and work space and ensure a distraction free environment. Parents/guardians should contact the teachers to share important information on how their scholar approaches the curriculum at home and if the scholar is experiencing difficulty. If a family has established a learning facilitator (other than the parent/guardian or an approved contact) who has a school-approved interest in the child's academic records and communication, the parent/guardian must fill out and submit the "Third-Party Consent to Release Student Information" form.

At Great Hearts Online, we are a learning community collectively exploring how to live well with the internet. Families, scholars, faculty, and staff all have responsibilities and opportunities to contribute to this exciting, important endeavor. Developmentally, our youngest scholars are simply incapable of

navigating their school day independently, and culturally, we do not believe scholars should be online without their parents' or guardians' awareness of their scholar's activities or searches. As such, parents, guardians, grandparents, and other adults act as at-home Learning Facilitators, enjoying opportunities to support instruction and connection throughout the day. It is also critical for the education growth of scholars that they be allowed to work independently during live classes, including the completion of schoolwork during live time or independent practice.

Parents, guardians, or other at-home learning facilitators providing scholars with responses during live class, or doing the scholar's schoolwork, constitutes academic dishonesty and may result in disciplinary action. It prohibits scholars from learning and creates a situation where teachers do not have accurate data on scholar academic growth needs. To assist the parents/guardians/at-home learning facilitators, a Canvas Observer account is required to be set up and used to communicate with teachers, receive Academy announcements, and monitor the scholar's grades. Students invest a great deal in their education, and thus teachers and parents/guardians/at-home learning facilitators should be unanimous in their support of the scholars and one another.

The teachers of the Academy are honored by the great trust that parents/guardians have placed in them. This trust between the parents/guardians and the school must be maintained not only by ongoing communication, but by a mutual understanding of the "big picture": what an Academy education will offer young people in the long run. It can be difficult for both young people and adults to maintain a focus on the long-term benefits that a liberal education offers. Likewise, scholars, especially younger scholars, may not fully sense the extent of their own intellectual and moral growth over time. When scholars are applying themselves on a particular part of their journey, they will look to their parents/guardians and their teachers for a reaffirmation that their investment is yielding positive gains. As such, mutual trust between parents/guardians and teachers is essential to convincing scholars that we have an achievable plan in place for them that is also in their best interest.

REGISTRATION AND RECORDS

In order to complete the registration process, parents/guardians must complete the Request for Student Records Form for all records to be transferred from the scholar's previous school to the Academy. This documentation should include the scholar's immunization history and a copy of their birth certificate or other legally acceptable identifying documents, as well as their complete academic and disciplinary records, including any special needs or information. The Request for Student Records Form may be obtained from the Academy Registrar or Student Information Specialist. Official transcripts should be sent to the Academy directly by the previously attended school. If the scholar was home-schooled, a signed description of the curriculum and course content mastered must be submitted to the Academy. A more complete explanation of the documents that may be submitted is included in the Enrollment Policy, which is part of this handbook.

Additionally, in order to complete scholar registration or re-enrollment, a parent/guardian must provide proof of Texas residency. This proof must be re-submitted annually; acceptable forms of residency verification are listed in the enrollment packets issued by the school and described in detail in the enrollment policy which is part of this handbook.

If at any time a family should move outside of Texas, and no longer be a resident of Texas, they are legally required to notify the school. At this time the scholar will need to withdraw from GHO-TX. **GHO-TX is a public school for TX residents only.** The definition of "resident" is that the scholar must be physically present/living in the state of Texas for over half of the calendar year.

Parents/guardians have the right of access to the records of their scholar. The school reserves the right to have a **72-hour waiting period** in order to maintain the smooth flow of school business, although there may be an additional delay during certain times of the year when administrative staff is involved with other tasks, and to charge a reasonable fee for the cost of copying records. Non-custodial parents/guardians also have the right of access to records, unless the school has received a court document to the contrary. Please review the FERPA notification which follows for more information regarding access to and disclosure of scholar information.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS AND TRANSFER OF RECORDS

The School may request transcripts from previously attended schools for scholars transferring into Great Hearts Online; however, the ultimate responsibility for obtaining transcripts from sending schools rests with the parent or scholar, if 18 or older.

For purposes of a scholar's enrollment or transfer, the School shall promptly forward in accordance with the timeline provided in law education records upon request to officials of other schools or school systems in which the scholar intends to enroll or enrolls. The School may return an education record to the school identified as the source of the record.

RECORDS RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Headmaster shall be responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information in records of scholars in special education.

A current listing of names and positions of persons who have access to records of scholars in special education is maintained at the Great Hearts Online Administrative Office.

OFFICIAL WITHDRAWAL

A scholar under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent or legal guardian. The Academy requests notice from the parent/guardian at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. An official withdrawal form may be obtained by emailing registrartx@greatheartsonline.org. The Registrar or other administrator will verify the information on the withdrawal when the parent/guardian submits the signed withdrawal papers to complete the process. The parent/guardian shall also provide the name of the new school in which the scholar will be enrolled and must sign the formal withdrawal form. All communication and forms should be submitted to the Registrar.

A scholar who is 18 years of age or older, who is married, or who has otherwise been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor may withdraw without parental signature.

Withdrawing scholars and parents/guardians are expected to:

- Return all technology, textbooks and checked-out materials and equipment, if applicable.
- Complete make-up work
- Pay unpaid balances of scholar fees, if any
- Sign a release of records if transferring to a private school
- In all cases, withdrawal forms must be completed and signed before withdrawal is processed.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT ("FERPA") NOTIFICATION

Required annual notification to parents/guardians and eligible scholars regarding scholar records This Notification is required by the FERPA and provides parents/guardians with important

information regarding their rights as it relates to scholar educational records. It is directed to parents/guardians (including a natural parent, a guardian or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian) and eligible scholars (scholars aged 18 years or older or attending an institution of postsecondary education).

Your Right as a Parent or Eligible Student

The Right to Inspect and Review the Student's Educational Records.

If a parent/guardian or eligible scholar wishes to inspect/review the scholar's educational records, please contact the Headmaster to make an appointment to do so. Parent/guardian or eligible scholar will be provided access to records within a reasonable period of time, but in no case more than 45 days after a request is received. School personnel will respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. The Academy will provide the parent/guardian or eligible scholar with a copy of the records or make other arrangements for inspection and review of the requested records if its failure to do so would effectively prevent the parent/guardian or eligible scholar from exercising their rights to inspect and review the records.

The Right to Consent to Disclosures of Personally Identifiable Information Contained in the Student's Educational Records, except to the Extent the Law Authorizes Disclosure Without Your Consent.

The Academy will limit the disclosure of information contained in a scholar's education records except: (1) By a parent/guardian or eligible scholar prior, written consent; (2) as directory information; or (3) under certain limited circumstances permitted by FERPA. Some instances in which disclosure is permitted without consent are set forth below.

Directory Information. Consent is not required for the Academy to release the following scholar information designated as "directory information":

- Name
- Class designation
- Address
- Place of birth
- Previous school or district attended
- Telephone number
- Extracurricular participation
- Date of birth
- Weight & Height for athletic teams
- Parent/guardian name
- Student photograph
- Dates of attendance
- Email address
- Achievement or honors

If a parent/guardian or eligible scholar wishes to **refuse** to permit the Academy to release directory information, a written refusal must be submitted to the Headmaster **within two weeks** of the date of this notice.

Disclosure to School Officials. The Academy may disclose personally identifiable information from a scholar's education record without consent to school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. School officials include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Heads of School, supervisors, and teachers
- Counselors, therapists, and other non-teaching personnel
- Authorized volunteers or interns
- Temporary substitutes for administrative, supervisory, or teaching personnel
- Members of Board of Directors, when acting in their official capacity
- Contracted consultants or other professionals (i.e., attorneys, auditors, evaluators)

A "legitimate educational interest" is the person's need to know in order to fulfill the school official's professional responsibility and/or to provide a service or benefit to the scholar or the scholar's family.

The Right to Seek Amendment of the Student’s Education Records that the Parent or Eligible Student Believes to Be Inaccurate, Misleading, or Otherwise in Violation of the Student’s Privacy Rights.

If a parent/guardian or eligible scholar believes the scholar’s records contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the scholar’s privacy or other rights, they may ask the Academy to amend the record. Parent/guardian or eligible scholars are also entitled to a hearing to present evidence that the record should be changed if the Academy decides not to alter it according to a submitted request. To make a change request, please email the Registrar and CC the Operations Manager at registrartx@greatheartsonline.org and operationstx@greatheartsonline.org

The Right to File a Complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Concerning Alleged Failures by the Academy to Comply with the Requirements of FERPA.

Parent/guardian or eligible scholar are entitled to file a Complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the Academy has violated FERPA. Complaints may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.

The Academy complies with FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g and § 1232h; 34 C.F.R. Part 99); the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400; 34 C.F.R. Part 300).

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (“PPRA”)

PPRA affords parents/guardians certain rights regarding the Academy’s conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before scholars are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)-

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the scholar or scholar’s parent/guardian;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the scholar or scholar’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the scholar or parents/guardian; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a scholar out of -

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a scholar, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from scholars for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use -

1. Protected information surveys of scholars;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from scholars for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents/guardians to a scholar who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

The Academy has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents/guardians, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect scholar privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The Academy will directly notify parents/guardians of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The Academy will also directly notify, such as through U.S. mail or email, parents/guardians of scholars who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent/guardian to opt his or her scholar out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The Academy will make this notification to parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year if the Academy has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents/guardians will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their scholar out of such activities and surveys. Parents/guardians will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents/guardians who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Volunteers often inadvertently have access to sensitive information. Any information about scholars, grades, faculty, etc. is to remain confidential. Volunteers may observe situations of a sensitive nature.

These are also to remain confidential. If a volunteer has a concern involving something that is witnessed, observed, or overheard it may only be discussed with the faculty member, Headmaster, or a member of the Governing Board of Directors. If a volunteer disregards this policy, the privilege of volunteering may be revoked.

VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND CHECK

All volunteers shall undergo a yearly criminal background check and be approved before volunteering. Volunteer status must be renewed after July 1st each year. This process can be completed online by going to <https://www.greatheartsamerica.org/volunteer/> and filling out an application. The system checks applicants for sex offender status and compiles criminal background results which are reviewed and approved by the school, usually within 48-72 hours. Once approved, the volunteer status will be acknowledged by the Raptor system with a state issued ID. Reach out to Bryan Cornish, Great Hearts Director of Safety at bryan.cornish@greatheartstxschools.org with any questions and safety concerns.

MATERIAL SUPPORT OF THE ACADEMY: TIME, TREASURE, AND TALENT

The Academy provides an outstanding educational offering unprecedented in the public arena, “in the tradition of the finest private schools” but free of tuition. The Academy is a state-funded public school, but the state funding formula does not provide sufficient dollars for improvements or ownership of

Academy needs, nor does state funding provide completely for the unparalleled scholar to teacher ratio. Further, charter schools, unlike regular district schools, cannot levy taxes. Consequently, the Academy must regularly seek outside charitable funding and grants to develop and maintain the high-level program.

Charitable support is thus encouraged from our parent/guardian community and volunteerism is thus strongly encouraged. The Academy humbly asks for each parent/guardian's time, talent, or treasure. The Academy asks each parent/guardian to consider making all of the following a part of their tenure at the Academy:

1. Volunteering regularly to assist with school events and/or through membership in the Parent Service Organization.
2. Supporting the Academy's material structure through donation of a unique talent or service.
3. Providing financial assistance to GHO-TX via participation in our annual giving campaigns.

Since only 80% of the Academy's budget income actually comes from the state, all donations are absolutely vital to the health of the school. These donations directly address the reality (the bottom line) that the Academy is not just a public school, but a unique institution that asks for so much more from everyone involved.

TOLERANCE AND PLURALISTIC SENSITIVITY

The Academy is a public, non-sectarian institution serving a variety of Texans. All members of the community—the administration, teachers, parents/guardians, and scholars—should show profound respect and tolerance for the religious, political, and cultural traditions and perspectives of others. The administration and teachers will take the lead at the Academy in actively promoting tolerance, civility, and sensitivity. Although the curriculum will include studies of world religions and ethical/moral codes, teachers are not permitted to encourage or endorse a particular religious perspective in the courses they teach. Rather, they encourage a civil and tolerant discussion of ideas when such topics naturally arise in class or on campus. Discussion of contemporary politics and global affairs is sensitively and reasonably a part of the Academy's curriculum, and while objective and curriculum-based discussions are encouraged in the proper courses in upper school, personal opinions about such issues are kept out of the classroom.

FOCUS ON THE WESTERN TRADITION

The Academy's teachers are able to explain to scholars, parents/guardians, and the public why we focus principally on Western culture during the nine years of education at the school. This focus is not intended as a statement about other cultural heritages. In brief, we focus on Western culture at the Academy because we believe that approximately nine years is just enough time to offer scholars a comprehensive introduction to the great works of the Western tradition, including literature, philosophy, history, math, science, languages, and the fine arts. The Western tradition is one of great depth and diversity (of peoples and ideas) and will serve as a superb foundation to our scholars as they go on to be life-long learners. We would also note that many of the principal values and ideas that underlie our own American society may be clearly traced to the classics we study.

STUDENT ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS, EVALUATION, AND PROMOTION

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

The Academy's mission is to provide an environment that allows every scholar who wants to learn the opportunity to engage with the subjects, ideas and great works of our curriculum, the practice of which

will prepare them to lead rich and fulfilling lives. To exclude any scholar from this opportunity would cause the Academy to fall short of its mission; though the curriculum is rigorous, and expectations of scholars are high, the Academy is not an exclusive school. The Academy is for scholars of all aptitudes or capacities.

A key philosophical assumption the Academy holds is that every scholar can learn. All human beings have an equal capacity to learn and grow. But this equality in capacity cannot be confused with equality of capacity, and certainly not with equality of academic results. Just as individuals differ in their physical gifts and characteristics, scholars all have different gifts and challenges in the subjects of learning. The Academy is committed to helping all scholars learn and grow as much as their natural capacities and endowments allow.

A scholar's willingness and desire to learn and grow (the curiosity and perseverance of each scholar) is the key to the pursuit of excellence and fulfillment at the Academy. While the school understands that some scholars are more talented than other scholars in certain subjects, all scholars who have passed the appropriate prerequisites, are genuinely curious, and apply themselves diligently on a daily basis will succeed at the Academy. Success is measured as a scholar's growth in maturity, accomplishment, and understanding over the course of years at the Academy. We seek long-term fruit from our scholars rather than short-term accomplishments and success in who our scholars become as future men and women.

COURSE OF STUDY

Please refer to the GHO Academy website to view the Course of Study overview.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Through the asynchronous physical education course, the Academy will require that scholars in kindergarten through grade 8 engage in at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week of moderate or vigorous physical activity.

Exemption

Short-term exemptions from physical education are possible for scholars who have physical handicaps, illnesses, or other incapacities that a physician deems severe enough to warrant exemption or severe enough to warrant modified activity in such classes. Each case is handled on an individual basis as follows:

1. Each request for exemption or for modified activity must be accompanied by a physician's certificate. Such certificates are honored but must be renewed each year.
2. When the certificate will allow modified activities in class, the scholar should remain in physical education class. The teachers adjust the activities of the scholar to the disability.
3. An exempted scholar may be admitted to regular physical education activities only upon presentation of a written statement from the same physician who signed the original exemption.

TEXTBOOKS AND STUDY MATERIALS

Books are at the heart of a classical, liberal arts education. At Great Hearts, it has always been the tradition for scholars 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. The Academy calls these books "Classics to Keep." Each scholar's class will utilize these classics during the upcoming school year. Parents/guardians and scholars are strongly encouraged to purchase a physical copy of these books for their own personal collections, so that they can mark them and keep them, allowing scholars to develop their own impressive personal library of classics over the course of their academic career with Great Hearts. Families may purchase books and other school supplies from whichever vendor they choose,

although some academies may have partnered with particular vendors as a convenience for families. Please check with the Academy website for vendor information. The Academy asks that all books match the ISBNs listed on the website. This ensures that scholars can all follow along on the same page when reading and discussing in class.

For families who do not purchase the texts, scholars will be given temporary access to the text in an online format, through video recordings and/or PDFs.

State-approved textbooks and additional curriculum materials are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Materials must be treated with care and used as directed by the teacher. A scholar who is issued a damaged book should report the damage to the teacher.

Students must return all school-owned textbooks and supplemental materials to the school at the end of the school year or when the scholar withdraws from school. Any scholar failing to return issued materials in an acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and educational materials until the scholar and/or parent/guardian pay for the damages. However, a scholar will be provided resources for use at school during the school day. The Academy may reduce or waive the payment requirement if the scholar is from a low-income family.

TIME EXPECTATIONS AND SCHOOLWORK

Students should expect to engage in both direct instruction and independent learning time each day.

Direct Instruction is an essential part of preparatory studies and includes a lesson, discussion, dialogue, and the collective pursuit of truth.

Independent practice is completed during a time of quiet concentration in which the scholar truly makes the subject their own. Independent practice includes what is typically completed in school as additional practice in class, as well as what is typically referred to as “homework”, which in a brick and mortar setting would be completed at home, after school.

Please see the following chart for independent work, in addition to the expected live time.

[Policy: Independent/Asynch Work](#)

Quality of Independent/Asynchronous Assignments

All assignments and quizzes should encompass Great Hearts Online’s mission: to cultivate the hearts and minds of scholars through the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty. A Great Hearts education is about educating great-hearted young people with minds and imaginations transformed through a rich study of the history, literature, and wisdom of the classical liberal arts tradition.

Time Scholars Expected to Spend on Work

Dedicated learning time for 2023-2024

Grade Level	Independent Practice Mon-Thurs old/ new	Independent Practice Friday must add up to a minimum of 4 hours of work for all grade levels. Suggested time is as follows:
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Kindergarten	2 hours 20 min/ 2 hours	4 hours
First Grade	2 hours 35 min/ 2 hours 15 min	4 hours 15 min
Second Grade	2 hours 50 min/ 2 hours 30 min	4 hours 15 min
Third Grade	2 hours 45 min/ 2 hours 45 min	4 hours 30 min
Fourth Grade	2 hours 45 min/ 2 hours 45 min	4 hours 30 min
Fifth Grade	3 hours/ 3 hours	4 hours 45 min
Sixth Grade	2 hours 50 min/ 3 hours	4 hours 45 min
Seventh Grade	3 hours 5 min/ 3 hours and 15 min	5 hours
Eighth Grade	3 hours 5 min/ 3 hours and 15 min	5 hours
Ninth Grade	3 hours and 30 min	5 hours 15 min

Due Dates

- Independent work for Live Scholars assigned Mon-Thurs will be due at 11:59 pm the day it is assigned, unless it is built to be a multi-day assignment
- Independent work for Live Scholars assigned Friday will be due Sunday at 11:59 pm
- Independent work for Live Scholars assigned on Friday before an R&R weekend will be due at 11:59 pm on Friday
- Work for Flex Scholars will be determined by the pacing guide provided by the course instructor at the beginning of each school year or new quarter.

Missed Due Dates

- 10% will be automatically deducted for each day an assignment is late
- Late assignments will not be reduce further than 50%
- All assignments will lock after two week or on the last day of the quarter

Unlocking Assignments

- If parent/scholar requests that assignments be unlocked, this must be approved by the grade level dean or ESS dean.
- If approval is granted, scholar must attend office hours to turn in assignments (teacher will unlock assignment, let scholar turn in work, and immediately relock assignment).

If the Scholar Misses Class

- It is the responsibility of the scholar to make up for all work missed even if the absence is excused.
- Scholar's will receive extended time of one school day for every school day missed. (Automatically deducted late points would be added back per assignment.)

- Teachers may extend grace for extenuating circumstances.

**Live classes take place at a set time each day. This represents whole class instruction. In addition, the scholar may have a reading group to attend a couple of times per week, and this will be a small group setting over Zoom. Scholars may also be required to attend intervention or tutoring in Zoom. When on Zoom, the scholar should be in a dedicated workspace and not in the car or near distractions. Please see "Zoom Guidelines.*

Study habits vary, so it is difficult to estimate the amount of independent practice for any one scholar. Often success with independent work is a condition of the scholar's self-regulation. Skillful self-regulators have an arsenal of strategies that enable them to achieve efficiently and effectively: help-seeking, planning, goal-setting, time-management, self-monitoring, reducing distractions, questioning, monitoring comprehension, and using feedback. Students who struggle often do not systematically employ these strategies, even though they may, in fact, spend a significant amount of time working/studying. The Academy believes that direct instruction and independent learning time are appropriate places for young people to develop and strengthen their work skills; in essence, scholars learn how to learn through the rigors of school. Students below junior high age will need guidance from teachers and parents/guardians to form and maintain consistent study habits.

As a general guideline, however, scholars should be prepared to complete independent assignments each day, including Fridays. Teachers work carefully in measuring out a proper amount of work for their class and will coordinate with other teachers of a section of scholars in scheduling their major tests and projects. Thus, scholars will rarely have two major exams and/or projects/essays due on the same day and will never have more than two such exams/projects due on the same day. If this should happen, please contact your scholar's teacher, dean, or assistant Headmaster and inquire if an oversight occurred.

Every scholar should keep and organize their submitted schoolwork according to the teacher's instructions. Students need to keep all of their schoolwork until the teacher gives explicit instructions that they may discard their work, which will generally be when quarterly grades have been issued and the family is content with the assigned grade. Do not discard schoolwork prior to this time. If you will be disputing a grade, you must have the original scholar work. (See "Disputing grades" in the section titled Progress Reports)

It is the responsibility of the scholar to make up missed independent work after any absence, planned or due to illness, in a timely manner.

An unexcused absence on the due date of a major assignment (essay, lab report, project, etc.) or exam may not extend the due date of that assignment. The scholar should expect to submit the work and/or make-up the exam, whether the absence is excused or unexcused, soon after their return. Likewise, absences during the preparation time of a major assignment may not extend the due date.

On average, scholars will spend a specified amount of time on their academic pursuits each day. If a scholar is routinely spending an hour more than the averages listed above, please notify the teacher and set up a conference. The Academy believes it is vital for scholars to also get time for exercise, creative play and family time, so the Academy wants to help support that balance. Also, if a scholar is spending an hour or more less than the averages, and the parent/guardians would like them to be challenged with deeper learning opportunities, please contact the teacher or grade level dean.

CHANGE IN SCHOOL MODEL

In order to make smooth transitions, Great Hearts Online will make model changes at the semester change only. Model changes at the end of a quarter, or mid-quarter, are at the discretion of the teacher and only by approval of the Dean and Assistant Headmaster. It is highly encouraged, and may be required, that scholars requesting a change from the Teacher-Led Live Instruction Model to the Flex Model have passing grades in all courses. If the Flex scholar is failing two or more core classes at the end of a quarter, they will be placed on Academic Probation for the following quarter. If the scholar fails two or more core classes after the subsequent quarter, they will be automatically moved to Teacher-Led Live Instruction on an Administrative Transfer.

If you should find that your scholar needs to change their model choice (Teacher-Led Live Instruction Model to Flex Week Model **OR** Flex Week Model to Teacher-Led Live Instruction Model) this change can be requested. Should you plan to change from the Flex Week Model to the Teacher-Led Live Instruction Model, we will place your scholar in a section that has space, so we cannot guarantee a specific teacher or section. Additionally, Teacher-Led Live Instruction classrooms will be filled based on a first-come basis, and if sections are filled, you will remain in Flex and will be placed on the waiting list to move to the live class until space is available.

Teacher-Led Live Instruction Model:

- **Best for:** Families who value learning in community, interactive instructional time, live discussions and classroom engagement, and/or want a more traditional classroom experience virtually
- **Instruction:** Teacher-led, live virtual classes Monday through Thursday with consistent faculty and classmates
- **Independent Assignments:** Daily independent assignments are completed in the afternoons and submitted before 11:59pm that day and assignments given on Fridays are due on Sunday at 11:59.

Flex Model:

- **Best for:** Independent scholars and families who value self-paced flexibility over live instruction and can dedicate *significant* time to supporting their child's education.
- **Instruction:** Course content delivered via instructional videos and self-paced asynchronous, independent assignments and activities. Course lesson open to scholars for the whole quarter within the learning management system, Canvas.
- **Independent Assignments:** Scholars complete assignments sequentially within each quarter and have the flexibility to go at their own pace within each quarter, unless otherwise indicated by the Flex class instructor or Flex Dean. Assignment due dates for Flex Scholars will be determined by the pacing guide provided by the course instructor at the beginning of each school year or new quarter.

ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATIONS, AND GRADE REPORTS

Canvas should be the parent/guardians' and scholar's "source of truth" when being aware of a scholar's academic performance. We ask parents/guardians to monitor their scholar's progress in all courses by using their observer accounts. The scholar's overall grade is visible in each course throughout the academic year. In addition to reviewing the grades, parents should review feedback teachers provide on scholar's work as

well as check for any missing assignments.

If your scholar is struggling in a course, the first step is to ensure your scholar is attending class regularly, attending office hours, and letting the teacher know help is needed. We ask parents and caretakers to provide direction and encouragement to their scholar to attend office hours when they notice their scholar is needing extra support. Helping your scholar create strong study habits now will benefit him/her throughout his/her academic career.

Grades will be finalized in Canvas at the end of each quarter. Approximately one week after the quarter ends, you will receive an email notifying you that teachers have completed grading and grades are locked for that quarter.

Students will also be assessed according to state requirements using the state standardized achievement tests, including the STAAR test. Parents/guardians will be notified of the dates of in-person administration of these tests, which take place multiple times throughout the year. Under Texas law, there is no right of opt-out from these mandatory assessments required in all public schools.

For its own internal assessment of scholar growth and educational effectiveness, the Academy may also administer other assessments at different points in the year. None of the results of these tests have any bearing upon scholar grades at the school. No individual scholars' test scores will be released to any third parties.

Teachers at the Academy do not merely crunch numbers to determine grades. It is true that there can be tests, etc., where there are clear right and wrong answers that can be tallied in an unambiguous and indisputable fashion. Which grade to assign to such results is still, however, a judgment of the teacher and takes into consideration such things as the goals of the course, the way in which the material has been taught, the right expectations from this class, etc. These are not to be understood as "subjective," as if they represent personal whim or feeling. The Academy has full confidence in the ability of teachers to assess the performance of a scholar relative to the goals of the class and then to assign an accurate grade. This is precisely what any teacher should be able to do, namely, to make the correct judgment about this specific scholar in this specific class and not simply to reiterate numerical scores and averages.

Students found to be in need of academic support, as evidenced by a progress report, may be referred to tutoring before or after school.

Progress Reports

Academic concern emails will be sent in the middle of the quarter to the parents of scholars who are earning a D or F in a course. When parents receive the progress reports, we invite you to review the information that the teachers provide and reach out with questions or schedule a conference in order to ensure your scholar can make the necessary progress.

The Academy encourages parents/guardians to speak with the faculty as soon as they think their scholar might be having difficulty. The earlier a problem is recognized, the easier it is to resolve. If a parent/guardian wishes to speak with their scholar's teacher by phone, or to make an appointment for a conference, please message the teachers directly through the teacher's Canvas Inbox/email. Please be aware teachers will not be monitoring email accounts during live class hours and will respond within 24 business hours.

If you or your scholar submitted work that is not visible to the teacher, please email the teacher with:

1. The title of the assignment

2. The date the assignment was turned in
3. A clear photo of the submitted assignment
4. Please send only one email per dispute. In the subject line, include the title of the assignment, for ex. "Grading - Reading Log week 5"

DETERMINATION OF GRADE PROMOTION AND RETENTION

In making the determination of both promotions to the next grade and retentions, teachers weigh not just the academic ability of the scholar but also social and developmental. Just as the Academy's liberal arts education strives to enlighten scholars in mind, body, and spirit, decisions concerning the promotion of scholars from one grade to the next, as well as determinations of retention, account for the "whole scholar" and the ability to thrive and access the rich curriculum found at the Academy. Foremost in this decision process is the well-being of the scholar.

Determinations of retention and promotion are not taken lightly; factors which influence these decisions include, but are not limited to:

- Age, social maturity, and academic and task independence of the scholar relative to grade level peers
- Level of effort across the curriculum in all academic exercises
- Performance in core subjects: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and History
- Performance on standardized tests and recognized assessments (e.g. STAAR, MAPS, DIBELS, etc.) as applicable
- Quality, quantity, and completion of assignments across the curriculum including in-class assignments, asynchronous work, and projects
- Reading achievement and the ability of the scholar to access the rich and rigorous literature
- Student engagement and participation in a variety of subjects, lessons, and assignments
- Behavior as it impacts the scholar's ability to access the curriculum
- Attendance (Please refer to the attendance policy)

The determination of retention is made by an academic committee in consultation with the Headmaster.

POLICY FOR GRANTING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT

High school credit will be given for all courses successfully completed from 9th-12th grade, along with any state standardized test requirement for those courses (e.g. STAAR EOC). High school credit can begin in 8th grade with Algebra I. A high school credit will be given for a passing grade in Algebra I, as well as passing the STAAR EOC Algebra I test. Upon successful completion of the courses, the course name, credit, and a "Pass" will appear on the scholar's high school transcript. The grade will not influence the scholar's high school GPA.

FAMILY-TEACHER ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP

PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Parent partnerships are one of the most important relationships at the Academy. For the scholar's personal and academic success, and for the family's organization, order, and overall enjoyment of our classical and online schooling, it is vital we partner with parents in building common goals, consistent expectations, shared understanding, and mutual edification in the work of forming each and every scholar as whole humans. The Academy counts it a great privilege and joy to partner with parents in educating their children, and therefore we do not see the work of the school as replacing the work, virtues, and joys of the family. For a scholar's utmost success, parents and guardians must be fully engaged with, committed to, attentive to the scholar's successes at home and in their coursework. Therefore, we strongly encourage parents to learn alongside their scholars, to talk with their scholars regularly about what they are learning, to set up an

at-home environment which fosters hard work, focus, joy, and order, and to be in regular communication with their teacher, through checking email daily, checking Canvas daily, and quickly reaching out to course instructors for further assistance or clarification.

STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

The Academy highly values the working relationship between teachers (or staff) and scholars. This is a relationship best characterized as a professional friendship grounded in mutual respect. Teachers will treat each scholar as a unique individual and will serve the scholar with a heart of charity. Students, on their part, will treat each teacher with the respect properly accorded his or her role as an authority figure and leader here at the Academy. With this in mind, scholars should address teachers by their formal title, i.e. Mrs., Ms., Mr., Dr., Instructor, and their last name.

The Academy's teachers and staff members will maintain a proper professional boundary between themselves and scholars. They will not be overly familiar with the scholar or get involved in the details of the scholar's personal life. (If a teacher senses that a scholar requires counseling for a social or family issue, that issue will be referred confidentially to the Headmaster and/or parents/guardians). The faculty/staff of the Academy will insist on maintaining appropriate physical boundaries and will not meet in a Zoom room alone with a scholar without permission of the parent/guardian. Faculty/staff will look for opportunities to have the parent/guardian on the call or work with multiple scholars at a time. It is also Academy policy that faculty/staff do not transport scholars or families in their personal vehicles. This is excepting, of course, when transporting their own scholar, or when acting in some other capacity (for example as a camp counselor, etc.) and parent/guardian permission for such transportation is explicitly granted.

Many of the Academy's faculty and staff may live in the same geographical region as scholars hence it is important to offer a word regarding outside Academy relationships. The same professional rules governing in-Academy relationships apply to outside-Academy relationships or chance meetings between scholars and faculty.

It is not appropriate for scholars and teachers/staff to interact as anything other than scholars and teacher/staff, regardless of the location, time, or day of the week. Furthermore, scholars should not contact or visit teachers or staff members unless the teacher or staff member has spoken with the parents/guardians and explicitly invited such contact, nor should teachers or staff contact scholars outside Canvas, unless such contact has been approved by the parents/guardians.

Scholars should address teachers with respect and professionalism in all email and Canvas communications. The use of slang, texting abbreviations, or commands of the teacher, are all inappropriate forms of communication. Teachers are required to address conversations with scholars in equal manner and professionalism.

Parents/guardians, scholars, and Great Hearts staff are advised that once an Academy employee has separated from employment, the separated employee no longer represents Great Hearts in any personal, professional, or political activities or relationships.

ATTENDANCE, ILLNESS, AND TARDINESS

ATTENDANCE

Great Hearts Online scholars will have a program of regular, structured school in which they must participate each school day. This will be direct instruction, lessons, and activities which take place at scheduled times. Engagement through Canvas will be required, this includes Independent work assignments.

Students will be accountable for independent work, and teachers will regularly and actively assess scholar progress. Discrete grades and scores will be given for activities, assignments, and assessments; there will be no “pass/fail” grading at the end of the quarter or semester.

A scholar enrolled in the live model will be considered as “present” for the day if the scholar logs into a Zoom synchronous class, tutoring session, and/or completes an assignment in our learning management system.

A scholar enrolled in the flex model is considered “present” for the day by completing an attendance check in question, completing assignments in our learning management system, attending tutoring, or speaking with their teachers.

But merely being “present” at school, even online school, does not ensure that scholars are learning as much as they need to be. In the Zoom synchronous classroom, scholars are invited by the teacher to engage actively in lessons, activities, and discussions. Scholars volunteer, get called on (with or without raised hands) to share their work or answers, ask their own questions, and take part in discussions; in all of these activities, scholars build their understanding just as surely as they do by studying, practicing math facts, or completing work independently. Active participation in live or virtual discussion, especially in upper schools, and especially in the seminars of Humane Letters, is a component of scholar participation grades.

The state compulsory attendance law requires that a scholar between the ages of five and 18 must attend school and school-required tutorial sessions unless the scholar is otherwise legally exempted or excused. The Academy employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A scholar absent from school without permission—including absence from any class, required special programs, or required tutorials—will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action.

A scholar who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is also required to attend each school day. The Academy may revoke a scholar’s enrollment if the scholar is 18 years of age or older and has accumulated more than five unexcused absences in a semester. The scholar’s continued presence on school property would be unauthorized and may, as allowed by applicable law, be considered trespassing

Under Texas Education Code § 25.095(a), you are hereby notified that if a scholar is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in any one school year or is absent for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the parent is subject to prosecution under Texas Education Code § 25.093, and a scholar age 12 through age 17 is subject to prosecution under Texas Education Code § 25.094 or to referral to a juvenile court in a county with a population of less than 100,000 for conduct that violates that section.

Our general policy is that, in order to receive credit or a final grade in a class, a scholar must attend at least 90% of the days the class is offered. These days include both excused and unexcused absences. A scholar who attends fewer than 90% of the days the class is offered may be referred to the Attendance Review Committee to determine whether the absences were due to extenuating circumstances (in which case credit may be granted) and how the scholar may regain credit or earn a final grade.

The Attendance Review Committee will consider the following factors when determining whether there are extenuating circumstances for an absence:

- All absences will be reviewed, both excused and unexcused, with consideration given to special circumstances discussed in the Texas Education Code.
- For a scholar transferring into the Academy after school begins, including a migrant scholar, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- The committee will attempt to reach a decision that is in the scholar’s best interest.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the scholar or

parent could exercise control.

- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documentation expressing reasons for the scholar's absences.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the scholar has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The scholar, parent, or other representative will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to discuss ways to earn or regain credit.

If credit is lost or a final grade is not earned due to excessive absences, the Attendance Review Committee will decide how the scholar may regain credit or earn a final grade. If the committee determines that there are no extenuating circumstances and that credit and/or a final grade may not be earned, the scholar or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the Superintendent by filing a written request with the Headmaster. The appeal notice must be received by the Academy within fifteen (15) days following the last day of instruction in the semester for which credit was denied or a final grade was not earned. After the Superintendent has reviewed the appeal and made the decision, the scholar or parent may decide to appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board of Directors by filing a written request with the Superintendent. The appeal notice must be received by the Superintendent within fifteen (15) days following the issuance of the Superintendent's decision. The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Headmaster or designee shall inform the scholar or parent of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the attendance clerk via phone (210) 469- 3828 or email AttendanceTX@greatheartsonline.org before 8:00 a.m. to report an absence. Students will be recorded as having an unexcused absence if no advance notice is provided. (The administration will not usually attempt to contact parents/guardians in the event of a message not being left.) Please be sure the Registrar has a current telephone number on file. Whenever possible, if a scholar's absence is anticipated, it is recommended that the parent/guardian notify the Registrar and teachers to request the assignments prior to the absence.

It is the responsibility of the scholar to make up all missed assignments after an absence from school. If a scholar is unable to attend school and seeks their assignments, the scholar or parent/guardian should contact the teacher. Each teacher will have an established make-up policy, including appropriate deadlines, for missed work. At the discretion of the Headmaster, scholars may not be allowed to make-up missed work due to an unexcused absence. Parents/guardians may receive a detailed attendance report upon request from the Academy Registrar.

VACATIONS

If families have selected the Live model, it is expected that scholars will attend class per the school calendar. Being out of state or country will not result in a change of class schedules, access to recorded classes, or adjustments to work assignment deadlines. Students are required to complete assignments and attend class from any location.

Students in the FLEX model have greater freedom to work on assignments during travel. Therefore, due dates and check ins for the FLEX model will not be extended or removed during travel.

Absences due to vacations will be considered unexcused absences. Missed school work and minutes for work will need to be made-up. Times to complete the work can be found during non-traditional hours - like weekends, evenings, and school holidays.

EXCUSE OF PUPILS FOR RELIGIOUS PURPOSES

The Academy permits scholars to be excused from school attendance for religious purposes, including participation in religious exercises, religious instruction, or the observance of religious holidays, subject to the following conditions:

1. A reasonable number of excused absences from school incurred by a scholar for religious purposes shall be allowed. For purposes of this policy, “reasonable number of excused absences for religious purposes” shall not exceed 2 school days in any one school year.
2. The parent/guardian who has custody of the scholar shall provide written consent for the scholar to be absent from school on the designated days, the dates of which will be included in the written consent. The written consent should be sent in sufficient time to be received by the school no later than one week prior to the dates of the designated days on which the scholar will be absent.
3. A request for reasonable accommodation for absences for religious purposes in excess of 2 school days in one school year must be made and approved in advance by the Headmaster.
4. Unless specifically approved by the Headmaster in advance, all absences for religious purposes that exceed 2 school days in any one school year shall be designated as unexcused absences.
5. Any religious exercise, instruction, or observance of religious holidays shall take place at a suitable place away from school property designated by the church or religious denomination or group.

ILLNESS

If a scholar is ill and is unable to attend live classes, the scholar or parent/guardian needs to contact the Academy Registrar at AttendanceTX@greatheartsonline.org. Absences in excess of 3 days due to illness require a note on official letterhead from your scholar’s physician. Each scholar must maintain current emergency contact information on file. Absences due to power outages will not be counted as excused; During a power outage at a residence, the family should consider libraries or other local establishments that offer wifi in order for the scholar to properly attend Live class.

TARDINESS

If a scholar will be late, the parent/guardian should notify the teacher via Canvas.

Following the distinction between excused and unexcused absences described above, the Academy makes a distinction between cases of excused tardiness (e.g., due to a doctor’s appointment, illness, or other family business) and unexcused tardiness (e.g., due to oversleeping, transportation problems, or some other reason). Tardies can be made up by having the scholar attend office hours.

The school disapproves of the accumulation of unexcused tardiness, irrespective of the circumstances. Persistent tardiness is highly disruptive of instruction and undermines scholar morale. On the third occasion that a scholar has an unexcused tardy in a quarter, a restitution will be issued to the scholar by the teacher. For each subsequent unexcused tardy in the quarter, another restitution will be issued. When a scholar has received four restitutions for tardiness in a quarter then they may receive a suspension for a duration determined by the administration.

TRUANCY

Truancy Prevention Measures

GHO-TX will call the scholar’s legal guardian when the scholar has been absent 3 or more days during a 4-week period. GHO Texas will discuss the absences and speak to the guardian about how critical attendance is to scholar success. If the school is unable to reach the parent by phone, the school will leave a message and follow the phone call with an email detailing the absences and the importance of attending school. GHO Texas will offer support to the family via phone call and/or email communication. Supports may include solving technical issues using the online school, developing a concrete understanding of requirements, or connecting the scholar and @Home Facilitator with the teacher or advisor.

For students who have 10 consecutive days absent but have parents who want them actively enrolled, these students will be placed on an Attendance Improvement Plan. If this plan is not met and the student

continues to be truant, the scholar will be referred to truancy court which can impose civil consequences or truancy may result in revocation of enrollment.

After repeated efforts have been made by the attendance team and/or the Headmaster to locate the truant scholar have proven unsuccessful, GHO Texas may refer the student to a truancy court that can impose civil consequences or truancy may result in revocation of enrollment per district policy.

Involuntary Withdrawal

The Academy may initiate withdrawal of a student under the age of 18 for non-attendance if one or more of the following is true:

- The student has been absent ten consecutive school days and repeated efforts by the attendance officer and/or selected administration to locate the student have been unsuccessful.
- Irrespective of absences, there are ongoing and non-responsive habits of non-participation by the scholar. This includes, but is not limited to, an excessive number of assignments missing in one or more core academic courses in a given quarter. If a scholar is missing more than 50% of their assignments in a given core class, in a three-week window, the scholar will be considered “academically delinquent” and their ongoing admittance to the school will be evaluated by an administrative team. Teachers and administration will make a good-faith effort to engage and involve parents; parent good-faith efforts at communication and partnership with the school will also be considered in the involuntary withdrawal decision.
- Additionally, the Academy may revoke the enrollment of a student 18 years of age or older who has more than five unexcused absences in one semester.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

As a public charter school, the Academy will provide identification, evaluation and instructional services to any enrolled scholar as required by state and federal law. If requested by the parent/guardian or teacher, a scholar may be evaluated for possible special education placement. Parental approval is required prior to an evaluation. Please contact the Dean of ESS at julie.thornton@greatheartsonline.org or more information. The Academy is also required under the “Child Find” law to offer possible referrals and/or evaluations for children not enrolled in the school. More information can be found in the Academies Standard School Policies Guide.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

IDEA is a federal law that protects the rights of scholars with disabilities. In addition to standard school records for scholars with disabilities, education records could include evaluation and testing materials, medical and health information, Individualized Education Programs and related notices and consents, progress reports, materials related to disciplinary actions, and mediation agreements. Such information is gathered from a number of sources, including the scholar’s parents/guardians and staff of the school of attendance. Also, with parent/guardian permission, information may be gathered from additional pertinent sources, such as doctors and other health care providers. This information is collected to assure the scholar is identified, evaluated, and provided a Free Appropriate Public Education in accordance with state and federal special education laws.

Each agency participating under Part B of IDEA must assure that at all stages of gathering, storing, retaining and disclosing education records to third parties that it complies with the federal confidentiality laws. In addition, the destruction of any education records of a scholar with a disability must be in accordance with IDEA regulatory requirements.

For additional information or to file a complaint, you may call the federal government at (202) 260- 3887

(voice) or 1-800-877-8339 (TDD), or the Texas Education Agency (TEA) at (512) 463-9734.

Or you may contact:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) is a civil rights statute designed to prevent discrimination against individuals with disabilities and to assure that scholars with disabilities have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled scholars.

It provides that:

- No otherwise qualified individual with disabilities in the United States... shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- Congress enacted a similar civil rights statute, the ADA, in 1990, also for the purpose of preventing discrimination against individuals with disabilities. While Section 504 only applies to recipients of federal financial assistance, the ADA protects individuals from discrimination by both public and private entities.

Both Section 504 and Title II of the ADA include similar nondiscrimination requirements. Since Title II applies to public institutions such as state governments, not just to schools, it does not include the same level of detail as Section 504 with regard to certain obligations of schools in educating scholars with disabilities (e.g., in providing scholars a FAPE). More information can be found in the Academies Standard School Policies Guide.

ANTI DISCRIMINATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Great Hearts Online- Texas, a Great Hearts Texas academy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, immigration status, sex, disability, or age. The following person has been designated to handle complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies:

The ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, is Diane Jones, 1212 Corporate Drive Suite 200 Irving, TX 75038, 469-759-3030, Diane.Jones@greatheartstxschools.org

The Age Discrimination Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of age, is Great Hearts Texas HR, 12500 San Pedro Ave. Suite 500, San Antonio, TX, 78216, 210-888-9475, HR@GreatHeartstxschools.org

All other concerns regarding discrimination may be directed to Great Hearts Texas HR, 12500 San Pedro Ave. Suite 500, San Antonio, TX, 78216, 210-888-9475, HR@GreatHeartstxschools.org

MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT AND STUDENTS

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that homeless children and youth have access to a free, appropriate public education, comparable to that provided to the scholars of any Texas resident and consistent with Texas’s mandatory school attendance laws.

Great Hearts academies do not offer any additional type of priority status to families qualifying under the McKinney-Vento Act. If an offer is given to a scholar who is deemed to be under the McKinney-Vento Act, Great Hearts Academies will work with families to provide the required and necessary transportation to and from the Academy.

TITLE IX POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Great Hearts academies do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

Title IX Coordinator

The Academy has designated Diane Jones, Senior Director of Special Student Services, to serve as its Title IX Coordinator and to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under federal law, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to the Academy alleging noncompliance with Title IX or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by Title IX. The coordinator’s name and contact information are as follows:

Title IX Coordinator:

Ms. Diane Jones
1212 Corporate Drive
Suite 200
Irving, TX
75038
210-888-9475
diane.jones@greatheartstxschools.org

Grievance Procedures

It is the Academy’s policy to ensure that scholars or parents/guardians with a grievance relating to the Academy, its administration, and/or other employees shall, except as otherwise set forth below, use a procedure which may resolve grievances as quickly and as fairly as possible.

Grievance Process for General Concerns

It is the Academy’s policy to ensure that scholars or parents/guardians with a grievance relating to the Academy, its administration, and/or other employees shall, except as otherwise set forth below, use a procedure which may resolve grievances as quickly and as fairly as possible.

The grievance procedure is clearly outlined and distributed to all families and staff in the handbook.

Process

Guidance

Stage 1

If parents/guardians or scholar has a grievance it should be discussed informally with the teacher, dean, Assistant Headmaster, Headmaster, coach, or staff member directly involved in the matter. The Academy hopes that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage.

Informal discussions should resolve the vast majority of grievances. NOTE: Grievance or information involving an ongoing or imminent threat to a scholar’s well-being should skip this stage and be immediately directed to the Headmaster.

Stage 2

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the matter may be raised, in writing, with the Headmaster, who must give a response within 5 school days. This response may take the form of a letter and/or follow-up meeting with the family and any employee(s) involved in the matter. This meeting will be led by the Headmaster.

The Headmaster is the acting supervisor over all school employees.

Stage 3

If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved, the matter may be raised to the Executive Director’s Office by addressing the matter in writing to the Executive Director of Lower Schools or Upper Schools, who must give a response within 10 school days. This response may take the form of a letter and/or follow-up meeting.

The Executive Director’s office oversees the Headmasters.

Stage 4

If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further, the grievance should be put in writing to the President of the Governing Board of Directors. The President will formally respond by setting a meeting or taking another course of action within 30 school days. If the Board as a whole is convened to address the grievance, all applicable public open meeting laws will be followed, including prior notice and the right of the employee(s) directly involved in the matter to request an open meeting or an executive session for the hearing. The Board’s decision is final.

Stages 1, 2, and 3 must be completed before the action is brought to the Governing Board of Directors. A response by the Board may include a dismissal of the grievance, a formal reprimand of the school employee(s), or Headmaster, and/or a directive for staff to develop an additional policy recommendation for Board consideration.

The Title IX Grievance Procedures can be found in the Academies Standard School Policies Guide, [linked here](#).

The Academy prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of scholars. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture or written, verbal or physical act toward a scholar that takes place on school property or at a school-sponsored activity and that:

1. Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic of the scholar, such as race, ethnicity, religion, ancestry, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or disability; and
2. Harms the scholar or damages the scholar's property or threatens personal harm or damage to his property; or
3. Insults, demeans, or intimidates the scholar or a group of scholars in such a way as to substantially
4. interfere with the scholar or scholars' educational or social activities at school or cause a substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

The school expects scholars to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other scholars and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities, and equipment.

The Dean or Assistant Headmaster are the first people responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy. All other members of the school community, including scholars, parents/guardians, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. Oral reports also shall be considered official reports. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Dean, in consultation with the Assistant Headmaster and Headmaster, will determine whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the Dean shall conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of the alleged incident. The Dean may conclude that the alleged violation occurred or did not occur, or that the evidence is inconclusive. If the Dean concludes that the alleged violation did not occur or that the evidence is inconclusive, no written report of the matter will be maintained in the scholar's file.

In advising the Headmaster on the appropriate response to scholars who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the Dean will consider the following factors:

- The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved.
- The levels of harm, the surrounding circumstances
- The nature of the behaviors, past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior.
- The relationships between the parties involved, and
- The context in which the alleged incidents occurred

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances. It is only after meaningful consideration of these factors that an appropriate consequence should be determined, consistent with the school's policies and applicable law.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for scholars who commit acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Some acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be isolated incidents requiring that the school respond appropriately to the scholars committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious that they require a response by law enforcement officials. **Any act of harassment, intimidation or bullying that may constitute sexual abuse or any other form of child abuse, and threats of violence against scholars, teachers, or staff, shall be reported to law enforcement officials as required by state law.**

The school prohibits retaliation against any scholar who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a scholar who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Headmaster after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with applicable school policies and law.

Great Hearts Online prohibits bullying as defined by this section, as well as retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process. Bullying means a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more scholars directed at another scholar that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a scholar, damaging a scholar's property, or placing a scholar in reasonable harm to the scholar's person or of damage to the scholar's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a scholar; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or the School; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim.

Cyberbullying means bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

The Academy's bullying policy applies to:

- Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school- sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property;
- Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately-owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of scholars to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school- related activity if the cyberbullying:
 - Interferes with a scholar's educational opportunities; or
 - Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

POLICY FOR HAZING

Hazing, solicitation to engage in hazing, and aiding and abetting another person who is engaged in hazing is strictly prohibited. A person is considered a "scholar" who has enrolled, who has been accepted for enrollment, or intends to enroll within the next 12 calendar months. This policy applies to all scholars until graduation, transfer, promotion, or withdrawal from the school.

"Hazing" is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a scholar, whether individually or with others, against another scholar, and in which both of the following apply:

- The act is committed in connection with an initiation into, an affiliation with or the maintenance of membership in any organization that is affiliated with the Academy; and
- The act contributes to a substantial risk of potential physical injury, mental harm or degradation or causes physical injury, mental harm, or personal degradation.

"Organization" means an athletic team, association, order, society, corps, cooperative, club or other similar group that is affiliated with the Academy and whose membership consists primarily of scholars enrolled at that educational institution. Violations of this policy do not include customary athletic events, contests or

competitions that are sponsored by the Academy or any activity or conduct that furthers the goals of a legitimate educational curriculum or legitimate extracurricular program.

It is no defense to a violation of this policy if the victim consented or acquiesced to hazing. All scholars, teachers, and staff shall take reasonable measures within the scope of their individual authority to prevent violations of this policy.

Students and others should report hazing to the Headmaster but may also report hazing to another faculty and staff member. It is the responsibility of the faculty/staff member to submit a report of the incident to the Headmaster within 1 school day. The faculty/staff member shall respect the confidentiality of those involved, disclosing the incident only to those with a need to know or as required by law. Any incident of hazing that includes possible violation of state or federal statutes shall be treated as required by statutory requirements and reported to law enforcement.

All violations of this policy shall be treated in accordance with the discipline procedures and penalties in effect for violation of the Academy's Behavior Code and Discipline.

If an organization knowingly permitted, authorized, or condoned hazing activity, its permission to conduct operations at the Academy may be revoked or suspended.

POLICY FOR ANONYMOUS REPORTS OF SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Parents/guardians or scholars who would like to provide an anonymous report to the school regarding bullying, illegal activity, or suspected abuse can do so via the school website or by mailing a note to the school, addressing it to the attention of the Headmaster. Anyone who has such concerns is encouraged to report them, either anonymously or in person.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Academy reserves to itself the right to investigate allegations of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and threats that occur on social media venues and are directed at or which disrupt the learning environment of the school. Not everything said or done by scholars online is the school's business, but actions and words directed against fellow scholars, parents/guardians, or school employees will be considered as such. The school will also notify law enforcement when credible threats of violence are detected. The Official Social Media Accounts Policy can be found in the Academies Standard School Policies Guide, [linked here](#).

POLICY FOR PRIVACY PRACTICE AND ACCOMMODATIONS GUIDANCE

All Great Hearts academies will comply with all settled law (statute, controlling case law and administrative regulations) for the jurisdictions in which it operates schools.

Great Hearts academies will take into account each scholar's privacy and safety;

Students entrusted to a Great Hearts academy are to be educated with exactly the same level of care and respect for their dignity.

At the request of the parents/guardians, accommodations and/or modifications to standard policies and procedures will be considered through a formal process.

Student enrollment and instruction

1. The Academy will record and identify each enrolled scholar as required by state law.
2. The Academy will record and report the legal name of the scholar as recorded in enrollment documents submitted by the parent/guardian. Faculty and staff will upon request refer to the scholar by a variant

name or nickname sanctioned by the scholar and the parents/guardians.

Use of School Facilities

1. On occasion, scholars may be required to conduct in-person testing at a Great Hearts campus. These campuses shall maintain single sex restroom and shall also provide single-occupant restroom. Students may use the single-sex facilities that correspond to their current school records described above, and single-occupant restrooms and locker/changing rooms that are open to use by all scholars.
2. This section shall not apply to a person or persons who enter a single-sex facility for purposes of
 - a. Maintenance
 - b. Providing medical assistance
 - c. Protecting scholars from a threat to good order or safety
 - d. Shelter in an emergency
3. No scholars shall be compelled to use a single-sex restroom or locker/changing room facility against their wishes; access to private, single occupant facilities will be provided.

Participation in school activities

Students are eligible to participate in athletic activities based on requirements of the specific league or ruling body for the athletic activity.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND FORMS

All other applicable policies, procedures and forms can be found in the Great Hearts Academies Standard School Policies Guide. Below is a list of some of the policies included in the guide. To view the full Standard School Policies Guide, click [here](#).

- Chronic Illness Policy
- Enrollment and Admission Policy
- McKinney- Vento Act Policy
- Medical and Health Policy

STUDENT HONOR CODE AND DISCIPLINE

ACADEMY HONOR CODE

Knowledge, skill, and character are fundamentally the possessions of individuals, and only the individual, through their actions, may obtain and preserve these goods. The Academy Honor Code exists to guide individual scholars towards those actions which promote honesty and learning and away from those actions which sacrifice honesty and learning to other ends. The Honor Code codifies those values which must be upheld for the health of our academic community, and universal subscription to it builds trust amongst scholars, faculty, and families. The Academy Honor Code is given below.

As a scholar and citizen of the Academy, I agree to the following:

- *I will not lie, cheat, or steal in any of my academic endeavors.*
- *I will forthrightly oppose each and every instance of academic dishonesty.*
- *I will not request, receive, or give aid in examinations/tests/quizzes.*
- *I will not give or receive illicit aid in class work, asynchronous work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the teacher as the basis of grading. I will understand the difference between studying and reviewing with others (which often is acceptable) and producing written documents that are submitted under my name for credit (which can only be done alone).*
- *I will not copy from or collaborate with others in completing asynchronous work. When I put my name on*

an asynchronous work assignment, I attest that all of the work on the assignment is my own in origin and content.

- *In the case of all essays and research papers, I will carefully cite all external sources. I will not represent someone else's work as my own, including artificial intelligence sources. I will do my very best to learn from my teachers the clear distinctions between appropriate research and plagiarism, intentional or unintentional.*
- *I will never use any "study aids" such as Cliff's Notes, Sparks Notes, or other materials, nor will I watch a movie/video version of a work of literature before or during study of it in school. I will do the reading for myself and strive to understand it for myself.*
- *I will not take pictures or video of other scholars.*
- *I will give prompt (and confidential) notification to the appropriate faculty member or the Dean and Headmaster if I observe academic dishonesty in any course. I will let my conscience be my guide if I should make such a report.*
- *I join the entire scholar body of the Academy in a commitment to this Honor Code.*

The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its scholars by refraining from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code. On some occasions, teachers may ask scholars to write "AHC" (Academy Honor Code) on the heading of their assignments to remind them of the details and spirit of this honor code.

Please see the discipline policy below for information about how violations of the Academy Honor Code are addressed by the school. Since academic dishonesty is viewed as a serious offense, even first offenders may be punished with a suspension. The Academy Honor Code is typically reviewed in class with scholars during the first week of school each year.

-Portions of this honor code are derived from the current Duke University and Stanford University honor codes.

APPROACH TO STUDENT DISCIPLINE

In general, discipline is intended to correct misconduct, to promote each scholar's development in character and the virtues, and to foster the common good of the school community.

Disciplinary action will draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of disciplinary techniques. Disciplinary action correlates to the seriousness of the offense, the scholar's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the scholar's attitude, and the effect of the misconduct on the school environment.

The following approaches may be used-alone or in combination-for misbehavior violating the Code or campus or classroom rules:

- Removal from live Zoom classes
- Assignment of school service or community service duties
- Behavioral agreements
- Cooling off time or "time out" in Zoom waiting room
- Counseling by teachers, counselors, or administrative personnel
- In school suspension or restitution, as specified in the suspension section of the Code
- Expulsion, as specified in the expulsion section
- Grade reductions as permitted as policy
- Out of School Suspension, as specified in the suspension section of the Code
- Parent-Teacher conferences
- Referral to an outside agency and/or legal authority for criminal prosecution in addition to disciplinary

measures imposed by the Academy

- School assessed and school administered probation
- Meeting with the scholar to the Headmaster
- Techniques or penalties identified in individual scholar organization's extracurricular standards of behavior
- Request temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- Verbal correction
- Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities and eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, and/or membership in school sponsored clubs or organizations
- Other strategies and consequences as specified by the Code

Students may be removed from class for a short duration following a perceived disciplinary infraction while an administrator collects an account of the situation.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

All of the following information below is directed toward the common good of the Academy and its maintenance as a place of learning and moral development. At the Academy, it is the belief that habits of behavior play a significant part in forming habits of mind. The Academy's teachers will make every effort to enforce the rules below consistently, informatively, and with a heart of mercy for the scholar's overall well-being.

Students at the Academy strive to make the most of their educational opportunities. No less than their parents/guardians and the faculty, all scholars appreciate the overall environment that they help maintain for the good of the entire school community. It does not take long for scholars to recognize the benefits of mutual encouragement, respect, courtesy, and helpfulness. As many scholars and parents/guardians will gratefully attest, the Academy is a very good place to be.

Nevertheless, scholars are young and human, and they will make mistakes in speech or behavior— they are still learning how to appropriately to comport themselves. Many such behavioral mistakes, while requiring correction, need not be punished. Sometimes, however, their mistakes can be disruptive to other scholars and to our teachers. Therefore, for the sake of orderly and productive community life, it is necessary to discuss school expectations and sanctions so that scholars and families can have a blueprint for conduct which contributes to a wholesome academic environment and to each scholar's self-esteem and success.

The philosophy of the Academy is that scholars are young adults in the making who will learn civil, polite, and respectful conduct by the example of their teachers and other adults. Consequently, scholars will be treated with respect and courtesy by the Academy staff and will be expected to treat not only all adults on campus with such respect, but one another as well. Several very obvious signs of such respect are a scholar's willingness to refrain from talking in class when others have the floor; a respect for the property of the school and of other scholars; a willingness to refrain from sarcastic or critical comments towards others; and a willingness to ask (and give) forgiveness when someone has been wronged. In conjunction with parents/guardians, the Academy has the goal of developing not only habits of good scholarship and critical inquiry, but the character traits of courtesy, promptness, forgiveness, self-control, responsibility, diligence, courage, generosity, and magnanimity. Good behavior is expected of all scholars and will not be specially rewarded at school. It is its own reward in the esteem the scholar earns from their teachers and fellow scholars.

The Academy's guiding policy is to be fair, firm, and consistent in the application of discipline for

inappropriate behavior. However, the following guidelines for discipline are not intended to be exhaustive. The school reserves the right to exercise reasonable judgment as an individual circumstance might dictate.

Please note that a scholar may be disciplined for violating the behavior code while off campus in the neighborhood of the Academy.

RESTITUTION

Students may lose the privilege of extra-curricular activity, or be required to perform community work detail, such as cleaning, depending on the nature and frequency of offenses such as: littering; being late to class; talking out of turn or otherwise disrupting class; use of profanity or disrespectful speech toward other scholars; uniform and dress code violations; or other inappropriate behaviors. If a scholar repeatedly violates any of the above, the parent/guardian may be contacted, and other disciplinary measures may be taken.

Students may not skip restitution. Any scholar who fails to complete terms of restitution will receive additional penalties. Students should not ordinarily ask to have a restitution rescheduled; restitutions are by their very nature inconvenient, and scholars should view the inconvenience to be a direct result of the poor choice that incurred the punishment in the first place. Exceptions may be made in the event of a family emergency or serious scheduling conflict. All matters pertaining to the scheduling and serving of restitution should be directed to the Teacher, Dean or Assistant Headmaster.

Restitutions can be serious in nature and a high number of restitutions can indicate a scholar's general unwillingness to cooperate with the school. If a scholar has received five restitutions for any reason in a school year, then he or she may be suspended for a duration determined by the Headmaster. If a scholar has received six restitutions for any reason in a quarter, then he or she will be suspended for a duration determined by the Headmaster. A scholar may be suspended for a lesser number of restitutions if many of the restitutions are received for the same offense (such as tardiness), or if the Headmaster and Dean determine that the accumulated restitutions are of a serious nature and warrant immediate action.

In the case of more serious misbehavior, such as frequently (more than twice) leaving class early without parental/guardian or teacher consent and notification, lying to an adult, cheating on exams and/or academic assignments, fighting, theft, forging a parent/guardian's signature, willful destruction of property, defiance of authority, disrespect of adults, leaving campus without permission, skipping class, etc., the parent/guardian will be contacted, and other disciplinary measures taken.

Please see the Academy Honor Code above for special information on academic dishonesty.

Threats of violence and physical, verbal, or sexual harassment are illegal and will result in parent/guardian contact and, depending on the nature of the offense, may result in other disciplinary measures, including notification of law enforcement authorities, suspension, and expulsion.

SUSPENSION

The Headmaster or Assistant Headmaster may suspend any scholar for up to 10 school days for serious cause, including, but not limited to the following:

- Defiance of authority of Academy staff
- Disregard or disobedience of school rules and regulations as outlined in the handbook
- Verbal abuse of adults or scholars
- Disruptive or disorderly behavior
- Violent or threatening behavior

- Bullying or harassment
- Fighting
- Destruction or theft of school property or personal property
- Truancy
- Persistent absenteeism that is not due to certifiable medical illness or disability
- Persistent tardiness
- Excessive accumulation of infractions

The school officials involved shall make reasonable efforts to verify facts and statements prior to recommending a discipline.

In cases of suspension for scholars in grades K-4th, The Academy will only suspend a scholar in the aforementioned grades under the specified circumstances identified by this handbook and our academy's best practices, in accordance with state and federal law.

In cases of suspension from school, the parent/guardian will receive a formal written notice of suspension identifying the reasons and evidence and be provided an informal opportunity to respond. Depending on the severity of the offense, the scholar's past behavior, and other circumstances, the school may choose to impose in-school or out-of-school suspension. There is no right to appeal a short-term (less than 10 days) suspension imposed by the Academy. There will be no corporal punishment of scholars at the Academy, though staff may use reasonable, necessary force to restrain a violent, disruptive, or disobedient scholar.

If the Academy is unable to contact the parents/guardians to inform them of a suspension, a suspended scholar will be held at school until the end of the day. The parent/guardian shall be held liable for all damages caused by the scholar.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

The Headmaster may recommend to the Disciplinary Hearing Committee, as assigned by the Governing Board of Directors, long-term suspension (more than 10 days) and/or expulsion of a scholar for serious cause. The parent/guardian will be notified of the school's intent to long-term suspend or expel the scholar, and a hearing shall be held in accordance with the Academy's policies and procedures. The Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedure can be found in the Academies Standard School Policies Guide, linked here.

In cases of suspension for scholars in grades K-4th, ACA will only long-term suspend or expel a scholar in the aforementioned grades under the specified circumstances identified by this handbook and our academy's best practices, in accordance with state and federal law.

Pursuant to our academy's best practices, in accordance with state and federal law, the Academy has the right to deny admission of a scholar who has been expelled or is in the process of being expelled from another educational institution.

The Academy will meet all requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the IDEA, and state laws regarding disciplining of scholars with disabilities.

Gun-Free Schools Act

In accordance with the Gun-Free Schools Act, the Academy shall expel from the scholar's regular program for a period of one year, any scholar who is determined to have brought a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school, school gathering location, or testing location. The Headmaster may modify the term of expulsion

for a scholar or assess another comparable penalty that results in the scholar's expulsion from the regular school program on a case-by- case basis. A scholar is not allowed to show a gun or firearm during a live or recorded class.

For the purposes of this law, "firearm" means:

1. Any weapon – including a starter gun – which will, or is designed to, or which may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive from the frame or receiver of any such weapon;
2. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
3. Any destructive device. "Destructive device" means any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than 1/4 ounce, mine, or device similar to any of the preceding described devices. It also means any type of weapon – other than a shotgun shell or a shotgun that is generally recognized as particularly suitable for sporting purposes – by whatever name known which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than 1/2 inch in diameter; and any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device as described, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

Alcohol-Free School Notice

In order to provide a safe and alcohol-free environment for scholars and employees, all alcoholic beverages are prohibited on school property at all times, and at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off school property. Student violators are subject to the disciplinary terms of the Honor Code.

Tobacco-Free School Notice

Smoking and using smokeless tobacco, including electronic cigarettes, are not permitted in school buildings, vehicles, or on or near school property, or at school-related or school- sanctioned events off school property. Students may not possess tobacco products at any of the locations or activities listed above. All violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law. Additionally, scholar violators are subject to the disciplinary terms of the Honor Code.

Drug-Free School Notice

The Academy believes that scholar use of illicit drugs is both wrong and harmful. Consequently, the Academy prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs by scholars on school premises or any school activity, regardless of its location. Student violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Honor Code.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION

The Academy has made a substantial investment in technology for instructional purposes. Use of these resources is restricted to scholars working for approved purposes only. Students and parents/guardians must read and agree to abide by the Student Acceptable Use of Technology Policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure school-level compliance with all procedures and regulations regarding the local area network and Internet usage.

TECHNOLOGY STATEMENT

The Academy is committed to utilizing appropriate technology to enhance scholar learning and increase teacher effectiveness in accordance with its mission and vision.

USER SAFETY

The Academy is aware that resources that are inappropriate or not designed for use in the educational setting may be accessed on the Internet. To protect scholars and staff from such inappropriate material, the school's Internet access is filtered with one of the highest-rated Internet filtering systems available. However, users must recognize that it is impossible for the Academy to restrict access to all controversial material and individuals must be responsible for their own actions in navigating the network.

USER RESPONSIBILITIES

The use of the Internet is a privilege. Inappropriate or abusive conduct will lead to the privilege being revoked. The Academy is providing Internet resources for educational purposes only. Student/staff use of Internet resources must be related to an expressed educational and/or administrative goal or objective.

1. The use of the Academy Internet and computer network must be in support of educational goals, research, and class assignments and be consistent with the educational objectives of the school.
2. Users must have a valid, authorized account to access the network, and use only those computer resources that are authorized. Accounts may be used only in accordance with authorized purposes.
3. Individual accounts may be used only by the owner of the account except where specifically authorized by the Academy administration. In the case of class accounts, all use must be under the supervision of the sponsoring teacher/supervisor.
4. The user is responsible for safeguarding the computer account. Users are expected to protect access to accounts by periodically changing the password and keeping it confidential. They must respect the privacy of others by not tampering with their files, passwords, or accounts.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Users are to properly use school network resources for educational and/or administrative purposes. Respectful and responsible network etiquette and behavior should be in keeping with the school's mission statement. Students and staff are expressly prohibited from accessing obscene, profane, vulgar, or pornographic sites or materials.

Students are prohibited from sending, posting, or sharing electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Honor Code and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, scholars involved in "sexting" or the sharing of inappropriate images or other content may also be disciplined for violating the Academy anti-harassment and bullying policies.

MONITORED USE

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications system by scholars and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated school staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes. Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited. Only the school's authorized IT Manager may read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users.

VANDALISM

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, disrupt, or destroy data of another user of the Academy network or any other agencies or networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but

is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Any of these actions may be viewed as violations of school policy, administrative regulations and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Users must respect the privacy of other users, and will not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify any file, data, or password belonging to another user, or represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance and/or degrade, disrupt, or bypass system security are violations of school policy and administrative regulations, and may constitute criminal activity under applicable laws. Any prohibited behavior under this policy will result in the cancellation of technology privileges. The Academy will, in accordance with school policy, cooperate with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the Academy network.

NETWORK ETIQUETTE

Each network user is expected to:

1. Be polite (i.e. an all-caps or excessive exclamation marks message implies shouting);
2. Use appropriate language;
3. Refrain from any activity that may be considered “cyber bullying,” including but not limited to threats of violence, extortion, obscene or harassing messages, harassment, stalking, child pornography, and sexual exploitation;
4. Maintain confidentiality of the user, colleagues, and scholars;
5. Respect copyright laws; and
6. Be respectful in all aspects of network use.

USE OF VISUAL/AUDIO CONFERENCING FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

Students will need to use online platforms such as Canvas and ZOOM to participate in classroom instruction and tutoring, and to access curriculum. These online conference services will be used by Great Hearts for instructional purposes only.

In order for a scholar to use any audio/visual conference platform, and to comply with the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and other related laws, Great Hearts requires written consent from parents/guardians for their scholars to use the conferencing services.

During a conference using Zoom and Canvas scholars may be visible/audible to other participants (scholars and Great Hearts staff) in the conference session. It is also possible that others in the scholar’s households may see or hear the participants and that other persons at the staff’s residence may see or hear the scholar participants.

PASSWORDS AND MEETING SECURITY

Students are not permitted to create an account per Zoom and other platforms’ Terms of Service. Therefore, scholars under the age of 18 should only be joining visual/audio conferencing meetings as participants (not separate account holders) through the Great Hearts Academies educational account. The Great Hearts’ account administrators and/or teachers will provide meeting information and meeting passwords to the scholar users to allow the Academy staff to maintain supervision and control over its scholar users’ meeting experiences. Meeting invitations, information and passwords should not be shared. Students will use their full name as their display name during live classes and sessions, unless otherwise approved by the teacher.

ACCESS TO STUDENT DEVICES AND CLASSES

Parents with legal custody and/or legal guardians of a scholar are entitled to access their scholars’ login credentials, Zoom class logins, and Canvas LMS login credentials. In situations of divorce or separation,

Great Hearts makes every effort to respect the rights of both parents. Both parents generally maintain educational rights, rights to information and access. In some situations, a divorce decree, custody order or other court order may modify rights and relationships. Parents/guardians are requested to keep Great Hearts informed and to provide a copy of official court orders where they may impact educational matters. Great Hearts is not the enforcer of such orders and is not responsible for overseeing compliance. Instead, those matters, and disagreements or disputes must be worked out between parents, their attorneys and the court.

DATA COLLECTION

All visual/audio conference services collect certain data from users. The information collected related to scholar use is more limited than for commercial users, but data is still subject to collection. As an example of the type of information collected by visual/audio conferencing services, a summary of Zoom's data collection as provided by Zoom, is attached as an Appendix A to this Notice. Please review the material carefully. If a Student User or their parent/guardian would like to request to access, review, refuse further collection of or delete a Student User's personal information, they must contact their Academy Headmaster in writing to initiate a request with Zoom or similar service provider. These services delete information associated with K-12 Accounts upon receiving a valid deletion request from a School Subscriber or automatically following the termination of the K-12 Account. K-12 Account users may access or request deletion of their personal information in the manner set forth in each services' Privacy statement which can be found online. Additional information available at <https://zoom.us/privacy>.

CONSEQUENCES

Violation of the Academy policies and procedures concerning use of the computer on the network will result in the same disciplinary actions that would result from similar violations in other areas of school policy, including the Honor Code. Any or all of the following consequences may be enforced if a scholar violates the terms of this policy:

1. Suspension and/or expulsion may be considered for flagrant violations or violations that corrupt the educational value of the computers or the Internet.
2. Expulsion may be considered in instances where scholars have used the Academy Internet access to engage in conduct that constitutes felony criminal mischief, and/or have deliberately attempted to bypass installed security software or copy/modify another scholar's work files.

STUDENT SERVICES

PERSONAL COUNSELING

The Headmaster is available to assist scholars with a wide range of personal concerns, including social, family, or emotional issues, and substance abuse. The Headmaster may also provide information about community resources to address these concerns. A scholar who wishes to meet with the Headmaster should set an appointment through the Director of Academy Operations.

Please note: The Academy will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent/guardian's written consent, unless required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas law for child abuse investigations and report.

TUTORING

All teachers offer regularly scheduled tutoring sessions before, during, and/or after school at no cost. Tutoring is an important opportunity for scholars to receive academic guidance and support. Tutoring is

offered by invitation only, for scholars at risk of falling below grade level. Tutoring services are also available for scholars receiving special education services.

Private tutoring is the responsibility of a scholar's parents/guardians. Teachers employed by the Academy are not permitted to privately tutor their own scholars for pay.

UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE

Great Hearts Online has a primary objective of developing a "community of learners," dedicated to the highest standards of academics and deportment. As such, a distinctive uniform is a unifying factor within our school community. It is also a visible signature of our school to the larger community, an indicator of our unity and of our pride of purpose. This is one of the most important functions of a uniform: it identifies its wearer as part of a distinctive group with a distinctive purpose. It is a reminder to its wearer of that purpose and of one's responsibility to that group.

The Academy is also committed to the development of individual personality and character-- not through the external 'expressions' of dress and appearance, which can easily be purchased or affected, and which can quickly divide scholars through the power of snap judgments and prejudices—but through personal qualities, virtues, quirks and traits. It seems countercultural to assert this in our age, but the Academy holds that the school uniform is an essential condition for cultivating genuine individuality in the school community. It is not this or that particular element of the uniform that "matters" more than any of the others; rather, the uniform as a whole is what matters.

While scholars are responsible for their clothing and appearance, it is the parents who are responsible for providing the conditions required for meeting the standard, e.g. proper shirts, skirts and pants that fit properly, etc. Parents/guardians are urged to understand the uniform requirements below, and to ensure that their scholar joins class each day in the proper attire. It is an uncomfortable experience for a scholar to be corrected for a uniform violation, and repeated uniform issues can become an enormous distraction for scholars.

The uniform is the basis of a dress code with a "professional," business-like standard. Students should dress their best, look their best, and do their best. All clothing must be clean, neat, reasonably pressed, and in properly fitting condition. If a scholar is deemed to be wearing inappropriate attire, the parent/guardian will be notified and a change of clothing may be required for attendance that day. If in doubt about the appropriateness of an article of clothing, check with the school Director of Academy Operations before purchasing.

Decisions about the appropriateness of apparel may be referred to the Headmaster, whose judgment will be final. The Academy will make specific exceptions to the dress code as required by particular religious customs; parents/guardians should address specific concerns to the Headmaster before the second week of school. Students must stay in uniform uppers whenever they are in class (live/synchronous or when recording an asynchronous assignment).

Parents/guardians must provide their scholar(s) with the required uniform. Financial assistance for uniforms is available in certain circumstances. A request for school assistance for purchasing uniforms must be made in writing to the Headmaster. Please contact the Director of Academy Operations for more

information.

Required K-8:

- Short sleeve or long sleeve polo; white or light blue

Optional:

- Navy blue button-up sweater
- GH0 patch with navy border stitching (provided by the school) placed over the left chest or solid.

Required 9-12

- Short sleeve or long sleeve white or light blue button-down oxford.

Sources:

- Polos, Oxford and Sweaters may be purchased from various vendors (e.g. French Toast, Amazon, Target, Wal-Mart, etc.)

Grooming

Hair should be groomed to be out of the face and allow for clear eye contact with Teachers in zoom classes. For girls, hair accessories may only be blue or white and should not be large or overly distracting. Hair gel that helps the hair stay in place or controls curly hair is allowable. Hair styles which reflect a family's particular religious heritage or culture are allowed.

SCHOLAR DESK/WORKSPACE

The scholar's workspace and work area are just as important as a scholar's class in a brick and mortar campus. Scholars should have a dedicated workspace that has enough space to hold all their school supplies, textbooks/workbooks, devices, and an area to complete in-class work. The workspace must be free of pop- culture and distractions.

BASIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL AND STUDENT HOURS

The Academy is open from 7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. every day that school is in session. Hours may vary during the holidays, breaks, and will be closed during parts of the summer. The school phone number is (210) 469-3828. Messages may be left on voice mail any time the phone is busy. Messages left after hours will be returned within 24 hours. Also, parents/guardians may contact the administration via e-mail (please see the Faculty Directory on the website).

School starts daily at 8:00 am and ends at 4:00 pm. To clarify, the Great Hearts Online Canvas classroom is available and open 24 hours a day and scholars are free to work on your lessons at any time, but school staff and teachers are available from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm on standard school days.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES

STUDENT/ACADEMY SAFETY

The Academy is aware that resources that are inappropriate or not designed for use in the educational setting may be accessed on the Internet. To protect scholars and staff from such inappropriate material, the

school's Internet access is filtered with one of the highest-rated Internet filtering systems available. However, users must recognize that it is impossible for the Academy to restrict access to all controversial material and individuals must be responsible for their own actions in navigating the network.

It is the Academy's goal to maintain the safety of scholars, faculty, and staff at all times. In light of this goal, every potential threat or rumor of a potential threat of harm against others or against the school will be taken seriously, investigated, and addressed through the Great Hearts Threat Assessment Protocol. Such threats or rumors of threats may include verbal, physical, direct, and indirect challenges to the safety or well-being of an individual, group, school, or persons in general. The Threat Assessment Protocol provides a standardized procedure to determine the level of severity of a threat, what (if any) immediate safety responses are required, and the need for a long-term recovery plan. While there may be instances in which a scholar utilizes threatening language or gestures in a transient manner (such as an inappropriate expression of frustration that can be resolved), the Academy's response to the threat will remain the same. *This uniform and established reporting procedure follows guidelines set forth by the Department of Education and The United States Government school safety resources (<https://www.schoolsafety.gov/prevent/threat-assessment-and-reporting>).*

If a parent/guardian, scholar, or employee hears of a potential threat, this information should be reported immediately by calling the Headmaster directly to share the information or use the "report a problem" button in the sidebar on the school's webpage. If the situation is an emergency or requires immediate investigation, please call 911 or your local Police Department.

Additional information regarding a scholar experiencing suicidal ideation should be reported to the Headmaster. If the situation requires immediate assistance, call 911/Police Department. **Please do not report suicidal ideation on the "report a problem" webpage.**

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Academy has an established Crisis Management Plan that is maintained and updated by the facilities and operations staff at Great Hearts academies. The plan outlines emergency procedures for natural disasters, violent situations, medical emergencies, and fires. Academy faculty and staff are trained in and drilled on the plan throughout the school year.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Thank you for taking the time to read the Academy Family Handbook. For questions or comments about this handbook, please contact the Director of Academy Operations. Please sign and return this Signature Page to the Academy's Student Specialist.

Parent/Guardian and Student signature

By signing below, you indicate that you have received, reviewed, understand, and accept the handbook and abide by the rules, guidelines, and procedures outlined in the handbook.

By signing below, you further agree that an electronic signature will have the same legal weight and binding effect as a hard copy signature.

Parent Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

(One completed Signature Page per Academy family)

This document is provided online in PDF ADA Accessible format. If you require additional accommodations, please contact your Academy.

APPENDIX A

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Signature Page

Use of Student Photos and Directory Information Opt Out Form

You have the right to choose whether your scholar's directory information (as defined in the Parent and Student Handbook) is released or not. Please check a box in the appropriate column below and return this form to your scholar's school. Parents, guardians, or eligible scholars who do not check a box, or who do not return this form, give their implied consent for release of directory information, and consent to scholar photographs. If you do not wish to allow disclosure of this information, please return this form directly to Great Hearts Online either by email to registrartx@greatheartsonline.org or by U.S. mail. If you have more than one scholar enrolled, you must complete a separate form for each scholar.

ALL FAMILIES/STUDENTS PLEASE MARK EACH APPLICABLE SPACE

- I do NOT consent to the release of directory information about the student named below by Great Hearts Online to outside sources, as described in the School's Notice of Directory Information, except as authorized by law.
- I do NOT consent to the release of photographs or directory information within the Great Hearts Online school system in sources such as yearbooks, rosters for sports information, and programs or articles.

Print Scholar's Full Legal Name:	Scholar's Date of Birth (month/day/year)
Print Scholar's Full Legal Name:	Scholar's Date of Birth (month/day/year)
Print Scholar's Full Legal Name:	Scholar's Date of Birth (month/day/year)
Print Scholar's Full Legal Name:	Scholar's Date of Birth (month/day/year)
Print Scholar's Full Legal Name:	Scholar's Date of Birth (month/day/year)
Print Parent/Guardian/Full Legal Name	Parent/Guardian Signature (month/day/year)

APPENDIX B

Zoom Information Regarding K-12 Schools Privacy Information

The full ZOOM Statement is available at <https://zoom.us/privacy>

Last updated: July 2020

ZOOM

Zoom provides a video communications platform to K-12 Account Users on behalf of and at the direction of the School Subscriber. For purposes of FERPA, Zoom is considered a “school official” and may receive Student User personal information through its contractual agreements because Zoom is performing a service that furthers a “legitimate educational interest” (*i.e.*, the provision of educational services in a remote setting). Zoom maintains Student User personal information on behalf of, and at the direction of, the School Subscriber and does not use the Student User personal information for other purposes except as permitted by applicable law, including FERPA and applicable agreements with School Subscribers.

Zoom is responsible for following the directions of the School Subscriber. For example, on a School Subscriber’s instructions, Zoom may provide reports containing personal information relating to the K-12 Account and its users (including Student Users) to that School Subscriber. Please visit our [Zoom and FERPA Compliance](#) webpage for additional information.

Residents of the European Economic Area (EEA) and the UK should review our [Privacy Statement](#) for additional information regarding how Zoom addresses European privacy rights.

INFORMATION ZOOM DATA COLLECTION

From the K-12 Account User

When creating a K-12 Account under the direction of a School Subscriber, the K-12 Account User must provide certain information, such as:

- K-12 Account User’s first and last name;
- School or district name;
- Job title;
- Password;
- School-issued e-mail address; and
- Information about the school’s location.

From Student Users

Zoom may receive personal information contained in “Customer Content.” Customer Content is any data a K-12 Account User uploads to the Zoom communication platform connected with use of the Service. For example, features that allow meeting hosts or co-hosts to record meetings locally or to Zoom’s cloud, allow K-12 Account Users to display or upload information that may be seen by other users of that K-12 Account, allow meeting participants to share files, allow hosts or co-hosts to create meeting transcripts, or allow meeting participants (including Student Users) to communicate in-meeting via chat and create chat logs. *Such Customer Content may include personal information that is part of an “educational record” as defined by FERPA. Zoom accesses Customer Content only upon the documented request of a School Subscriber, or if required by law.*

Automatically Collected Information

Zoom collects certain personal information *automatically* through the use of a K-12 Account including:

- Information about the use of the Zoom platform, including type and frequency of actions taken, number of logs-in or meeting entries, date and time, duration, quantity, quality, network connectivity, other platform performance metrics, and feature usage information, including use of video and screen sharing; and
- Information about a user's device, network, and internet connection, such as IP address(es), MAC address, other device ID, device type, operating system type and version, type of camera, microphone and speaker, and client version.

Use of Personal Information

Zoom uses personal information collected from and about Student Users only as needed to deliver the functionality of the Zoom platform, operate the business (including to enhance or improve the Zoom Services), and as directed by School Subscribers. For Student Users, this means that:

- Zoom never sells Student User personal information
- Zoom does not use Student User personal information to deliver behavioral advertising.
- There are no third-party advertising or analytics cookies on Zoom's product pages.

Regarding cookies, Zoom publishes two types of webpages: product and marketing. A product webpage enables a Student User to click on a hyperlink and join a Zoom meeting. Zoom's product webpages serve only third-party cookies that are necessary for technical support and to deliver the service. There are no advertising or analytics cookies on our product webpages.

Marketing webpages, such as www.zoom.us, are designed to encourage sales of Zoom subscriptions. They are directed at a general audience over the age of 16. We designed the Student User experience so that a Student User never needs to visit our marketing webpages to use our Services under a K-12 Account. Zoom provides further information on its use of third-party cookies on its marketing webpages in its [cookie policy](#).

Sharing Personal Information

We do not share personal information with companies, organizations, or individuals outside of Zoom unless one of the following circumstances applies:

- With Consent.
- We will share personal information with companies, organizations, or individuals outside of Zoom when we have K-12 Account User consent (as applicable) and in compliance with applicable laws (including FERPA as applicable).
- With or As Directed by School Subscribers.

School Subscribers have access to personal information (including Student User information) connected with their K-12 Account(s). School Subscribers may also direct us to share personal information with others.

To Provide ZOOM Services

ZOOM provides personal information to third-party service providers to help us provide the Service. Such service providers are prohibited from using personal information for any reason other than to provide the contracted-for services, and in compliance with appropriate privacy and security obligations.

With Other Meeting Participants

ZOOM may share personal information collected during a Zoom meeting with other participants of the same meeting during the use of the Service. *For example, video and audio recordings, chat messages and other content shared by a Student User during a meeting, which may contain personal information of Student Users,*

may be available to all other participants in that meeting, as well as to any K-12 Account Users who host or co-host that meeting and the K-12 Account Administrator.

For Certain Corporate Transactions

ZOOM may share personal information where, whether for strategic or other business reasons, Zoom decides to sell, buy, merge, or otherwise reorganize its businesses. In such transactions, ZOOM may disclose or transfer personal information to actual purchasers or receive personal information from sellers. Student User personal information will remain subject to this K-12 Privacy Statement unless it is changed by a successor entity.

For Legal Reasons

ZOOM shares personal information outside of Zoom if ZOOM believes that access, use, preservation or disclosure of the information is reasonably necessary to:

- Comply with any applicable law, regulation, legal process or enforceable governmental request.
- Enforce applicable provisions of the [Terms of Service](#) and [Acceptable Use Policy](#), including investigation of potential violations.
- Detect, prevent, or otherwise address fraud, security or technical issues.
- Protect against harm to the rights, property or safety of Zoom, our users or the public as required or permitted by law, including to help prevent the loss of life or serious injury of anyone.

For more information about data ZOOM discloses in response to requests from law enforcement and other government agencies, please see our [Guidelines for Government Requests](#).

Third Parties

Zoom does not share personal information with third parties other than as described herein, or as required by law, except at the direction and on behalf of a School Subscriber.

Security

Maintaining the confidentiality, security, and integrity of scholars' personal information is a top priority. ZOOM uses appropriate technical and organizational measures designed to help protect personal information from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. Customer Content is encrypted in transit between any devices running a Zoom client and at rest when in permanent storage in the Zoom Cloud. ZOOM has also taken steps to minimize the risk that meetings that include Student Users are not disrupted by uninvited participants. Examples include enabling meeting passwords and virtual waiting rooms by default for K-12 Accounts and configuring default screen-share settings to limit in-meeting content sharing. For guidance on how to secure virtual classrooms, please review "[Best Practices for Securing Your Classroom](#)" and "[How to Keep Uninvited Guests Out of Your Zoom Event](#)."

Report a User

All K-12 Accounts have the "Report a User" feature enabled by default. The "Report a User" feature is available to the meeting host or co-host via the Security icon on the meeting taskbar. If an unwelcome participant joins the meeting, the host or co-host can select "Report a User," which automatically takes a screenshot of the reported user(s) and their shared content (if any) and creates a report. The feature then sends the report to Zoom's Trust & Safety Team. A member of the Trust & Safety Team will review the report and investigate the reported user(s) for violation of our Terms of Service. Confirmed offending users will have their accounts terminated, and, where appropriate, we will notify relevant law enforcement authorities.

Data Retention

Zoom retains K-12 Account Users' and Student Users' personal information for as long as necessary to fulfill the purposes for which it was collected, including for the purposes of satisfying any legal, accounting, or reporting requirements, to establish or defend legal claims, or for fraud prevention purposes.

Access and deletion of information

If a Student User or their parent would like to request to access, review, refuse further collection of or delete a Student User's personal information, they must contact their school subscriber with his or her request. **Because Zoom is required to comply with contractual confidentiality obligations related to Student Users' data, we are not able to respond to parental or scholar requests directly.**

School Subscribers may direct requests to access, delete or restrict further collection or use of a Student User's personal information to privacy@zoom.us. Zoom also deletes information associated with K-12 Accounts upon receiving a valid deletion request from a School Subscriber or automatically following the termination of the K-12 Account. K-12 Account Users can delete their content

K-12 Account Users may access or request deletion of their personal information in the same manner as set forth in our [Privacy Statement](#).

Additional Rights of California and European Users

If you are a resident of the State of California or the European Users, please refer to our [Privacy Statement](#) and our California Privacy Rights Statement for additional information on the rights that you may have and how you can exercise those rights.

How to Contact ZOOM

Zoom Video Communications, Inc.
55 Almaden Blvd, Suite 600.
San Jose, CA 95113 1.888.799.9666
privacy@zoom.us

APPENDIX C

Graduation Requirements

To receive a high school diploma from a Great Hearts Texas Academy, a student must successfully accomplish the following:

- Complete the required number of credits for the Foundation High School Program
- Pass all statewide end-of-course (EOC) assessments
- Meet additional Texas graduation requirements listed below

Foundation High School Program (FHSP)

In 2014–2015, the Texas Education Agency adopted new graduation standards for students at Texas public high schools (which includes open enrollment charter schools), establishing the Texas Foundation High School Program (FHSP). The curriculum sequence below accounts for all Texas FHSP requirements and is to be used across GHTX schools for incoming freshmen in SY 2021–2022.

End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

According to HB 5, to graduate, students are required to perform satisfactorily on the following end-of-course (“EOC”) assessments:

- Algebra I
- English I
- English II
- Biology
- United States History

A student who has not achieved sufficient scores on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments. If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the academy will provide remediation to the student in the content area for which the performance standard was not met. This may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours or at times of the year outside normal school operations.

There are three testing windows during the school year in which a student may take an EOC assessment, which will occur during the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have additional opportunities to retake the assessment.

Additional Texas Graduation Requirements

To receive a high school diploma from a Great Hearts Texas Academy, a student must also successfully meet additional Texas graduation requirements, including demonstrated speech proficiency, cardiopulmonary resuscitation awareness training, peace officer training, and a FAFSA or TAFSA financial aid application.

Demonstrated Speech Proficiency

To graduate from high school, the state of Texas requires a student to demonstrate proficiency in elements of effective speech communication, including delivering clear verbal messages; choosing effective nonverbal

behaviors; listening for desired results; applying valid critical-thinking and problem-solving processes; and identifying, analyzing, developing, and evaluating communication skills needed for professional and social success in interpersonal situations, group interactions, and personal and professional presentations (19 TAC 74.11(a)). Students enrolled in Great Hearts Texas may demonstrate speech proficiency during their Junior panel, Senior panel, or Senior thesis.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Awareness

Texas state law (HB 897) requires students attending an open-enrollment charter school to complete a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) awareness and training program in order to graduate. The CPR awareness course is not taken for credit and does not result in CPR certification. Great Hearts academies will offer CPR awareness training, free of charge, to students during their junior year to fulfill the graduation requirement.

Peace Officer Training

Texas Administrative Code (19 TAC §74.39) requires high schools to provide students with instruction on how to interact properly with peace officers during traffic stops and other in-person encounters. Great Hearts academies will offer peace officer training during the junior year to fulfill this non-credit graduation requirement.

Financial Aid Application Requirement

Texas House Bill 3 (HB3) requires students to complete and submit the free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA) to graduate from high school. Students must complete the graduation requirement during the senior year. To opt-out of the graduation requirement, a parent or guardian must submit and sign the required state form available from your academy's college counselor. 68

Certificates of Coursework Completion

A certificate of coursework completion will be issued to a high school senior who successfully completes state and local credit requirements for graduation but fails to perform satisfactorily on the exit-level tests.

Students with Disabilities

Upon the recommendation of the Admission, Review, and Dismissal ("ARD") Committee, a student with disabilities may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her plan.

Grade Replacement

All credit-based courses taken at Great Hearts will remain on the transcript, and grades earned in a high school credit-based course at a Great Hearts school will be calculated into a student's grade point average (GPA). Courses taken to recover credit will appear on the transcript, along with the associated grade earned, but will count for credit only and not towards a student's GPA. Great Hearts accepts credits that are recovered from state-approved educational platforms or exams. Please check with your academy's administration for credit-recovery options.

One-Semester Courses

A one-semester course is a single, unique course taken for its full-credit across a single semester. Examples include U.S. Government and Economics. If a student fails to earn credit for a one-semester course that is required to graduate under the Foundation High School Program, the student must recover credit for the semester failed for that course in order to graduate.

Two-Semester Courses

A two-semester course is a single, unique course taken for its full-credit across two semesters in the same year. Examples include Biology or Algebra 1. A high school student who fails one semester of a two-semester course but earns an average for the year above an F will earn a full credit for the course. If a student fails to earn full credit for a two-semester course that is required to graduate under the Foundation High School Program, the student must recover credit for the semester or semesters failed for that course in order to graduate. If a

student fails to earn full credit for a two-semester course that is a prerequisite for another course in the Great Hearts curriculum, the student must recover credit for the semester or semesters failed for that course before progressing to the course for which it is a prerequisite.

Optional Credit Recovery

If a student fails to earn credit for a one-semester or two-semester course that is not required to graduate under the Foundation High School Program, the student may choose not to recover the credit for that course. However, failure to recover credit may result in the loss of the Distinguished Level of Achievement diploma and a loss of graduation endorsements that colleges and universities have come to associate with the robust Great Hearts curriculum.