ADVANTAGE CHARTER ACADEMY

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Parent and Student Handbook 2025-2026

A public school academy managed by
National Heritage Academies, Inc.

Parent and Student Handbook
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Board of Directors

Dione Davis, President
Alisa Ross, Vice President
Walter Morales, Treasurer
Tabitha Bell, Secretary
Cedric Noel, Director
Jordan Pittman, Director
Rasheedah Quiett Jenkins, Director

Board meetings are open to the public and meeting dates and times are posted at the school.

Administrative Staff

Mendrek Solite, Principal
Kristopher Davis, Dean of K-2
La Rhonda George, Dean of 3-5
Mendrek Solite, Dean of 6-8
Ashley Hamilton, Dean of Special Education

Student Creed
I am an Advantage student.
I strive to achieve academic excellence.
I exemplify high moral character.
I work diligently to prepare for the future.
I know my success in school and life is dependent on my own effort.

School Mission
Louisiana Achievement Charter Academies (LACA) is committed to offering new high-quality educational opportunities to students throughout the state, especially economically disadvantaged students, striving to provide schools that prepare Louisiana's children for success in high school, college, and life.

National Heritage Academies

National Heritage Academies is a network of public charter schools serving families and students in multiple states. Our early childhood, elementary, middle school, and high school programs are designed to put children on a solid path to success in high school, college, and beyond. As a network, all National Heritage Academies schools share a common vision, while each individual school enjoys the flexibility of tailoring their program to meet the needs of their specific community.

NHA's Parent Relations Department provides guidance to parents and the school in resolving concerns. Once the classroom teacher, dean, and/or principal have been contacted regarding your concern, you may also reach out to the Parent Relations team to discuss any additional needs.

Parent Relations Contact Information:
Phone: (877) 642-7471 (Monday–Friday; 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.)
Email: ParentRelations@nhaschools.com

National Heritage Academies
3850 Broadmoor Avenue

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49512
www.nhaschools.com

Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, all policies and procedures will comply with Federal and State applicable laws.

Our Purpose, Vision, and Philosophy

Purpose and Vision
Working in partnership with parents and the community, the school's purpose is to challenge each child to achieve. We offer a challenging, character-based education through a rigorous curriculum with high academic and social expectations with the vision to better educate more children.

Educational Philosophy
The educational philosophy is based on the principles set forth in *Effective Schools Research* developed by Professor Ronald R. Edmonds*. Effective Schools Research* recommends research-based school attributes that are associated with quantifiably improved student learning.

In his book *What Works in Schools*, Robert J. Marzano translates these principles into the following factors:

School-Level Factors:
- A guaranteed and viable curriculum
- Challenging goals and effective feedback
- Parent and community involvement
- A safe and orderly environment
- Collegiality and professionalism

Teacher-Level Factors:
- Instructional strategies
- Classroom management
- Classroom curriculum design

Student-Level Factors:
- Home environment
- Learned intelligence and background knowledge
- Student motivation

The school employs a continuous improvement model that focuses on principles and practices that are simple and supported by research.

The school supports its researched based approach to education by including the following practices in its daily operation of the school:

College Readiness: The school's focus on a liberal arts education provides the academic foundation necessary to succeed in an increasingly global and competitive society. In grade school, the vast majority of time is spent on mastering the core subjects of English, history, mathematics, reading, and science. Furthermore, the school's first priority is to bring students up to grade level in reading and math, so they will be able to master other subjects as well. In all grades, at least twice as much time is spent on language arts and mathematics than on other academic subjects.

Longer School Day: School days are approximately seven hours long, which is longer than most traditional public schools. This includes at least six hours of instructional time.

Structured Discipline: Students are expected to follow a clearly defined and structured discipline program. This program encourages personal responsibility and respect for others. As a result, students who have had behavior problems at other schools are often drawn back into a positive learning environment.

Moral Focus™ **Program:** Part of the school's purpose is to instill a strong moral identity in each of our students. The Moral Focus™ curriculum comprehensively identifies the skills, behaviors, and virtues students will need for character growth and development to prepare them for success, both academically and throughout their lives. The curriculum includes explicit and integrated instruction around three key components of character to provide students with a strong foundation for leading an ethical life. The Moral Focus™ program is an essential part of every student's education.

Parental Involvement: Research indicates that a leading predictor of student success is parental involvement; therefore, parents are included in many aspects of the education program. The school governance structure relies on significant parental input and cultivates a close working partnership between staff members and parents. In addition, parents are asked to volunteer by participating in playground activities, becoming a member of school committees, or helping in the classroom, library, or office. To encourage involvement, parents sign a "School-Parent Compact" upon their child's enrollment, committing to active involvement in the school.

American Heritage: It is appropriate to demonstrate a great deal of both pride in the history of the United States and gratitude for our unique roots and founding by gifted men and women.

The Four Pillars of NHA

Academic Excellence

National Heritage Academies has invested significant financial resources in the development of a strong academic program that provides students with an excellent academic foundation. In partnership with NHA, we have carefully selected the finest curriculum to be used by our teaching staff in order to accomplish our purpose. All of our curriculum meets or exceeds the state educational standards.

Moral Focus™

We believe that a strong moral identity is foundational to student success. It is our goal to not only support the virtues parents try to instill at home, but to explicitly teach students the skills, behaviors, and virtues necessary for leading an ethical life. NHA's nine monthly virtues are Wisdom, Respect, Gratitude, Self-control, Perseverance, Courage, Encouragement, Compassion, and Integrity. Students will learn to internalize these virtues through the intentional and consistent focus on the application of Moral Focus™ concepts throughout all aspects of school life. This integration is essential for students to learn the importance of developing and maintaining strong personal character and to create a learning environment built on a foundation of respect and care where everyone works hard to achieve academic goals and improve school culture. The Moral Focus™ program is an essential part of every student's education.

Student Responsibility

In addition to preparing our students for academic success, we seek to develop a strong sense of responsibility in each child. We want students to take personal ownership of their success or failure, regardless of their background or previous experiences. This includes sound decision-making, an ability that is becoming critical in our ever-changing, complex world. Students must meet high expectations both academically and behaviorally. Our teachers work with students and parents to promote the responsibility necessary for success both in and out of school.

Parental Partnership

A successful learning experience would not be possible without the partnership and dedication of our students' parents. Parental participation in each school's program is solicited and highly encouraged. Our parents are involved on leadership committees, in the classroom, and in the details that make a school function effectively. NHA parents know they are always welcome and that they are a key to the success of every NHA student.

NHA believes that open communication between school and home improves the quality of the educational experience. Every marking period, parents receive detailed written reports of student performance and accomplishments. These reports are coupled with fall and spring parent-teacher conferences. The reports and conferences include interpretation of internal and external measures of assessment. Teachers and parents may also schedule additional meetings.

At all other times throughout the year, parents can use NHA's Secure School Website via the Internet to view their child's grades and progress. This web-based information center provides parents with both classroom information and student academic data. The Secure School Website promotes the increased accountability of all participants in the educational process—teachers, students, and parents.

Academic Excellence: Curriculum

The school uses the National Heritage Academies (NHA) curriculum, a rigorous and challenging curriculum uniquely designed to prepare them for high academic achievement in successive schooling environments. Our goal is to graduate students who have not only had the opportunity to experience academic excellence but have also acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in high school and beyond.

English Language Arts

The NHA English Language Arts curriculum, aligned with the Louisiana Academic Standards, provides students with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary for success in listening, reading, speaking, viewing, and writing. Early reading instruction focuses on the building blocks of reading—phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. These building blocks lay the foundation for the intellectual processes necessary for students to remember, understand, analyze, evaluate, and apply the ideas they encounter while reading.

Mathematics

To provide students with the mathematical skills they will need in everyday life as well as in the rigors of high school and post-high school mathematics, NHA has developed a strong mathematics curriculum, aligned with the Louisiana Academic Standards, that emphasizes communicating, computational and procedural skills, making connections, reasoning and proofing, problem solving, and using representations. Students learn to represent and communicate ideas through graphs, mathematical terms, models, signs, symbols, and writing.

Science

NHA has developed an engaging science curriculum that encourages students to participate actively in scientific inquiry while developing scientific literacy. When participating in inquiry, students describe objects and events, ask questions, construct explanations, test those explanations against current scientific knowledge, and communicate their ideas to others. Students' scientific knowledge is developed in the areas of The Nature of Science, The Living Environment, Physical Science, and Earth and Space Science.

Social Studies

NHA's Social Studies curriculum includes the examination of historical documents, so students can demonstrate their understanding of the major themes, developments, and turning points in our nation. The curriculum is strong in the study of National and World Geography. We build a strong knowledge of economic principles, so students understand the impact of economic forces both internationally and personally in their daily lives. Additionally, the curriculum is comparative in examination of world cultures. This creates a point of reference by which students compare the freedoms of American life with non-democratic societies both historically and currently. Our students are reminded of the rights and liberties they enjoy and the due reason to participate in and protect those liberties.

Art

Art classes allow students to explore the many different aspects of art while acquiring an understanding of the significant role art has played in the expression of ideas throughout history. Hands-on art projects help develop student creativity and self-expression and are frequently related to current classroom topics.

Music

Students are exposed to a wide variety of music education and many periods of music during their classes. Basic music concepts such as beat, rhythm, fast/slow, high/low, and music notation are taught from kindergarten through 5th grade. Students also spend time developing an appreciation for different genres of music and their great composers. All concepts are introduced in kindergarten and further developed in each subsequent grade level.

Physical Education

Physical Education is a sequence of developmental experiences in which students learn through movement. Students work on individual skill development and learn about teamwork and the importance of sportsmanship. In addition, they are given the opportunity to develop a positive attitude toward life-long physical activity.

Library and Educational Technology

The technology education program at our school equips students with digital literacy skills needed to be productive, safe, and life-long digital learners. The K-12 technology curriculum scaffolds student learning of technology from foundational computer skills to computational thinking and design theory. Our NHA Technology Standards (2023) are derived from the national technology standards for students published by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the state technology standards. Online safety, digital citizenship and cyberbullying awareness and prevention is taught annually in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

The library program at our school is designed to expose students to a wide variety of classic and contemporary literature, instill a life-long love of reading, and develop information literacy skills. The library collections contain specific titles that support the curriculum and provide students with a variety of high-quality literature. Our library program uses the NHA Library Standards (2018) based on the expectation for students in the Information Literacy Standards developed by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL).

Moral Focus™

We believe it is imperative to equip students with both the moral and academic foundations necessary to interact successfully in today's society. Our Moral Focus™ Program is centered on the study of 9 Virtues: Wisdom, Respect, Gratitude, Self-control, Perseverance, Courage, Encouragement, Compassion, & Integrity. Virtues are fundamental to a great education, and great schools place equal importance on developing the heart and mind of students.

Monthly Virtues		
September – WISDOM	October – RESPECT	November - GRATITUDE
December – SELF-CONTROL	January – PERSEVERANCE	February - COURAGE
March – ENCOURAGEMENT	April – COMPASSION	May - INTEGRITY

Character is defined by which virtues our students determine are important to their lives and there are certain necessary steps to acquire or strengthen those virtues. Our Moral Focus™ Program is structured around a clearly defined process for teaching and learning virtues. That process outlines those steps, allowing teachers to intentionally guide students through the

process of teaching virtues. Our teachers provide them with the opportunity to learn virtues in a way that will not only affect their mind, but also change their heart.

- **Step 1:** Introduction - Define the virtue
    - Students learn to name the virtue and simply define it in terms they understand as a foundation for their journey. (focus for the 1st week of each month)

- **Step 2:** Connection - Understand the importance of the virtue to create personal meaning and value
    - Students learn to describe the value & meaning of a virtue. A necessary step that motivates them to put forth the effort to put virtue into action. (focus for the 2nd week of each month)

- **Step 3:** Reflection - Recognize the positive impact the virtue has and know exactly how to display it
    - Students learn what it looks like and sounds like through intentional modeling and careful study, allowing them to recognize it in others. (focus for the 3rd week of each month)

- **Step 4:** Application - Find ways to display the virtue and be intentional about practicing it
    - Students are given regular opportunities to practice virtues. Practice is the key to virtues becoming a learned behavior or habit. (focus for the 4th week of each month)

To support the Moral Focus™ program, time is dedicated each day to the teaching of Moral Focus™ virtues. The 4 steps of the process described above form the core of Moral Focus™ instruction. Each month is broken down into 4 weeks of instruction that correspond to the 4 steps for teaching virtues. Each grade bases instruction on a definition of each virtue designed for their grade level. The definitions scaffold in complexity from grade to grade, allowing students to deepen their understanding and extend their ability to display each virtue.

This comprehensive approach provides students with a strong foundation for leading a moral life. Students will learn to internalize these virtues through the intentional and consistent focus on the application of Moral Focus™ concepts throughout all aspects of school life. This integration is essential for students to learn the importance of developing and maintaining a strong personal character and the qualities necessary for success as both a student and a citizen. Additionally, all students are given the opportunity to participate in service-learning projects.

Academic Excellence: Achievement

Supporting our vision *to better educate more children*, the school has implemented grading practices that best match the needs of our students, parents, and teachers, with the ultimate goal of supporting high-quality learning for all students.

Teachers utilize the myNHA gradebook application to track students' academic performance on identified learning goals, with the ultimate goal of ensuring high levels of learning and proficiency on state accountability tests.

We encourage you to speak with your child's teacher or talk with a member of the school's leadership team if you have questions or would like more detailed information related to the school's grading practices.

Honors Ceremonies

At the end of each quarter, special recognition is given to those students in grades K-6 who have achieved excellence in their academic progress as well as in the Moral Focus™. An honors ceremony is held as an extension of the opening ceremony. Students are given awards based on their individual accomplishments during the previous quarter.

Summa Cum Laude (with highest honor): 4.0
Magna Cum Laude (with high honor): 3.60-3.99
Cum Laude (with honor): 3.00-3.59

Student Grade Placement, Acceleration, Promotion, or Retention

The principal is authorized to make initial grade placement of a student and to promote, accelerate or retain students after initial grade placement. After initial grade placement, a student is expected to progress through the grades one year in each grade receiving the benefits of academic, social and physical growth usually accompanied with a full year of development. On occasion, it may be in the best interest of the student to have a new grade placement, be accelerated more than one grade, or be retained in the current grade. In this event, supporting documentation with interventions already offered to the student will be provided by the school. If a student's parent or teacher believes one of these grade changes should be considered, a written request for consideration should be provided to the principal, including the reasons for such consideration. The final decision regarding placement, acceleration, promotion, or retention of a student rests solely with the principal.

The principal shall consider the following, when making such decisions:

1. The education record of the student, including but not limited to a student's grades, standardized test scores, reading, speaking and math skills, the curriculum of each grade, the available teacher(s) skill(s)delivering the instruction and available programs.
2. Attendance
3. Discipline
4. The physical, social and emotional readiness of the student for the curriculum of each grade.
5. The recommendation of the student's parents and teachers.
6. The applicable laws governing these decisions.

Promotion Requirements for Grades 4 and 8
In addition to the standards and criteria described above, promotion of a student shall be made in accordance with the School's Pupil Progression Plan. A complete copy of the School's Pupil Progression Plan is kept on file in the school office.

The goal of placing, accelerating, promoting or retaining a student is to enhance the opportunity for the student to achieve learning goals, meet state and school performance expectations, and to be prepared for high school, college, and career plans.

Special Education Students
The decision to retain a student with a disability is approached with great caution. The IEP Team makes the final decision regarding the promotion and retention of students with disabilities. A student with a disability may not be retained based on their disability, but may be retained for other factors. The parent of a student with a disability may appeal the decision to the school board of directors or may choose to have the student leave the school. If a parent appeals the IEP Team's decision to the school board of directors, the school's special education supervisor must be contacted for consultation and guidance.

English Learner Students
The retention of an English Learner (EL) student is a decision that is carefully considered by the building principal. The principal, in collaboration with the EL Coordinator, EL teacher, and Special Populations Team, should consider evidence related to the student's performance in each subject area when making this determination. An English Learner student may not be retained solely based on a lack of language skills, but may be retained for other factors.

Academic Excellence: Student Support Services and Special Education

It is the goal of the school to provide appropriate educational opportunities for all students.

It is the school's obligation to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all students with suspected disabilities or disabilities, as defined under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and state special education rules and regulations. For additional specifics regarding a student's special education rights, parents are encouraged to review the *Procedural Safeguards* that are available from a school administrator or special education provider.

Child Find

The IDEA includes a Child Find Mandate. Child Find requires all school districts to locate, identify and evaluate all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of their disability. This obligation encompasses all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children receiving passing grades and "advancing from grade to grade…". A parent who suspects that their child may have a disability and is in need of special education and related services may initiate a free evaluation of their child by contacting the school principal and providing a written request for an evaluation under IDEA and/or Section 504. The school must take the parents request into consideration and provide a response consistent with State and Federal special education requirements. If the school does not suspect a disability, it may refuse to conduct an evaluation. If the school refuses, it must give the parent written notice explaining the reason(s) why it is declining to initiate an evaluation, what data the decision was based upon, and other factors considered. The parents then have the right, if they choose, to request a due process hearing to seek a ruling to conduct an evaluation.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Section 504 (General Education)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 794, (sometimes referred to as "Section 504") prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities solely on the basis of their disability. If you have Section 504 questions, please contact the school's principal who has been designated as the Section 504 Coordinator. The Section 504 Coordinator is responsible for investigating and resolving complaints. In addition, any individual who desires information related to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act, may contact the school's principal or the NHA Special Education Department at (616) 222-1700. The school does not discriminate against individuals seeking to access a program or service of the school based on disability. Where an individual desires to participate in a program or service and requires an accommodation(s) in order to do so, they should contact the school's principal to request an accommodation. In addition, if you suspect that your child has a disability which may qualify him/her for support under Section 504, you should contact the school's principal to begin the referral process. Upon initiation of the Section 504 referral process, parents will be provided with a copy of the Section 504 Procedural Safeguards and Parent/Student Rights which contains complaint and due process procedures.

The Intervention Assistance Team

The Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) is a committee of school personnel set up by the principal to ensure ongoing and effective support for students and classroom teachers. Parents are informed if their child is being considered for referral to the IAT for behavioral and/or

academic support. The IAT is a general education intervention process and team membership will generally include: a building administrator, the student's general education teacher, and a staff member knowledgeable in accommodations and interventions. Parents may also be invited to participate in this meeting. The team provides a forum to discuss the student's academic and behavioral data and needs. In addition, the team generates, initiates, and monitors implementation of interventions designed to address the individual needs of the student. This includes use of the resources of the school, family, and the community. This process creates awareness and understanding of the issues affecting the student and their academic, behavioral, and functional performance. The IAT may serve as the pre-referral intervention-planning team for those "unidentified" students whose difficulties may suggest the presence of a disability. As appropriate, the IAT may refer a student to the Special Education team for formal assessment. Parents should be informed if the IAT is considering a referral of their student to the Special Education team. Prior to initiating a special education evaluation, written parental consent/permission must be obtained. Information gathered through implementation of interventions identified by the IAT will be taken into consideration as a part of the special education evaluation along with progress monitoring and other data sources provided by the parent, educational staff, and others as deemed appropriate. The IAT's review of documentation of intervention strategies, the student's response (progress monitoring data), in addition to a referral for special education testing for a suspected disability, fulfills the Child Find requirement under IDEA and State special education requirements.

The Individual Education Program

The school will comply with the IDEA and state regulations and every student identified as having a disability will be provided an Individual Educational Program (IEP) designed to address their unique needs. All required components of the IEP will be addressed including but not limited to: a description of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance including disability related needs, goals and objectives, supplementary aids and services, program services, ancillary services, extended school year, etc. All students with disabilities are considered general education students first. Each IEP is designed to assure that eligible students receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and specially designed instruction delivered by highly qualified special education staff within the least restrictive environment (LRE). Prior to the opening of school and throughout the school year, registration forms are reviewed to identify students with current IEPs from previous schools attended. The parents are informed of their rights, procedures, and responsibilities under special education law. Decisions regarding an IEP are made by the IEP Team. This team has required participants which minimally includes general and special education providers, administrators, and the parent(s).

The IDEA includes specific rights for parents of children with disabilities. This information is contained in the document commonly referred to as the Procedural Safeguards. We encourage parents to review this document carefully, so they are fully informed of their rights. Copies of this document are provided at a minimum of at least once per school year and can be obtained from your school office or by contacting the state's Department of Education.

Educational Placement of Students with Disabilities

The school is committed to educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in order to meet their educational needs as determined by the student's IEP Team. This means that to the maximum extent appropriate, children who are disabled are educated with children who are nondisabled, and special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the

nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

In an effort to meet with the LRE requirements, the school must ensure that a continuum of placement options is available to students with disabilities, including: services provided within the general education classroom; pull-out services; special classes; home instruction; instruction in hospitals and institutions; and in unique circumstances, access to programs and services located in settings outside the school. Placement decisions are the determination of the Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT).

Transfer Students:

In-State transfer: If a child with a disability (who had an IEP in effect in a previous public agency) transfers to a new school in the same state and enrolls in the new school within the same academic year, the public agency (in consultation with the child's parents) shall provide the child with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the prior IEP, until the public agency adopts the prior IEP or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state laws.

Out of State Transfer: If a child with a disability (who had an IEP in effect in a previous public agency) transfers to a new school in a different state and enrolls in the new school within the same academic year, the public agency (in consultation with the child's parents) shall provide such a child with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the prior IEP's until the public agency conducts an evaluation, if determined to be necessary by the agency, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate, that is consistent with federal and state laws. The evaluation conducted is considered an initial evaluation as special education eligibility within the new state must be determined.

In order to comply with these transfer requirements, under certain circumstances the school may need to contract with another school/entity for the provision of educational services.

Parent Participation

Parents are an important member of the school community and have the right to participate in all meetings involving the evaluation, identification, and educational placement of their student. Parents will be invited to participate and share information about their student prior to and during the IEPT meeting. Parents are encouraged to review the *Procedural Safeguards* so that they are fully informed of their rights.

Crisis Management: De-escalation, Isolation and Restraint of Student

The school is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. It is the policy of our school to only utilize approved physical restraint in response to emergency or crisis situations. Use of restraint procedures should: (a) not be viewed as a behavior change or intervention strategy, (b) be implemented only under extreme situations and as a matter of last resort, (c) be implemented only by trained personnel, and (d) be accompanied by school wide pro-active positive behavior supports to prevent the need for their use. When such activities are utilized, documentation procedures are required in addition to timely communication with parents and other key members of the educational system. This documentation must remain on file at the school and is considered part of the student's educational record.

ABA Behavioral Strategies and Crisis Prevention

Advantage employs the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to minimize and extinguish maladaptive behaviors. ABA is used as a daily protocol to help students manage their behaviors in a positive and proactive way. If a student escalates into a crisis, becoming a danger to himself or others, Quality Behavioral Solutions to Complex Challenges (QBS) strategies are used. The QBS program's proven strategies give service providers and educators the skills to safely and effectively respond to anxious, hostile, or violent behavior while balancing the responsibilities of care. These strategies include verbal de-escalation, therapeutic holds, calming rooms or seclusion. Advantage only uses these strategies as a last resort and follows all restraint and seclusion reporting requirements found in R.S. 17:416.21.

Moral Focus™

Philosophy

At NHA, we believe it is our job to ensure our students leave us not only with a quality education, but with strong moral character to guide them. They will inevitably be faced with challenges throughout their lives that we cannot anticipate, but must prepare them for. One of our primary academic goals is college readiness for all students, and we cannot achieve that goal by focusing on our rigorous academic program alone.

Through an intentional focus on the development of character, our students will acquire all of the skills they will need to prepare them for college and the challenges they will face in life. Moral Focus™ provides students with a moral foundation to stand on and the strength to withstand whatever comes their way. Parents are the first and most important influence on the development of a child's character, but it is our job to partner with you by reinforcing those positive values in the classroom. Guiding the growth and development of character can often be more impactful in the lives of our students than anything else we teach them. It is during this critical period of their lives that they will learn how to be the adults they will one day become.

It is an essential component of the education of our students that simply cannot be left out. The role teachers play in shaping the character of their students is one of profound importance. It is a responsibility that NHA takes very seriously through our work to maintain an intentional and consistent focus on the character development of our students and the character being modeled for them.

Moral Focus™ Expectations

Our Moral Focus™ program greatly impacts the development of a positive school culture. Each classroom works diligently to uphold the following expectations related to the implementation of Moral Focus™.

- Moral Focus™ monthly virtues are posted in all classrooms and around the school.
    - Students will be able to identify the Moral Focus™ virtue of the month.
- Monthly virtues are explicitly taught through lessons, activities, or assemblies.
    - Students will be able to define each Moral Focus™ virtue.
- Moral Focus™ virtues are incorporated throughout day-to-day interactions.
    - Students will be able to provide examples of behavior that exemplify each Moral Focus™ virtue.
    - Teachers will be able to capitalize on teachable moments using the Moral Focus™ virtues.
    - Teachers will redirect student behavior referencing the Moral Focus™ virtues.

Monthly Virtues		
September – WISDOM	October – RESPECT	November - GRATITUDE
December – SELF-CONTROL	January – PERSEVERANCE	February - COURAGE
March – ENCOURAGEMENT	April – COMPASSION	May - INTEGRITY

By intentionally teaching the Moral Focus™ virtues and weaving them into the fabric of the classroom, teachers are better able to support their efforts in creating systems that support

students in taking responsibility for what they need to do and how they need to do it with a sense of urgency that increases the time spent learning. Teachers intentionally guide students as they acquire or strengthen virtues in their lives. Through this process, they provide students with the opportunity to learn virtues in a way that will not only affect their mind, but change their heart. To support teachers as they work to develop the character of the students they serve, time is dedicated each week to the teaching of Moral Focus™ virtues.

Moral Focus™ Assemblies

To support the Moral Focus™ program and philosophy, regular Moral Focus™ assemblies are held. During assemblies, students recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Student Creed. The staff and/or students lead a brief discussion of the month's virtue and perform a skit or lead another activity to exemplify the virtue. At times, students are recognized for outstanding citizenship and academic achievement. Parents and friends are encouraged to attend the assemblies.

Student Responsibility: Homework

Philosophy

The school staff believes that homework is an important component of the educational process as it allows students to be actively engaged in their own learning. It is expected that the following objectives will be accomplished through regular and well-planned homework:

- Students will develop more self-direction and individual responsibility.
- Students will develop independent study skills.
- Students will become organized.
- Students will learn to budget their time.
- Homework is intended to align with student proficiency goals.

Guidelines

1. Parents and students should expect regular homework.
2. Assigned homework that requires completion is part of each student's evaluation.
3. Homework will be planned and assigned for specific instructional purposes related to classroom objectives.
4. The quantity of homework will be within reason. As the school year progresses, the amount of homework and the number of days homework is assigned may increase depending on the maturity and ability of the students.

Make-Up Work

Students have an obligation to complete assignments missed during illness, suspension, or unexpected absence from school. In keeping with our belief that students should develop a sense of responsibility, we expect them, with their parents' help, to contact their teachers to secure missed assignments.

In cases of prolonged absence due to illness, the student's teachers should be called, so necessary arrangements can be made to have assignments picked up.

Homework Assistance

Students and their parents or legal guardians are encouraged to seek homework assistance through their local public library or by accessing the after-school homework assistance services offered through the State Library of Louisiana. The State Library of Louisiana homework assistance services can be accessed at the Homework Louisiana website.

Student Responsibility: Technology Use and Internet Safety Practices and Procedures

Students are offered access to the National Heritage Academies (NHA) computer network for creativity, communication, research, and other tasks related to the NHA academic program. All use of computers, furnished or created data, software, and other technology resources as granted by NHA are the property of NHA and are intended for school business and educational use. Students are to use the NHA computer network responsibly. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and using the NHA computer network and the school's technological resources.

At no point may any Advantage student possess a cellphone or other handheld electronic device on Advantage's campus. Should a student bring such a device to school, the device must be turned off and properly stowed during the duration of the school day. A violation of this provision is considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and appropriate measures will be taken against students who fail to adhere.

The school educates students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

General Rules

1. **Privacy:** The school and NHA reserve the right to monitor Internet traffic and to retrieve and review any data composed, sent, received, or stored using the NHA network or Internet connections, including e-mail. Users do not enjoy any expectation of privacy when using any NHA technology or transmissions originating within or around school property.

2. **Bullying:** The school prohibits cyber-bullying, an act involving the use of information and communication technologies, including but not limited to e-mail, text messages, blogs, instant messages, personal Web sites, on-line social directories and communities, video-posting sites, and online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate or repeated hostile behavior, by an individual or group, that is intended to defame, harm, threaten, intimidate, or harass students, staff members, or the school during or outside school hours and on or off school premises.

3. **Materials and Language:** Use of or accessing profane, abusive, pornographic, obscene, and/or impolite materials or language is not permitted. Accidental access should be reported to the instructor immediately. Intentional circumvention of web-filtering is prohibited.

4. **Installing/Copying:** Students are not to install or download any hardware, software, shareware, or freeware onto any media or network drives. Software installed by anyone other than the network administrator will be removed. Downloading of non-work-related files is permitted only with an instructor's permission. Students may not copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. All copyright laws must be respected. Use of any other organization's network or technology resources via the NHA network

requires the instructor's permission and must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.

5. **Access:** Users may not access the computer network without proper authorization. Users are to use their own username and password when using a computer. Users must log off the computer when they are finished with their work and are not to log on to a computer for someone else or tell others their password. Students are to notify the instructor if someone else is thought to know his/her password.

6. **Data Protection:** Users must not attempt to damage or destroy equipment or files. Though efforts are made by NHA to ensure the safety and integrity of data, NHA makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the service it provides. NHA will not be responsible for any damage to data.

7. **Storage:** Users are to delete their files and materials they no longer need.

8. **Printing Resources:** Paper and toner are costly, and excessive use is wasteful. Documents must be proofread before printing. Users are to print only the needed part(s) of documents. Students must obtain permission from an instructor before printing documents.

9. **Technology Disruptions:** Users may not perform any activity designed to deny the availability of network or computer services. These activities are malicious and pose a cyber threat by denying or limiting services without authorization or permission.

Internet Use

The World Wide Web is a vast collection of resources readily available to any user on any computer connected to the Internet. NHA integrates the use of these resources into student instruction. Student Internet usage is permitted only in the presence and supervision of a teacher, the child's parent, or other designated adult school personnel. NHA is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet or the NHA computer network.

Some material accessible via the Internet contains illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive language or images. While the school uses Internet resources to achieve educational goals, there is always a risk of students accessing other materials. However, we believe that the benefits of using technology outweigh the disadvantages. Teachers are trained in the appropriate use of technology with students, but parents of students are responsible for setting and conveying the expectations regarding the use of media and information sources at home and at school.

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to the Internet and other information. Under CIPA, schools must certify that they have certain Internet safety measures in place. These include measures to block or filter pictures that (a) are obscene, (b) contain child pornography, or (c) when computers with Internet access are used by minors, are harmful to minors. Schools subject to CIPA must adopt a policy such as this to monitor online activities of minors and to address (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web, (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications, (c) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful

activities by minors online, (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors, and (e) restricting minors' access to harmful materials.

NHA complies with CIPA by deploying a Web content filtering product which categorizes Internet sites and sends updates to NHA and cloud site-based hardware. A process is in place for changing the categorization of Web sites. The following categorizations are currently in place:

- Obscenity and Pornography Filtering: The website and content filter allows NHA to manage Internet access for several URL categories pertinent to CIPA.
- Web Filtering: The website and content filter that is supported by the web content filtering product and can be updated based off the need of the school.
- Monitoring: The website and content filter contains reporting tools and a real-time monitoring function and reports online activities of minors.
- Policy Management: The website and content filter allows customization of Internet policies, based on a user or group, with the ability to set appropriate policies based on age or need.

Student Responsibility: Search and Seizure Practices and Procedures

Lockers are School Property

All lockers assigned to students are the property of the school. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of its lockers. The school principal or his/her designee shall have custody of all combinations to all lockers or locks. Students are prohibited from placing locks on any locker without the advanced approval of the school principal or his/her designee.

Legitimate Use of School Lockers

The school assigns lockers to its students for their convenience and temporary use. Students are to use lockers exclusively to store school-related materials and authorized personal items such as footwear, grooming aids, lunches, or outer garments. Students shall not use lockers for any other purpose, unless specifically authorized by school board policy, the school principal, or his/her designee prior to students bringing the items to school. Students solely are responsible for the contents of their lockers.

Search of Locker Contents

Searches of school lockers and their contents deter violations of school rules and regulations, ensure proper maintenance of school property, and provide greater safety and security for students and personnel. Accordingly, the Board of Directors authorizes the principal or his/her designee, upon reasonable suspicion under the circumstances, to search lockers and locker contents at any time, without notice, and without parental or student consent.

The principal or his/her designee shall not be obligated, but may request the assistance of a law enforcement officer in conducting a locker search. The principal or his/her designee shall supervise the search. In the course of a locker search, the school principal or his/her designee shall respect the privacy rights of the student regarding any items discovered that are not illegal or in violation of school policies and rules.

Seizure

When conducting locker searches, the principal or his/her designee may seize any illegal or unauthorized items, items in violation of board policy and/or school policies or rules, or any other items reasonably determined by the principal or his/her designee to be a potential threat to the safety or security of others and report the finding of such items to law enforcement officials to the extent required by law. Such items include but are not limited to the following: contraband, controlled substance analogues or other intoxicants, dangerous weapons, explosives, firearms, flammable materials, illegal controlled substances, poisons, and stolen property. Any items seized by the school principal or his/her designee shall be removed from the locker and held by school officials for evidence in disciplinary proceedings and/or turned over to law enforcement officials. The parent of a student shall be notified by the principal or his/her designee of items removed from the locker.

Search and Seizure of Electronic Devices

Cell phones, Tablets/ iPads, and personal computers. Cell phones, tablets/iPads and personal computers are not permitted on Advantage's campus at any time. Should a student bring such a device to school, the device must be turned off and properly stowed during the duration of the school day. If the teacher has a reasonable suspicion that a violation has occurred, he/she shall

have the right to search for and confiscate the electronic device. This prohibition against cellphones and/or other electronic devices shall not extend to students with an IEP, IAP, Section 504 Plan, or Individualized Health Plan that requires the use of an electronic telecommunication device. A violation of this provision is considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and appropriate measures will be taken against students who fail to adhere.

All other electronic devices. All other electronic devices, including but not limited to PDAs, iPods, MP3 players, video equipment, cameras, gaming devices, laser pointers, recording devices, are not permitted on school grounds or at school-related events unless approved by the principal. If approved, an electronic device shall not be used in a manner that disrupts the educational process or purpose, including but not limited to posing a threat to academic integrity, violating confidentiality or privacy rights of another individual, or violating the Student Code of Conduct. If the principal or his/her designee has a reasonable suspicion that a violation has occurred, he/she shall have the right to search for and confiscate the electronic device.

Search and Seizure of Person and/or Personal Property

The school will conduct a search if the principal (or principal designee) has a reasonable suspicion that a violation of the Student Code of Conduct has occurred. When determining the nature and scope of the search, the principal (or the principal designee) will consider the age and sex of the student as well as the nature of the act of misconduct. The search may include the student's person, backpack, purse, pockets, shoes, and/or other personal property, but a student's person will only be searched when there is a reasonable suspicion that the student has an illegal weapon, drug and/or alcohol on his/her person. A physical search may only be conducted by a staff member of the same sex as the pupil. School personnel shall not conduct strip searches or body cavity searches of any pupils under any circumstances.

Positive Behavior Intervention Support

The purpose of school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm. While the Student Code of Conduct necessarily focuses on misconduct and the resulting consequences, we actively promote PBIS as a strategy to teach, model and reinforce positive social behavior as an important aspect of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioral expectations and recognizing students for meeting and exceeding them are important community-building strategies that shape the culture of our schools.

Building-Wide Expectations

The PBIS expectations are designed to (1) provide a clear understanding of expected student behavior, (2) be few in number, (3) be positively stated and structured, (4) use familiar language, and (5) include example behaviors defined for purposes of instruction. These expectations will be clearly posted in each of our schools.

Student Responsibility: Student Code of Conduct

Our goal is to offer a quality education program. To fulfill this goal, students need a positive, safe, and orderly school environment in which learning can take place without disruption. Students who do not observe the rules of good conduct in the classroom or on the playground decrease both the learning and safety of others and their own opportunities to learn. Therefore, our staff takes a very proactive role in enforcing the Student Code of Conduct outlined below.

Students are expected to demonstrate respect and courtesy by obeying staff members, being kind to others, and being considerate of others' and the school's property.

Acts of Misconduct

The acts of misconduct listed in this Student Code of Conduct are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list or as a limitation upon the authority of school officials to deal appropriately with other types of conduct which interfere with the good order of the school, the proper functioning of the educational process, or the health and safety of students.

A student violating any of the acts of misconduct listed in this Student Code of Conduct will be disciplined. Additionally, a student who engages in an act of misconduct that violates the law may be referred to law enforcement.

Students are expected to follow the Code of Conduct when:

- on school property;
- in a motor vehicle being used for a school related purpose;
- at a school-related activity, function or event;
- en route to or from school;
- at any time or place when the student's behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order, safety, health and discipline in the school

Acts of misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any and all forms of smoking, tobacco possession or use including e-cigarettes/vaporizers and paraphernalia
- Any public display of affection having sexual connotations
- Arson
- Bullying and harassment
- Coercion, extortion or blackmail
- Criminal acts other than as enumerated herein
- Criminal Sexual Conduct as defined by state law
- Cyber-bullying as defined by the Technology Use and Internet Safety Practices and Procedures
- Defacement/Damage of property or theft/possession of stolen property
- Disruption of school
- Excessive tardiness or absences as defined in the Attendance Policy
- Extreme acts of defiance and/or threats toward teachers/other adults/fellow students
- Failure to cooperate or comply with directions of school personnel and volunteers
- False alarms
- False allegations against staff, volunteers, or students

- Falsification of records or scholastic dishonesty (including cheating and plagiarism)
- Fighting, assault and/or battery on another person
- Gangs and gang related activity
- Improper dress in violation of the Dress Code
- Improper or disrespectful communications to staff, volunteers, or students
- Indecency (either with clothing/exposure, pictures or public display of affection)
- Malicious or willful types of behavior that endanger the safety of others
- Misconduct prior to enrollment*
- Misuse of copyrighted materials
- Possession and/or sale of alcohol and/or drugs (narcotic drugs, look-a-like substances and illegal chemical substances)
- Possession of dangerous weapons as defined by state law and dangerous weapons or instruments not otherwise enumerated herein
- Possession of cellphones or other electronic device(s) on Advantage's campus
- Possession of firework(s), explosive(s) and/or chemical substance(s)
- Possession of look-a-like weapons
- Possession of personal protection devices (such as tasers, mace, pepper-spray, etc.)
- Suspended or expelled student on school property or attending school activities
- Title IX Sexual Harassment
- Trespassing, loitering
- Unadjustable or incorrigible behavior. A pattern of behavior when a student is disciplined under the code for the disregard for school rules and regulations established by the School Board.
- Use or possession of Electronic Telecommunication device(s), including facsimile systems, radio paging devices, mobile telephone service, intercom or electromechanical paging system during school hours.
- Use, possession, distribution, and/or sale of alcohol and/or illegal drugs, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or attempted use, distribution and/or sale of alcohol and/or drugs including but not limited to, controlled substances as defined by law, marijuana, look-a-like or imitation drug substances and illegal chemical substances
- Verbal assault
- Violation of Technology Use and Internet Safety Practices and Procedures
- Violations of building rules and regulations
- Violations of rules or policies as set forth in the Parent and Student Handbook
- Vulgarity, spoken, written or implied

Parents or students who are unsure of what conduct is prohibited by each act should consult with the principal.

*If your child has been suspended or expelled from another Louisiana school, your child will be offered an opportunity for an informal hearing before the principal to determine whether the school will honor the suspension or expulsion as initially imposed by the other Louisiana school. If the principal chooses to honor the disciplinary removal imposed by the other Louisiana school, then your child will be temporarily denied admittance to the school until after the suspension or expulsion expires.

If your child has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a school in another state, your child will be offered an opportunity for an informal hearing before the principal. Based on the outcome of the hearing, your child may be denied admittance for the

shorter of the period of the removal from the previous school or the period of removal and/or re-admittance requirements which would have been applied had the student committed the same offense in this school.

Disciplinary Procedures

A student may be disciplined at any level depending upon the facts, frequency and/or severity of the act of misconduct. A Behavior Referral will be completed for each violation of the Code of Conduct and copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. Discipline records will be included in any student file properly requested by the parent to be transferred to a subsequent school. Corporal punishment is prohibited as a means of discipline.

Level 1 EARLY INTERVENTION: The behavior may be a violation of the code of conduct or a disruption of the orderly operation of the classroom or a school activity. The inappropriate behavior is addressed directly with the student.

Level 2 PARENT NOTIFICATION: The parent is notified by mail or a note home of the misbehavior.

Level 3 PARENT CONTACT: A conference with the parent is held in order to discuss the incident and appropriate disciplinary action.

Level 4 BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLAN (BSP): When Level 2 and 3 behaviors become chronic or a student accumulates more than ten (10) suspension days in a semester, the dean and/or principal shall schedule a meeting with the parents in order to implement a Behavior Support Plan or BSP. A BSP will take into consideration the motivation for the inappropriate behavior, positive interventions that might be utilized to diminish the inappropriate behavior and disciplinary consequences that will take place if the behavior continues. The BSP is an intervention tool and does not require parent consent to implement. Copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. Violation(s) of the BSP will result in disciplinary action and a revised BSP. In the event of multiple (3-5) violations and revisions of the BSP, the School Principal, or the Principal's designee in the Principal's absence, has the discretion to impose additional disciplinary measures or recommend the student for additional disciplinary measures up to and including expulsion.

Level 5 SUSPENSION OF 10 SCHOOL DAYS OR LESS OR OTHER DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS: When the act of misconduct disrupts the school environment, the resulting consequence issued by the school administration may include suspension of up to 10 school days, or other options that allow the school to practice discretion to enact the practices and procedures to align with Behave With Care and the School-wide Behavior System. The school administration may convene a meeting with the student, parents and others to develop or update an existing Behavior Contract that outlines the expected behavior and disciplinary action. The Behavior Contract will be signed by school administration and offered to the student and parent(s) for signature. Copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. The student will be granted a right to due process as described in the Due Process Procedures of this Code of Conduct.

Level 6 LONG TERM SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION: When the act of misconduct is considered a crime under state law, constitutes extreme non-compliance with school rules, or is so extreme that it threatens the safety of others, the student may serve a long-term suspension or be expelled from the school. The student will be granted a right to a due process hearing.

Students who are served under IDEA (Special Education) or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are entitled to certain additional rights in the area of discipline based upon their qualification for services under these federal laws.

Bullying

The school prohibits any and all acts of bullying exhibited toward a student, more than once, by another student or group of students and occurs, or is received by, a student while on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related function or activity, in any school bus or van, at any designated school bus stop, in any other school or private vehicle used to transport students to and from schools, or any school-sponsored activity or event. Bullying means a pattern of any one or more of the following that has the effect of physically harming a student, placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm, damaging a student's property, placing the student in reasonable fear of damage to the student's property, or must be sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough to either create an intimidating or threatening educational environment, have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's performance in school, or have the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school:

- Gestures, including but not limited to obscene gestures and making faces.
- Written, electronic, or verbal communications, including but not limited to calling names, threatening harm, taunting, malicious teasing, or spreading untrue rumors. Electronic communication includes but is not limited to a communication or image transmitted by email, instant message, text message, blog, or social networking website through the use of a telephone, mobile phone, page, computer, or other electronic device.
- Physical acts, including but not limited to hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, choking, damaging personal property, or unauthorized use of personal property.
- Repeatedly and purposefully shunning or excluding from activities.

Procedures:

1. Any school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall report the incident to the principal. A student, volunteer, or visitor who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall report the incident to a teacher, other staff member or the principal.
2. A verbal report of bullying or harassing behavior shall be submitted by the school employee or the parent on the same day as the employee or parent witnessed or otherwise learned of the bullying incident and a written report shall be filed no later than two days thereafter. The report may be done anonymously and shall remain confidential.
3. Any staff member who receives a report of bullying or harassing behavior shall immediately forward the report to the principal who will ensure that a prompt investigation is completed. The school shall begin an investigation of any complaint that is properly reported and that alleges prohibited conduct the next business day during which the school is in session after the report is received by the school official. The investigation shall be completed not later than ten (10) school days after the date the written report of the incident is submitted to the appropriate school official. If additional information is received after the end of the ten-day period, the school principal or his/her designee shall amend all documents and reports.
4. Upon completion of the investigation report, the principal or his/her designee shall notify the parent of both the victim and perpetrator of the result of the investigation.

5. There will be no reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment. Such reprisal or retaliation by a student is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.
6. Any student who is found to have falsely accused another of bullying or harassment is subject to remedial action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Bullying or harassing behavior is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

These procedures are not applicable to Title IX Sexual Harassment.

Due Process Procedures

The following due process procedures only govern the suspension or the expulsion of a student from the school's regular educational program. If a student charged with violation of this Student Code of Conduct has been returned to the regular school program pending a decision, then such action of reinstatement shall not limit or prejudice the school's right to suspend or expel the student following that decision.

A. Suspension of Ten (10) School Days or Less

The principal may, at his/her discretion, appoint a designee to address suspensions of ten (10) school days or less. As a general rule, prior to any suspension of the student, the principal or designee shall provide the student with the following due process:

1. Inform the student of the charges against him/her, and, if the student denies the charges, provide the student with an explanation of the evidence the principal or designee possesses.

2. The student shall be provided an opportunity to explain his/her version of the facts.

3. Provide the student's parent with a Notice of Suspension form.

If a student's presence in school poses an immediate danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process, the principal or designee may immediately suspend the student, and as soon thereafter as reasonable, provide the student with his/her due process rights as set forth in this section.

If, after providing the student with his/her due process rights, it is determined that the student has engaged in a prohibited act under this Student Code of Conduct, then a disciplinary penalty of a suspension not to exceed ten (10) school days shall be made. The student's parent shall be informed (in person, by phone or by certified mail) of the suspension and of the reasons and conditions of the suspension. Prior to readmitting the student, the principal or designee shall meet with the parent and student.

A decision to suspend a student for ten (10) or fewer school days may be appealed before the Board of Directors on the merits of the suspension. A parent shall have the right to appeal the suspension by contacting the principal within five (5) days of the notice of suspension.

B. Long-Term Suspension (over 10 days) and Expulsion

The principal has the discretion to issue a long-term suspension over ten (10) school days or an expulsion for a minimum of one semester. The Board of Directors will hear all appeals for long-term suspension or expulsion.

Acts of misconduct warranting long-term suspension or expulsion require that the student be immediately be placed on suspension for up to five (5) school days pending the hearing.

1. Hearing for Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion

   If a student is charged with a violation of the Student Code of Conduct carrying a consequence of long-term suspension or expulsion, the student and his parent shall be notified of such in writing by regular and certified mail, as well as the student's rights of due process as set forth herein.

   The due process hearing before the principal shall be conducted within five (5) school days of the date of the act of misconduct.

   The written notice of violation shall state the nature of the violation, the proposed consequence, and the student's and parent's right to a due process hearing before the principal at a specified time and place to determine (i) whether a violation occurred and (ii) whether the consequence of such violation merits the imposition of a long-term suspension or expulsion.

   The notice shall also set forth the right of the student and his parent and an advocate of their choice and at their expense to participate in the hearing, the right of the student to hear and/or see the evidence offered against him or her during the hearing, the right of the student to present oral or written evidence or testimony on the student's behalf, and the right to a written record of the result of the hearing.

   At the hearing, the student and parent shall be advised of the alleged violation and the facts leading toward the allegation. Minutes shall be kept of the hearing. Within a reasonable time following the hearing, the principal will provide the parent with a written record of the decision. This document will inform the parent of their right to an appeal before the Board of Directors. The parent may request an appeal within five (5) days of the determination of the principal.

   The parent shall be responsible for making arrangements for the child's educational needs during a suspension or expulsion.

   All discipline decisions made by the principal and confirmed by the Board of Directors are final and not subject to further appeal at the school level.

C. Specific Expulsion Events

The principal shall immediately suspend a student who is found carrying or possessing a firearm or another dangerous instrumentality or who possesses, distributes, sells, gives or loans any controlled dangerous substance. No student shall be permitted to carry or possess a knife of any blade length on school grounds, school buses or at school events.

1. Firearms, Knives or other Dangerous Instruments

   Any student under 16 years of age and in grades 6 through 8, found guilty of being in the possession of a firearm or knife with a blade that equals or exceeds two inches in length on school property or other dangerous instrument, on a school bus or in actual possession at a school sponsored event shall be expelled from school for a minimum period of four (4) complete school semesters. If the student is in kindergarten through grade 5, the expulsion period shall be a minimum of two (2) complete semesters. The principal may modify in writing the minimum length of expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

2. Controlled Substances

   Any student under 16 years of age and in grades 6 through 8, found guilty of possession of or knowledge of and intentional distribution of or possession with intent to distribute any illegal narcotic, drug or other controlled substance on school property, on a school bus, or at a school event, pursuant to a hearing as provided shall be expelled from school of a minimum period of two (2) complete semesters. If the student is in kindergarten through grade 5, the student shall be referred to the principal for disciplinary action.

   A student expelled for firearm, knife, and controlled substance related offenses shall provide documentation that he or she has participated in a rehabilitation or counseling program related to the offense leading to the expulsion prior to readmission in the regular school setting, which rehabilitation or counseling program shall be approved by the Juvenile or Family Court having jurisdiction, provided that the program shall be at no additional cost to the school system.

The School will disenroll a student upon receipt of either written notice from a parent/guardian of intent to withdraw or a records request from another school. If at the time of receipt of a notice of disenrollment there are pending disciplinary proceedings against the student involving potential suspension or expulsion, the School may elect to complete those proceedings.

Definition of Terms

Behavior Referral is a specific written record of the student's act of misconduct. It documents the date, nature of the offense, and the disciplinary action taken by the teacher and/or school administration.

Behavior Support Plan (BSP) is a written document that identifies the motivation for chronic misbehavior and what steps will be taken in order to help a student overcome inappropriate behavior. When Level 2 and 3 behaviors become chronic or a student accumulates more than ten (10) suspension days in a semester, the dean and/or principal shall schedule a meeting with the parents in order to implement a Behavior Support Plan or BSP. A BSP will take into consideration the motivation for the inappropriate behavior, positive interventions that might be utilized to diminish the inappropriate behavior and disciplinary consequences that will take place if the behavior continues. The BSP is an intervention tool and does not require parent consent to implement. Copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. Violation(s) of the BSP will result in disciplinary action and a revised BSP. In the event of multiple (3-5) violations and revisions of the BSP, the School Principal, or the Principal's designee in the Principal's

absence, has the discretion to impose additional disciplinary measures or recommend the student for additional disciplinary measures up to and including expulsion.

Behavior Contract is a written document that outlines specific behavior expectations and disciplinary action for a student.

Detention refers to activities, assignments or work held before the normal school day, after the normal school day or on weekends.

In-School Suspension refers to a decision to temporarily remove a student from the regular classroom setting but maintaining the student under supervision within the school building that allows the student to continue to progress in their coursework but denies them access to regular classroom instruction and social interaction with their peers. The In-House Suspension room must be supervised by an adult employee of the building at all times.

Out-Of-School Suspension refers to a decision to temporarily remove a student's right to attend school or any school-related activity not to exceed ten (10) school days. A meeting with the parents shall be convened to discuss the incident that led to the suspension and to develop a Behavior Contract for the future.

Long Term Suspension refers to a principal's decision to temporarily remove a student from school for more than ten (10) school days but less than thirty (30) school days. This decision shall be made by the principal with the right to appeal to the Board of Directors.

Expulsion is defined as a decision to remove a student from school due to extreme non-compliance with school rules/state law for a period of not less than one (1) semester, during which time the student shall be placed in an alternative school.

The principal may modify a recommendation for expulsions based upon the following considerations:

A. The student possessing or carrying a firearm or knife had done so for the purposes of involvement in a school class or course or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity approved by the principal in advance.
B. The controlled substance has been legally prescribed by a licensed physician and proof of the prescription was provided by the student immediately upon discovery of the controlled substance.

Dating Violence is defined as a pattern of behavior where one person threatens to use, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner.

A. Warning Signs include a dating partner who: (1) attempts to isolate you from friends and family, (2) is very controlling, (3) is extremely jealous, (4) blames you when he or she treats you badly, (5) has an explosive temper ("blows up" a lot), or (6) uses physical force against you.
B. **Reporting**: If you are in an abusive relationship, help is available. Students are encouraged to bring reports of dating violence to the principal or other administrator. For additional assistance, call the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence's 24-hour toll-free hotline at 1-888-411-1333 to speak with a trained advocate who can help. If you feel you are in immediate danger, call 911.

Behavior Threat Assessment & Management (BTAM) Process

Recognizing that certain behaviors may be indicative of potential risk of safety to self or others, school officials will implement a threat assessment process.

The BTAM team will be a multi-disciplinary team made up of school officials. For purposes of assessment and intervention, school officials shall mean principals, deans, mental health counselors, social workers, teachers, law enforcement, NHA employees and outside consultants who have a legitimate educational interest in the behavior the student (34 CFR §99.36).

The following behaviors shall be reported for screening:

- Commits an act of violence upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee.
- Commits an act of violence against another student while on school property.
- Commits an act of violence against any person on school property.
- Possess or display a gun, knife, explosive or incendiary bomb, or other dangerous weapon on school property.
- Threatens to use any instrument that appears capable of causing physical injury or death while on school property.
- Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other school employee or any person lawfully on school property.
- Knowing and intentionally damaging or destroying school property.
- Risky behaviors such as grievances with classmates, discipline problems, criminal activity, cruelty to animals, intolerance, prejudice or affiliation with gangs are paired with escalating behaviors or unexplained behavioral changes.
- Threats and/or communications that have context and meaning to support a legitimate safety concern.
- Persons on the receiving end of a concerning behavior fear for their safety.
- Concerning behavior or threat made through the state confidential tip line.

If the screening reveals that there is a need to conduct a full threat assessment the BTAM team shall meet to collect data and investigate the event.

At the conclusion of the BTAM assessment, school leadership shall complete the BTAM Intervention and Monitoring plan. Only the Intervention and Monitoring plan shall be maintained in the student's educational record. The Intervention and Monitoring plan shall be reviewed and modified as determined by the BTAM team until it can be placed into an inactive status.

Parental Partnership: Communication

Effective communication between the school and home is vital to the academic success, and emotional and social well-being of students. The school will communicate often and by a variety of means in an effort to keep parents informed of the programs, events, and activities at school and the academic growth and achievement of students.

Secure School Website

National Heritage Academies (NHA) is committed to student achievement and parental involvement. NHA maintains a secure website, the NHA Parent Portal, containing student information to link these two core values. This secure online tool can be accessed by visiting the school website and logging in through the Parent Portal link in the upper right corner of the homepage. Administrators and teachers daily update student records, analyze data, and communicate important information on this site.

NHA recognizes the value of informed and involved parents in the learning process. The NHA Parent Portal provides another way for parents to stay connected to the school. The online connection begins as soon as a student applies to attend an NHA school. The parent(s) of the applicant are sent a letter with detailed instructions for accessing their own *free* online account. After following these instructions, parents can log on to the system from any computer or mobile device with Internet access and review their child's admissions information, attendance, and grades.

Through the NHA Parent Portal, parents also can access NHA's school-to-parent communication tool to see school updates and engage with staff members, including sending direct messages. Questions related to the Parent Portal should be directed to parentportalsupport@nhaschools.com.

Parent Satisfaction Survey

Measuring and understanding parent satisfaction is an important part of our culture. In an effort to understand school-wide parent satisfaction, our students' parents are surveyed twice per year. Parents are expected to complete one survey per household.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are conducted face-to-face twice each school year. In addition, parents are encouraged to inquire about their child's performance any time during the school year. We believe that by continually monitoring students' progress, the parent-teacher conferences will serve as a review with very few surprises.

During each conference, teachers review the student's progress and discuss his/her strengths and opportunities. Parents are encouraged to ask questions in order to learn as much as possible about their child's performance. We aim to make parent-teacher conferences a positive experience for everyone involved.

Up-to-Date Contact Information

We must be able to contact you (or your designated substitute) during the day. Parents/guardians are required to notify the school office whenever there is a change in home, work, or cell phone numbers or other emergency contact information. That includes changes to

a student's medical history or any other condition that affects students participating in school programs.

Parental Partnership: Attendance

Regular attendance establishes good work habits and self-discipline. Our school records attendance every morning, afternoon, and in each middle school class period.

School Hours

The school hours are as follows:

- Grades K-5: 8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

The half day dismissal time for grades K-5 is 11:15 a.m.

Arrival

Students in grades K-8 should arrive to school between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. School doors open at 8:05 a.m. After exiting their vehicle, students should proceed directly into the building. They may not run, shout, or otherwise act in a disorderly manner. All students wearing hats should remove them upon entering the building. Prompt arrival is essential for an orderly opening ceremony.

Dismissal

School dismisses at 3:15 p.m. for grades K-8. In the interest of teacher's preparation time, parents are asked to pick up their children immediately at dismissal and no later than 3:30 p.m. Any students not picked up by their designated time will be sent to our after-school care provider for an hourly fee. Siblings or carpoolers of any after school program participants (sports, drama, band, tutoring, etc.) must be picked up at their dismissal time. Staff members or coaches are not responsible for students that are not picked up.

Tardiness and Early Dismissal

Students are considered tardy if they arrive to their homerooms after the start of either class or morning ceremony, if held prior to class. Parents must walk tardy students into the school office and sign them in on the sign-in sheet. Early dismissals from school will be marked accordingly in the student's record. Parents who dismiss their child early from school, for any reason, must sign the child out.

If a tardy is due to a doctor or dental appointment, a note from a physician may be requested. Tardies are excused for only the following reasons:

- Personal illness or injury
- Funerals
- Doctor or dental appointments (which could not be arranged outside school hours)
- Religious observances
- Authorized tardy (approved by the principal)

We consider abuse of tardies and/or early dismissals as lost instructional time, which may be addressed by the principal.

Please Note: When a student accumulates 10-20 tardies and/or early dismissals, a parent meeting may be held and an Attendance Corrective Action Plan may be initiated.

Absences

All absences are to be verified by communication from the parent to the school office. This communication should be documented for record-keeping purposes. Voicemail is available before and after school hours.

If an absence is not verified by communication from the parent, the absence is considered unexcused. An absence may be excused if communication is provided by the parent within five days following the absence and meets the guidelines below for an excused absence. The communication should contain the following information:

- Student's name
- Teacher's name
- Date of absence
- Reason for absence
- Phone number
- Signature of parent

If an absence is due to illness and lasts five days or more, a note from a physician may be requested. Absences are excused only for the following reasons:

- Personal illness or injury
- Funerals
- Doctor or dental appointments (which could not be arranged outside school hours)
- Religious observances
- Authorized absence (approved by the principal)

Abuse of excused absences may be investigated by the principal and could result in a referral to the Visiting Teacher or supervisor of Office of Child Welfare and Attendance or other disciplinary action.

Absences (Excused and Unexcused)	Procedures & Notifications
0	Notification of Attendance Expectations to all parents/guardians
10% of total school days	Parent Meeting and Completion of Attendance Corrective Action Plan (ACAP)*
18 days	Appropriate Consequence*

*Referral to the Visiting Teacher or supervisor of Office of Child Welfare and Attendance with certified return receipt to parent. Such referral shall be issued pursuant to the Truancy section of the Parent and Student Handbook. Factor considered in grade promotion.

Note: Any student deemed chronically absent at the end of the first quarter or trimester is eligible for withdrawal. Chronic absenteeism is defined as absenteeism of ten percent of days or greater, measured at any point in the school year, regardless of "excused" or "unexcused".

Attendance Corrective Action Plan (A-CAP) is a written document that identifies the causes for excessive tardies and/or absences and what steps will be taken to minimize the number of occurrences. It is signed by the parents, student, and staff member.

Truancy

A student is truant if unexcused absences total five (5) or more school days within any school semester. If truant, the student will be referred to the visiting teacher or supervisor of the Office of Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) Office.

The principal may act as the school's attendance officer or delegate that duty. The school's attendance officer investigates possible school attendance violations and takes other necessary actions to enforce the compulsory education laws.

Family Vacations

Family Vacations are considered an unexcused absence. Lengthy trips are discouraged and may be cause for withdrawal. It becomes the student's responsibility, with the help of the parents, to make arrangements with each teacher for missed assignments and to complete assigned work upon his/her return to school. The student is to complete all assignments within the same number of days as the length of the vacation. Incomplete assignments will not receive credit. Students who miss an announced test during their absence will take the test when all missed work is completed and within the same number of days missed due to the vacation. In fairness to the teacher's planning time, no exceptions will be made to this policy, including asking for work in advance of the trip.

Family Death or Terminal Illness

If there is a death, terminal illness, or similar traumatic situation in a student's family that may affect his/her attendance, emotional well-being, and/or level of concentration, the office staff members should be notified.

Illness during the School Day

If a student becomes ill during the school day, appropriate arrangements will be made for the student's care while waiting for parent pick-up. Students with vomiting or fever must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Voluntary Withdrawal

To withdraw a student, a parent must complete a Student Withdrawal form available in the office.

Parental Partnership: Dress Code

To enable students to reach high academic standards, the school has put in place a dress code designed to reduce distractions. Implementing a dress code promotes student learning and increased academic instruction time. Interpretation of the Dress Code is at the principal and staff's discretion and their decision is final. Parents/Guardians may also contact Advantage to receive an economic hardship waiver for the cost of required uniforms, which will be granted on a case-by-case basis and only in rare circumstances.

Dress code guidelines prohibit student dress or grooming practices which present a health or safety risk to the student or others, disrupt the educational program, or limit a student from achieving educational goals because of blocked vision or restricted movement.

Uniform Preferred Vendor Information

The School's preferred uniform vendor is Image Builders. To purchase shirts, you may contact Image Builders' toll-free customer service hotline at (855) 654-6243. For additional information, please visit the School's web site. PE uniform vendor information is available at the office.

Uniform Requirements

Uniform Tops

- Grades K-5: All shirts must be a short- or long-sleeve bright green or white polo.
- Grade 6-8: All shirts must be a long- or short-sleeve light blue polo.
- Students may also wear solid navy blue or black sweaters and vests.
- Undershirts (t-shirts worn under uniform shirts) must be white and must fit appropriately under the uniform shirts. Undershirts must not have longer sleeves than uniform shirts.
- Shirts must be tucked neatly into bottoms.

Uniform Bottoms

- Dress bottoms must be solid navy blue.
- Athletic, spandex and denim materials, yoga-style pants, carpenter loops, and decorative embroidery are not permitted.

Uniform Shoes

- Shoe colors must be navy, white, black or brown.
- Shoes must be loafer style, dress shoes, tennis shoes, or closed toed sandals.

PE Uniform

- Tops: Gray Advantage PE t-shirt
- Bottoms: Blue Advantage PE shorts or pants

General Expectations

Tops

- Shirts and tops must cover the back, shoulders, chest, and midriff. Undergarments must not be visible.
- Spaghetti strap shirts, halter tops, tank tops, undershirts, muscle shirts, sheer, or any other clothing items that show bare midriff are not permitted.

Bottoms

- Pants, capris, and shorts must be fitted or belted at the waist to prevent sagging and undergarments must not be visible.
- Shorts must extend past the mid-thigh (mid-thigh is determined as halfway between inseam and knee).
- Skirts, skorts, dresses, and jumpers must be no more than two (2) inches above the knee in length.
- Pajama pants are not permitted without administrative permission.

Shoes

- For safety reasons, students are required to wear shoes appropriate for indoor and outdoor activity.
- Shoes that are unsafe (for example flip-flops or shoes with wheels) are not permitted.
- Slippers are not permitted without administrative permission.
- Athletic shoes with non-marking soles are to be worn for P.E. class.

Headwear & Accessories

- Hats, hoods, and other headwear except for religious or medical purposes, must not be worn inside the school building.
- Any jewelry, chain, or other apparel posing a safety risk is not permitted.
- Ear piercings are permitted.
- Hair must not obstruct vision or distract from the learning environment.
- Sunglasses are not permitted inside unless for medical purposes.

Miscellaneous

- Revealing clothing is prohibited. All clothing must fit appropriately and must not be excessively tight or loose. Such clothing includes all sheer, low-cut, or otherwise revealing garments.
- Areas typically covered by undergarments must not be visible.
- Clothing, accessories, or grooming may not depict or advertise weapons, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, drug paraphernalia, sexual or obscene language or images, threats, or racial or ethnic slurs/symbols, or promote conduct expressly prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct.
- Wearing, carrying, and displaying gang paraphernalia, names, signs, or symbols is prohibited.
- Spirit week and other special occasion attire may be worn only with administrative permission.

Parental Partnership: Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy

The school has adopted a policy addressing the importance of parent and family engagement. The school and the board of education recognizes the rights of parents or guardians to be fully informed of all information relevant to their children who participate in programs and projects funded by Federal and State Funds, including Title I (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) [1116(a)(1)]. The Parent and Family Engagement Policy was jointly developed with and agreed on, by parents and family members of participating children [1116(a)(2)(A)]. The Parent and Family Engagement Policy is provided to parents, families, and community partners in an understandable format and is updated to meet the needs of the included stakeholders [1116(b)(1)]. In addition to existing policies and guidelines, the school also recognizes the need for a policy that meets the requirements under Section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 (P.L. 114-95). The school will ensure parental involvement and family engagement in these programs and projects by:

Building a Capacity for Parent and Family Engagement
Parents and family members of students are vital contributors in the education of their children. The school will ensure that all parents/guardians are involved in our school in a meaningful manner in order to improve student academic achievement. Two-way communication between the school and home, both verbal and written, provides a sound base for a good partnership to provide an effective educational program for all students. Full realization of the partnership will be achieved through on-going commitment and active participation by both home and school. The policy describes how federal and applicable state requirements for parental and family engagement will be met and sets the school's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family involvement and engagement. Specifically, we will do the following in order to build a capacity for parent/guardian involvement and engagement:

a. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet the challenging State academic standards, and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning; volunteering in their child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time [1116 (d)(1)];
b. Provide assistance (materials and education) to parent/guardians of children served in understanding such topics as the school's curriculum, assessments, and proficiency level expectations, and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children [1116(e)(2)]. Efforts are made to assist parents in understanding challenging State academic content standards and the academic achievement levels established for students, the school curriculum, and school expectations and assessment results [1116(e)(1)];
c. Educate all school staff in the value and utility of contribution of parents/guardians; and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents/guardians as equal partners; implement and coordinate parent/guardian programs, and build ties between parents/guardians and the school [1116(e)(3)];
d. Coordinate and integrate, to the extent feasible and appropriate, parent/guardian involvement programs and activities that encourage and support parents/guardians in more fully participating in the education of their children [1116(e)(4)];

e. Ensure that information related to school and parent/guardian programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents/guardians in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents/guardians can understand [1116(e)(5)];
f. Provide other reasonable support for parental involvement and involvement activities to ensure a sucessful partnership amongst the school, parents, and the community to improve student achievement [1116(e)(14)].

Providing the coordination, technical assistance, and support necessary to assist the school in planning and implementing effective parent/guardian involvement and engagement activities to improve the student academic achievement and school performance [1116(a)(2)(B)].
To the extent feasible and appropriate, parent and family engagement strategies will be coordinated and integrated with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs [1116(a)(2)(C)]**.**

The following initiatives have been implemented at the school:
a. Annual Fall Federal and State Programs (including Title I) Parent Meeting to inform all parents/guardians of Federal and State Program requirements, their rights to be involved and provide input in school policies and planning, how progress is measured and how they receive feedback about their child's progress [1116(c)(1)].
b. Parent and family meetings are scheduled throughout the year to provide all parents with a description and explanation about the school's curriculum, assessments, and proficiency level expectations. Efforts are made to assist parents in understanding challenging State academic standards and the achievement levels established for students, the school curriculum, and school expectations and assessment results [1116(c)(4)(B)].
c. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to make arrangements to speak to their child's teacher regarding their child's progress throughout the school year.
d. Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled during the school year to give parents/guardians the opportunity to discuss and to get information pertaining to their child's academic progress.
e. Progress reports and report cards are sent home to notify parents of their child's performance and progress.
f. The principal will be available upon request to help parents/guardians better understand the state assessments.
g. Parent learning events and materials to help parents and families develop and use at-home skills that support their child's academic and social development.
h. Meetings are scheduled for parents to provide suggestions and direction relating to the education of their children and for the school to respond to any parent suggestions as soon as practicably possible [1116(c)(4)(C)].

Other activities that promote parent/guardian involvement and engagement (but not limited to):
a. School assemblies/ceremonies (parents invited)
b. Volunteer opportunities
c. Classroom observations (as requested)
d. Special event and reminder notices
e. Parent Room with community resources listed and computer access
f. Voice of Parent survey
g. Athletic and extra-curricular events (as they occur)

In order to develop a partnership between the home and the school, and to build meaningful, consistent, and effective communication, the information regarding school programs is provided to parents/guardians in a timely manner according to the following ways [1116(c)(4)(A)]:

a. Annual Federal and State Programs (including Title I) Parent Meeting
b. Annual Parent and Family Continuous School Improvement Meeting
c. The Parent and Student Handbook
d. Regular school and classroom newsletters
e. The annual school calendar
f. Report Cards
g. Parent-Teacher conferences
h. Parent and Family Engagement events
i. The School-Parent Compact
j. Bilingual staff or translators are available for interpretation and translation of important documents for limited English proficient parents/guardians and families of migratory children
k. School administration will meet with families who have limited English proficiency, families with members who have disabilities, families experiencing homelessness, and migratory families to provide information regarding support available to them [1116(f)]

Involving Parents/Guardians in the development of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, continuous school improvement planning

Parents/guardians will be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's parent and family engagement policy, and the joint development of the continuous school improvement plan, the intervention program, and the Parent and Family Engagement Plan [1116(a)(2)(F)], [1116(a)(3)(B)], [1116(c)(3)]. At least annually, the school, parents/guardians, and family members will be invited to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Continuous School Improvement Plan, Parent and Family Engagement Plan, and the Intervention Program [1116(a)(2)(D)]. The school will offer a flexible number of meetings at different times to ensure as many parents/guardians as possible will have the opportunity to participate in the joint development and evaluation of the before-mentioned policies [1116(c)(2)].

The school, to the extent practicable, will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents/guardians with limited English proficiency, parents/guardians with disabilities, and parents/guardians of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents/guardians understand.

Conducting, with the involvement of parents, an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental and family engagement policy and initiatives in improving the academic quality of the school, including identify barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by Title I.

Parents/guardians, family, and school staff members will be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of parent and family engagement policy initiatives and the level of responsiveness to parent and family concerns. The findings of such an evaluation will be published and made available for review by parents/guardians and will be used to design strategies for more effective parent/guardian involvement. The evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy will identify [1116(a)(2)(D)]:

a. Barriers to participation by parents, including parents who may be economically disadvantaged, disabled, limited English proficient, limited literacy, or any racial or ethnic minority backgrounds;
b. The needs of parents and family members in assisting with the learning of the children;

c. Strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

All stakeholders will be given an opportunity to review, plan, and help improve Federal and State Programs (including Title I), including parent and family engagement activities and strategies that are implemented with Federal and State funds. Strategies and activities may include, but are not limited to [1116(a)(3)(D)]:

a. Providing professional development for school staff on parent and family engagement strategies;
b. Supporting parent, family, and community outreach programs;
c. Best practices for increasing parent and family engagement;
d. Collaborating with community partners or other vendors with expertise in increasing parent and family engagement.

Parents/guardians are responsible for submitting any comments and feedback if the Parent and Family Engagement Policy or if schoolwide plan is not satisfactory [1116(b)(4)], [1116(c)(5)]. Comments can be included in the formal survey given during planning and evaluation meetings, through open discussion, or through private means (mail, email, telephone) including anonymously. The feedback provided will be used by the school to design strategies for more effective parent and family engagement and to revise, if necessary, this Parent and Family Engagement Policy [1116(a)(2)(E)].

Jointly developing, with involvement of parents and the school, the school-parent compact and outlining shared responsibilities and means for improving student academic achievement.

The school-parent compact will address the importance of communication on an ongoing basis by the following means:

a. Describing the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive learning environment that enables students to succeed academically by meeting state standards [1116(d)(1)];
b. Describing the parents' responsibility to support their children's learning by participating in decisions relating to their children's education [1116(d)(1)];
c. Sharing, at least annually, the compact during parent-teacher conferences as it relates to student achievement [1116(d)(2)(A)];
d. Providing parents frequent reports on their children's progress [1116(d)(2)(B)];
e. Providing parents reasonable access to communicate with school staff on an individual or community wide basis [1116(d)(2)(C)];
f. Providing parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, including observation of classroom activities [1116(d)(2)(C)];
g. Ensuring two way and meaningful communication, to the extent practicable, in a language family members can understand [1116(d)(2)(D)].

Collaboration Statement

All stakeholders will have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Continuous School Improvement Plan, Parent and Family Engagement Plan, and the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Stakeholders include staff, parents/guardians, board members and community partners. All stakeholders are encouraged to participate in and attend parent meetings and family events. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide the school with feedback through written surveys. Feedback provided to the school through communication and the written surveys will be reviewed for incorporation into the Continuous School Improvement Plan, Parent and Family Engagement Plan, and Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

Parental Partnership: Visitor and Volunteer Guidelines

Visitors and volunteers are expected to review and honor the following guidelines while visiting or volunteering for the school. Violation of these guidelines endangers the safety of students and their right to an education. Those not abiding by these guidelines may be barred from the building and/or prevented from participating in future volunteer opportunities. Please contact the school's office for information on becoming a volunteer.

General

1. Volunteer hours are strictly optional and are not a condition for enrollment.
2. Potential volunteers must complete the appropriate level of background check before a volunteer assignment begins. Parents and guardians may complete the online Volunteer Authorization and Release form on the parents' form site to begin the background check process. Individuals who do not have access to the parents' form site can complete the Volunteer Authorization and Release form on the school's website as a community member.
3. All visitors and volunteers must be processed through the visitor management system, using their driver's license and must wear a form of identification provided by the school. They may also be required to submit to a criminal background check.
4. All visitors and volunteers must sign both in and out in the school office. They may not walk directly to any classroom unless given permission by the office staff.
5. All visitors and volunteers must reinforce and demonstrate the school's Moral Focus™ Philosophy.
6. The distribution of literature, without prior approval from a dean or the principal, is prohibited.
7. Visitors and volunteers must abide by staff instructions, asking for clarification if necessary.
8. Corporal punishment is prohibited.
9. The school is a public school with a Board policy of neutrality regarding religion. Visitors and volunteers may neither show preference for any one religion over any other religion nor share their personal religious views with students.
10. Appropriate dress is required.
11. The use of any of the following is strictly prohibited: tobacco, marijuana, e-cigarettes/vaporizers and paraphernalia, and alcohol.

Classrooms

1. The teacher is ultimately responsible for the students and activities in his/her classroom.
2. Volunteers should enter classrooms quietly and wait for a break in the activity before communicating with the teacher and students.
3. Student infractions must be addressed by the classroom teacher.
4. Classroom issues regarding students are confidential. Visitors and volunteers may not talk with others about the learning or disciplinary needs of any child other than their own.
5. Classroom visitors are allowed for a limited time and must have the principal's permission.

Field Trips

1. Volunteer drivers must provide a valid driver's license, proof of insurance, and a sufficient number of seat belts to transport their assigned students. Volunteer drivers, overnight chaperones, and anyone in attendance of a field trip may be required to submit to a criminal background check.
2. Volunteers must follow all instructions provided by the teacher or school.
3. Smoking is prohibited in the presence of students.
4. Volunteer drivers must drive directly to the event and return directly to school (or pre-approved location) immediately after the event. "Side trips" are prohibited.
5. Volunteer drivers should leave radios off and avoid playing music.
6. Volunteers must behave appropriately when participating on field trips.

Field trips are a privilege, not a right, and participation is determined at the teachers' and administrators' discretion.

General School Procedures

Transportation

Free busing services, provided by a third-party vendor, are available to all students residing within the East Baton Rouge Parish boundaries. Parents of students who reside outside of Parish boundaries are ineligible for busing and are expected to provide the means for their children to get to and from school. Should you require additional information, contact your school principal or visit the school website.

School Bus Procedures

Parents: In the event a parent or guardian of a student under the age of 10 or with relevant transportation accommodation in the student's IEP is not at the bus stop, the student will be returned to the school.

- 1st Offense – A parent or guardian will be contacted to pick the student up from the school and will be reminded of the transportation policy.
- 2nd Offense – A parent or guardian will be contacted to pick the student up from the school and a conference with the student-family liaison will be held to discuss possible next steps.
- 3rd Offense – A conference with a school administrator will be held where a final warning will be issued.
- 4th Offense – The scholar will lose bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

If a student is returned to the school and is not picked up by 5:00 p.m., the Baker Police Department will be contacted.

Student Bus Behavior Expectations

Students are expected to follow the Code of Conduct while riding, entering, and exiting the bus. If a student violates the Code of Conduct while riding, entering, or exiting the bus, disciplinary procedures will be followed. The level of discipline will be appropriate for the frequency and/or severity of the act of misconduct. Depending on the frequency and/or severity of the act of misconduct, a bus suspension or loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the year may be imposed.

Any time a student is suspended from the bus, parents are responsible for providing transportation for the student to attend school. A bus suspension is not a suspension from class. If a student does not attend school when suspended from riding the bus, the absence is unexcused.

Please refer to the **Busing Handbook** for more detailed information.

New Bus Rider Applications

In order for new bus riders to be routed for bus transportation, a bus application must be completed. Bus applications can be found in the "Forms" section of the Parent Portal. A parent or guardian may submit the application online or print and return a paper copy to the front office. It may take up to two weeks to be processed. Once an application is processed, the busing vendor, DS Bus South, will route the student. The parent or guardian will be contacted by DS Bus South with a start date and assigned bus stop.

NOTE: After the first two weeks of school, all applications will be collected by the bus liaison and turned into DS Bus South at the end of each week. These bus riders will be routed and assigned to begin riding buses on the following Tuesday.

Addressing Transportation Concerns
If there is an issue involving transportation, contact the school directly. School office hours are 7:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. If an issue is experienced before or after school hours, contact Umecka O'Conner at (225) 229-2922.

All changes to bus transportation must be made by a parent or guardian prior to 2:00 p.m. and submitted in writing to the office. No changes will be made after 2:00 p.m. as dismissal will be in progress.

Bus Driver Expectations- *including but is not limited to*:

- **Adhering to the DS Bus South *"Standards of Conduct"***
- Act responsibly and maintain professionalism.
- Ensure the safety of all students.
- Obey all traffic laws.
- Be attentive to traffic and weather conditions.
- Follow the planned route and schedule for departure times and stops.
- Verify permissions for children who enter and exit the bus.
- Follow the discipline procedures to maintain a safe environment for all students.
- Maintain a professional appearance.

Emergency Incident Communications

1. Bus Drivers will first ensure the safety and account for all student passengers.
2. Bus Drivers will call 911 if needed.
3. Bus Drivers will call dispatch and Advantage Charter Academy with incident details.
4. Advantage Charter Academy and DS Bus South will determine the reunification process for parents.
5. DS Bus South and Advantage Charter Academy will work to contact parents/guardians of all student passengers and communicate the reunification process.
6. Bus Drivers will keep attendance throughout the reunification process until all students are released to parents/guardians or emergency contact. This attendance data will be communicated to both Advantage Charter Academy and DS Bus South

Drivers
Traffic congestion can occur on a daily basis during the arrival and dismissal process. Parents are asked to be patient and to plan on some delays, particularly during inclement weather. Please contact the front office should you have questions about the arrival and dismissal process.

Bicycles
Riding bicycles to and from school is strongly discouraged due to safety reasons. If it is necessary for a student to ride a bicycle to school, he/she must park and lock the bicycle in the school's bike rack before school begins and leave it untouched until school is dismissed. The school does not assume responsibility for damage or theft of bicycles. The student should register his/her bike with the police department and must wear a bicycle helmet.

Walkers

Parents or guardians who wish their students to walk home from school must complete the Student Walk Home Release form. Students who walk to and from school should go directly home following dismissal. Failing to do so may cause undue worry for parents and staff members.

School Telephone Use

Students are not allowed to use the office telephone unless it is an emergency, and such use has been approved by administration. Calls originating from the school will be strictly supervised. No student will be called to the office to receive personal phone calls. An administrator will deliver emergency messages to the student. An emergency is an illness or death in the family. Transportation changes, changes in scheduled appointments, etc. are not considered to be emergencies. Cell phones must not be brought onto campus. If a student brings a cell phone onto campus, it must be kept off and in bags. No flower or balloon messages will be delivered to students at school.

Meals

For grades K-8, the school schedule allows for a 15–20 minute lunch period and a 15-minute outside recess period. A nutritious lunch, including milk, may be purchased at school, or students may bring a sack lunch from home.

Your student's school is participating in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a Federal program which offers free meals to all enrolled students. Parents should complete a Household Information Survey as part of the program participation. These forms are available online or in the school's front office. The Household Information Survey determines the funding your student's school will receive to provide supplemental student support services. Incomplete forms may result in the elimination of these school services.

Snacks

A snack period may be offered at the discretion of the teacher. Students must bring their own snacks from home as they are not provided by the school. During the snack time, students must be in their seats. They may talk quietly with those sitting near them. Snacks should be nutritional (e.g., fruit, vegetables, cheese and crackers). Candy, pop/soda, and sweets are not acceptable.

Recess

As in the classroom, the supervising adult is the authority during recess. When playing games, students are encouraged to include anyone interested in participating. Games that are abusive or demeaning are not permitted. All students are to remain in the designated recess area. Students are not allowed to use playground equipment while waiting for school to begin, waiting for rides, or following dismissal. There is an afternoon recess for kindergarten only.

Holiday Celebrations

Birthdays

Because birthday celebrations tend to disrupt the normal progress of the day, students are encouraged to donate a book to the library rather than bring treats for their classmates. A special ceremony takes place when the student presents his/her book to the library. No gifts for students (e.g., flowers, balloons, stuffed animals, etc.) will be delivered to classrooms. These items will remain in the office until after school hours.

Halloween
Halloween is not celebrated at the school. Consequently, costumes are not worn to school.

Christmas/Winter Holiday
Classes may have a small party at the end of the last day before the Christmas/winter holiday.

St. Valentine's Day
Students in grades K-4 are encouraged to celebrate by making homemade valentines for their classmates. A class list will be supplied by the teacher for parents' convenience. Students who bring valentines must give one to each of their classmates. Students in grades 5 make special valentines at school that are shared with veterans, senior citizens, hospitalized children, or members of the armed services.

Field Trips

When students travel away from school, they are subject to the same rules, regulations, and appropriate politeness observed at the school. As in the classroom, the teacher will judge behavior as acceptable or unacceptable. Misbehavior or disregard of school policies can result in denial of field trip privileges. Signed permission slips must be on file with the teacher for each student on each field trip.

Lost and Found

The lost and found is located in the hallway of each wing. Unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of the school year.

Personal Items

The school will not accept responsibility for the personal items of students. We expect students to leave belongings that are not necessary for their education at home. Any personal items that staff members judge to be unsafe, inappropriate for school, or interfering with students' educational focus will be confiscated and held in the office or remain in the possession of a staff member until the parents retrieve them. The school shall not be responsible for any items lost or damaged while in its possession.

Students shall not possess cell phones, smart watches, tablets, music players, video equipment, gaming devices, AI glasses, and electronic devices during the instructional day at school or school-related events. Subject to the Search and Seizure Practices and Procedures, the possession of such electronic devices during those restricted times constitutes the consent to search for and confiscate the device(s) by school personnel. Confiscated devices may be returned at the end of the school day.

Coaches and personnel in charge of extracurricular activities may make exceptions to this rule upon obtaining the principal's permission.

Any exceptions to this general rule sought by parents for specific health or safety concerns should be brought to the attention of the principal. The principal's determination is final.

Emergency School Procedures

In the case of severe weather (e.g., major snowstorm, ice storm, dangerous wind chills, heavy fog), the principal will notify local radio and TV stations regarding the decision to close school or delay its opening. A phone message will also be sent out to each family through our SchoolConnect calling system. In the event of closure, teachers will provide learning

opportunities through the use of digital tools or materials relevant to current learning targets to promote every day as a learning day.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning
If school is already in session when the watch or warning is issued, the school stays open. The staff takes safety precautions.

Tornado Watch
Students remain in school, and the staff takes safety precautions. Students are released to parents or other designated adults upon request.

Tornado Warning
All students and staff members remain in the building and take shelter in designated areas. Students may be detained beyond the usual dismissal time. Students are released to parents or other designated adults upon request.

Emergency Drills
Emergency drills are held throughout the year. In some instances, parents may be informed following a drill.

Tobacco Use and Non-Smoking Policy

The school is a non-smoking facility. Any form of smoking, including but not limited to e-cigarettes/vaporizers and paraphernalia, and tobacco use are prohibited anywhere on school property, in all indoor facilities, and in the presence of students.

Payments Made to School

Checks written to the school that are returned for insufficient funds are processed through a service called Payliance. If a check is returned, Payliance contacts the person who wrote the check to collect the check's face value plus a collection fee. If he/she cannot be contacted or fails to respond properly, the check may be resubmitted to the bank with applicable collection fees.

General Statement

Advantage is tuition free. Advantage believes that the inability to pay student fees should not prevent students from having access to a quality education and that economically disadvantaged students and student families who are experiencing economic hardships should have the same opportunities afforded to them as other students.

The following chart details current student fees. All fees are collected in person in cash or by money order. Collected fees are used to defray the costs of the referenced supply, activity, or experience.

Fee	Amount	Due Date	Purpose
TBD by the school Principal			

Families who would like to request an economic hardship fee waiver should contact the Dean of Students for his/her student. Waiver requests will be evaluated based on a family's demonstrated financial need. Waiver requests that are denied may be appealed to the Principal.

No student will ever be denied participation because of a lack of ability to pay a fee. Students will not be denied any other academic opportunity because of an inability to pay a fee. Furthermore, failure to pay any required fee shall not result in withholding a student's educational record. This fee policy also prohibits the assessment of any fees which are not outlined above.

Medical Information

To maintain a healthy learning environment, students are offered certain health services and are required to provide evidence of required immunizations.

Health Screenings

Students receive vision and hearing screening services in grades K, 1, 3, 5, and 7. First-time entering students are screened within their first month of school.

Immunization Requirements

Required immunizations must be completed upon entering school or student must present proof they are in the process of receiving vaccinations. Vaccination requirements may be waived if parent/guardian requests an exemption in writing for religious/philosophical reasons. Medical exemptions require a written statement from a physician stating the vaccine is contraindicated for medical reasons. Refer to the Louisiana Department of Health website for the most current information regarding minimum required immunizations and important vaccine details.

Human papillomavirus (HPV) refers to a group of viruses with more than 100 different strains or types. Over 30 of these viruses are sexually transmitted. Some of these viruses may lead to cancer. The virus lives in the skin or mucous membranes and usually causes no symptoms. There is no cure for HPV infection, although the infection sometimes goes away on its own. The HPV vaccine is recommended for adolescents 11-18 years of age. The vaccine is given through a series of either two or three doses. Parents are encouraged to talk with their child's health care provider or local health department about HPV and immunization. More information is also available at the Center for Disease Control's website.

Medication Administration

Only necessary medications that must be given during regular school hours will be administered. All medications, whether prescribed (written instructions from a licensed prescriber are required for all prescription medication administered to students) or over the counter, require written permission from the custodial parent, who must complete the Medication Administration Permission form (one form per medication). The form must be renewed each school year or upon any change in medication or dosage.

Parents must include any prescribed treatment or care plan. An emergency care plan from the physician is required for asthma and epinephrine medications.

Prescribed medication must be delivered to the school in the original container prepared and labeled by a pharmacy. The label must specify the name of the student, name of the licensed prescriber, name of the prescription drug, dosage, effective date, frequency of administration, and directions in a legible format. Over-the-counter medication must be in the original package with the student's name affixed to the package.

The medication supplied to the school must be in the exact dosage prescribed. The individual administering medications is not responsible for dividing or splitting pills. All medication must be

picked up by the parent at the end of the school year or upon a student's withdrawal. Any medication not picked up will be discarded.

If a parent is accompanying their child on a field trip, the parent will be required to administer the child's medication.

Notifications

Rights Under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents certain rights with respect to their child's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents should submit a written request to the school principal clearly identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. A school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parents of the time and place the records may be inspected.

- The right to seek an amendment of the student's education records that the parent believes are inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's rights of privacy. Parents should submit a written request to the school principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they want amended and specifying its inaccuracy. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, it will notify the parents of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing to challenge the content of the student's education records. Hearing procedures will be provided to the parents when a hearing is requested.

- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The school does not need written consent to disclose a student's education records if the disclosure meets one or more of the following conditions and the disclosure is to or for: (see 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99.31):
    1. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent/guardian or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents /Guardians or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.
    2. To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1)).
    3. To officials of another school, school system, or institution of post-secondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2)).
    4. To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or state and local educational authorities, such as the state educational agency in the parent or eligible student's state (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35.
    5. In connection with an audit or evaluation of federal- or state-supported education programs or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements

that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35). In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4)).

6. To state and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a state statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5).
7. To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6)).
8. To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7)).
9. To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8)).
10. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9)).
11. To appropriate officials, in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a) (10).
12. Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a) (11)).

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA:

  Family Policy Compliance Office
  U.S. Department of Education
  400 Maryland Avenue SW
  Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Right to Know under Federal Law

Parents of students have the right to know the professional qualifications of the school's classroom teachers, and the school must give this information to parents in a timely manner if they ask for it. Specifically, parents have the right to ask for the following information about each of their child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he/she teaches
- Whether the State Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances
- The teacher's college major
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to their child and, if they do, their qualifications

Rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights concerning student privacy, parental access to information, and administration of physical examinations to minors. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey, which is funded in part or in whole by a program of the U.S. Department of Education, that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey"):
    1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent
    2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family
    3. Sexual behavior or attitudes
    4. Anti-social, demeaning, illegal, or self-incriminating behavior
    5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close familial relationships
    6. Legally-recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers
    7. Religious affiliations, beliefs, or practices of the student or parent
    8. Income, other than as required by law, to determine program eligibility

- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:
    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 the student (except for hearing, vision, scoliosis, or any other physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law)
    3. Any activity involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information or the marketing, selling, or distributing of such information to others

- Inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:
    1. Surveys created by a third party before their distribution by a school to its students
    2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
    3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

The school protects student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The school will also both directly notify parents through U.S. Mail, e-mail, parent meetings, or the Parent and Student Handbook of the specific or approximate dates (if such events are planned and/or scheduled) of the above activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in them. *Parents 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. 20202-5920

Scouting America

The school does not discriminate against any group officially affiliated with either Scouting America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society) that wishes to conduct a meeting within an open forum. The school does not deny such access or opportunity or discriminate for reasons based on the membership or leadership criteria or the oath of allegiance to God and country of Scouting America or the youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society).

Title IX

If students, their parents/guardians, or anyone else on their behalf believe they have been subjected to discriminatory harassment, including but not limited to harassment related to the students' sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, or pregnancy by school board members, staff, students, vendors, contractors, or other persons doing business with the School, it should be immediately reported to the school principal (Academy or designee) of the school and should provide specific details regarding the event, the date of the event, and the parties involved. The complaint will be considered confidential and will be expeditiously investigated by the Academy or designee with the assistance of NHA legal counsel as necessary and appropriate.

The School intends to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, which states, in part: "No persons in the United States shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving financial assistance...."

As such, the School does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education program or activities, and is required by Title IX and its regulations not to discriminate in such a manner. This requirement not to discriminate in the education program or activity extends to admission and employment.

The following person shall be the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator and is responsible for investigating any complaint alleging noncompliance with Title IX.

Mendrek Solite
14740 Plank Road
Baker, LA 70714
Phone: (225) 774-3111
100.msolite@nhaschools.com

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the telephone number or electronic mail address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX and its regulations to the School may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department, or both.
A specific procedure for grievances related to Title IX issues is set forth as the "Title IX Grievance Procedure." *34 CFR 106*

The language above will be posted on the School's website within two clicks of the home page; in other School-related documents made available to students, parents, staff, and applicants (e.g., student newspapers, parent newsletters, student handbooks, employee handbooks, application forms, recruiting materials, etc.).

Administrative Policies

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

The grievance procedure, as set forth below, is clearly outlined and distributed to all families and staff in the Family/Employee Handbook.

Process	Guidance
Stage 1	
If a parent/guardian or a student has a grievance you should discuss it informally with the teacher, administrator, or staff member directly involved in the matter. We hope 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 student's well-being should skip this stage and be immediately directed to the Principal.*
Stage 2	
If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the parent/guardian or student may raise the matter, in writing, with the Principal, who must give a response within five working 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 Principal.	*The Principal is the acting supervisor over all school employees.*
Stage 3	
If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved, the parent/guardian or student may raise the matter to the Executive Director's office by addressing the matter in writing to the Executive Director, who must give a response within ten working days. This response may take the form of a letter and/or follow-up meeting.	*The Executive Director's office oversees the Principal.*
Stage 4	

If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, and the parent/guardian or student wishes to pursue this matter further, the individual should put the grievance 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 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 Principal, and/or a directive for staff to develop an additional policy recommendation for Board consideration.*

Unsafe School Choice Option

A student attending a persistently dangerous school or a student who is a victim of a violent criminal offense on school property has the right to transfer to another safe school in the district, if his/her parent requests a transfer. If there is not another safe school in the district providing instruction at the student's grade level, the school shall contact neighboring districts to request that the student be permitted to transfer to a school in one of those districts.

Asbestos Management Plan

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires us to annually notify parents, students, staff members, and others who regularly occupy the school building of compliance with AHERA. An Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) has been developed for the school and is on file in the school office. Parents may schedule an appointment with the principal if they wish to review the AMP.

Pesticide Notification

The school aims to control pest populations and to reduce the use of active pesticides throughout the school by implementing an integrated pest management program. The health and safety of all persons within the school's facilities are of primary concern. In addition to providing parents with this annual notification, the school will notify parents in advance of individual pesticide applications of non-emergency applications of pesticides such as an insecticide, fungicide, or herbicide, other than a bait or gel formation, that is made to the school ground or building. Please note that notification is not given for the use of sanitizers, germicides, disinfectants, or antimicrobial cleaners. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but parents will be notified following any such application. Advance notice will be posted on the front door and posted in a public, common area of the school other than the entrance. A parent can also request to be notified by letter postmarked at least 72 hours before the application is to take place. Please contact the school office if you wish to be notified by letter or wish to review the school's integrated pest management program or records. Your school will provide additional information regarding this.

School-Parent Compact

Advantage Charter Academy and the parents of enrolled students agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

This school-parent compact is in effect during school year 2025-2026.

School Responsibilities: Advantage Charter Academy will:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows: employing state qualified teaching staff and providing intervention support to the most academically at-risk students at the school.
- Hold parent-teacher conferences at least annually during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement. Adequate notice will be provided to parents of conference scheduling.
- Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress. Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows: the distribution of progress reports and report cards on a regular basis along with updates given during parent-teacher conferences and informal meetings with parents and teachers.
- Provide parents reasonable access to staff. Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows: during parent-teacher conferences, via regular email and phone communication with parents, through SchoolConnect and also during more informal consultations on an as-needed basis.
- Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities, as follows: notices regarding volunteer opportunities will be posted in the hallways of the school and communication will also be sent out via the school newsletters and SchoolConnect

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities: We, as parents, will support our children's learning in the following ways:

- I understand that my child is enrolled in this school, so he/she has opportunities to achieve.
- I realize that the expectations and standards at this school are high and agree to support them.
- I understand and agree to be bound by all provisions outlined in the Parent and Student Handbook and acknowledge receipt of the Parent and Student Handbook by signing below.
- I will monitor my child's attendance and homework completion.
- I will participate in parent-teacher conferences and volunteer for school activities when possible.
- I will stay informed about my child's education and communicate with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school either received by my child, by mail, SchoolConnect or other means and responding, as appropriate.
- I will serve, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as being a parent representative on the school's Continuous School Improvement Team, or other school advisory or policy groups.

- I understand that my child must behave respectfully and responsibly to protect the safety, interest, and rights of others in the school. I will model appropriate behavior while in the school.

Please add any other commitment statements you would like to note:

_____

_____

_____ _____
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

_____ _____
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Student's Commitment: I fully commit to this school in the following ways:

- I am enrolling in this school because I want to achieve. I will put forth my best effort every single day.
- I agree with my school's expectations, standards, and requirements because I have high expectations for myself.
- I understand and agree to follow the Student Code of Conduct and Dress Code in the Parent and Student Handbook.
- I will attend school all day, every day, unless I have an excused absence.
- I will complete my homework, submit it on time, and contact my teacher about any questions.
- I will behave respectfully and responsibly to protect the safety, interests, and rights of others in the school. I will accept responsibility for my actions

Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date	Grade
Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date	Grade
Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date	Grade
Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date	Grade

Teacher's Commitment: I fully commit to this school in the following ways:

- I will provide each student opportunities to achieve.
- I will communicate with parents on a regular basis via personal contact, weekly newsletters, SchoolConnect or progress reports and will make myself available to students and parents for any concerns they may have.
- I will display integrity and respect to students, parents, and staff members through my words and actions.
- I will protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom.

Teacher Signature	Teacher Printed Name	Date

Parent and Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form
Advantage Charter Academy 2025-2026

Please complete this form and return it to the school principal.

_____ _____ _____
Student Printed Name Grade Date

Our signatures indicate that we have received, read, and understand the 2025-2026 Parent and Student Handbook which includes the following documents:

- School-Parent Compact for Student Success, A Parent/Student/School/Teacher Agreement
- School-Based Parent & Family Engagement Policy
- Internet Usage Policy
- Media Release Form

_____
Student Signature

_____
Parent/Guardian Signature

_____
Teacher Signature

_____
Principal Signature