

BRIGHTality

Specialized Education
and Support Services



**Student Handbook
2023-2024**

For More information visit : www.BRIGHTality.org

Title 16

BRIGHTality is a Vermont Agency of Education approved Therapeutic Day School serving students in grade 6 through age 21.

Title 16 : Education

(b) Approved independent schools. On application, the State Board shall approve an independent school that offers elementary or secondary education if it finds, after opportunity for hearing, that the school provides a minimum course of study pursuant to section 906 of this title and that it substantially complies with all statutory requirements for approved independent schools and the Board's rules for approved independent schools. An independent school that intends to accept public tuition shall be approved by the State Board only on the condition that the school agrees, notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, to enroll any student who requires special education services and who is placed in or referred to the approved independent school as an appropriate placement and least restrictive environment for the student by the student's individualized education program team or by the local education agency; provided, however, that this requirement shall not apply to an independent school that limits enrollment to students who are on an individualized education program or a plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, and who are enrolled pursuant to a written agreement between the local education agency and the school. Except as provided in subdivision (6) of this subsection, the Board's rules must at minimum require that the school have the resources required to meet its stated objectives, including financial capacity, faculty who are qualified by training and experience in the areas in which they are assigned, and physical facilities and special services that are in accordance with any State or federal law or regulation. Approval may be granted without State Board evaluation in the case of any school accredited by a private, State, or regional agency recognized by the State Board for accrediting purposes, provided that the State Board shall determine that the school complies with all student enrollment provisions required by law.

(3) An approved independent school shall provide to the parent or guardian responsible for each of its students, prior to accepting any money for a student, an accurate statement in writing of its status under this section and a copy of this section. Failure to comply with this provision may create a permissible inference of false advertising in violation of 13 V.S.A. § 2005.



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Agency of Education

VERMONT STATUTES ANNOTATED
and Special Education Rule 2228 et. seq.
the Vermont State Board of Education on June 15, 2022
granted initial general education and special education approval
to serve a maximum of 15 students in grades 6-12
within the disability categories of Specific Learning Disabilities,
Intellectual Disability, Emotional Disability, Speech or Language Impairment,
Other Health Impairment, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Multiple Disabilities
to

BRIGHTality

in St. Albans, Vermont

effective June 15, 2022 through June 30, 2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan French".

Daniel M. French, Ed.D.
Secretary of Education

This handbook is specific to BRIGHTality Specialized Education and Support Services, LLC (BRIGHTality) and outlines the guidelines and specifics associated with their educational platform and offered services.

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The BRIGHTality Vision of Learning

BRIGHTality believes that all people can learn and grow. We believe that a complete education happens in an environment that develops knowledge, skills, and character to the end that students can pursue their individual life goals and fully participate in society. We believe that knowledge and skills are deeply connected to social emotional well-being and character development.



Contact Information

School Name

BRIGHTality

Director:

Jamie Seeholzer M.Ed.

Title

Director and Special Educator

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Staff Directory

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BRIGHTality

2023-2024 School Calendar

July 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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August 2023						
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September 2023						
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October 2023						
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November 2023						
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December 2023						
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January 2024						
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February 2024						
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March 2024						
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April 2024						
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May 2024						
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June 2024						
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 School Closed

 EP Employee Planning (no school for students)

Quarter 1: Sep 5 - Nov 17
 Quarter 2: Nov 20 - Jan 19
 Quarter 3: Jan 22 - Mar 22
 Quarter 4: Mar 25 - Jun 6

 Open House

 First and Last Day of School

Jul 10-Aug 17	Extended School Year- Summer Program
Aug 21-Sep 1	Staff In-Service
Sep 5	First Day of School
Sep 22	Planning/Development Day - No school
Oct 30- Oct 31	Planning/Development Day- No school
Nov 22	Planning/Development Day - No school
Nov 23- Nov 24	Thanksgiving Break- No school
Dec 22	Planning/Development Day- No school
Dec 25- Dec 26	Holiday Break- No School
Jan 1	Holiday- No School

Jan 12	Planning/Development Day- No school
Feb 28	Planning/Development Day- No school
Feb 29- Mar 1	Winter Break- No School
Mar 15	Planning/Development Day- No school
Apr 24	Planning/Development Day- No school
Apr 25- Apr 26	Spring Break- No school
May 1	Open House- 5:00 pm-7:00 pm
May 24- May 27	Memorial Day Break- no school
Jun 6	Last Day of School
Student Days 178	Staff Days 218

Attendance Policy and Procedures

BRIGHTality has adopted the state of Vermont Agency of Education's policy on Attendance and Truancy. The state's guidance will be outlined below.

State of Vermont Policy for School Attendance

Vermont law says a child or youth between the ages of 6 and 16 must go to public school unless they meet one of several conditions including attendance at an approved independent school such as BRIGHTality.

It is BRIGHTality's policy to take daily attendance. The sending school, parent, or guardian of an absent student is contacted to ensure the student is accounted for. In cases of extended absences of ten days or more, BRIGHTality will notify the sending district and, if necessary, collaborate with the school to make a plan with the student's parents or guardian to facilitate the return of the student to school.

State of Vermont Policy for Truancy

Who is responsible for making sure that a child attends school?

A person who has "control" of a child **must** make sure that the child attends school. The person in "control" is someone who is legally responsible for the care and welfare of the child, including:

- a parent, grandparent, or other family member
- a foster parent, or
- a court-appointed guardian for a child.
- the steps or services the school may use to prevent or respond to truancy.

Curriculum

English Course

ELA 1:

Students will be studying the novels *Holes* by Louis Sachar and *It's Kind of a Funny Story* by Ned Vizzini. They will learn to analyze each character, have the ability to describe plot, relations of each character, and identify the novel's central ideas. We will cover basic novel study skills such as conflict, setting, point of view, inferences, and analyzing. They will begin grasping the concepts of writing and editing their own text and use descriptive writing and narrative techniques. In addition to novel studies, students will learn the introductory aspects of grammar, including parts of speech, run-on sentences, fragments, punctuation, and capitalization. They will begin to understand the proper usage of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunction, interjections, as well as the forms of nouns and types of phrases (preposition, appositive, etc.).

ELA 2

Students will be studying the novel *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner as well as the sequel to their freshman year read *Thunderhead* by Neal Shusterman. We will review the previous book and have the ability to connect stories, characters, and plotlines. They will identify mood, tones, main ideas, and summarizations. Students will have a concrete understanding of figurative language including metaphors, similes, imagery through text, and figurative language. Their writing will expand into argumentative and persuasive techniques, having the ability to organize evidence and clearly support claims. We will learn to establish and maintain formal writing styles providing concluding statements to support a reflection of understanding as well as practicing creative journal writing.

ELA 3

Students will be studying the novels *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding and *The Hunger Games* by Suzanna Collins. The students will demonstrate the ability to not only interpret the information presented in the text but be able to interpret other points of view, identify the main points and overarching messages conveyed, and support alternative interpretations. They will learn concepts such as foreshadowing, irony and suspense. We will be expanding on the previous years grammar and continue to learn simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex sentences, and expand on journal writing.

ELA 4

Students will be studying the novels *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton and *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. Students will learn the ability to accurately cite information from each book with in-text citations and begin understanding MLA/APA formats. They will also be learning how to introduce a topic, organize ideas, concepts, and information using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect. There will be a continuation of the understanding of conclusive writing, precise language and vocabulary, as well as maintaining a formal style of writing.

Fine Arts

BRIGHTality Art Studio

**The undermentioned refers to all proficiencies required for grades sixth through twelve.*

The art curriculum at BRIGHTality School follows the choice-based art education and “Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB)” partnership. C.H.O.I.C.E stands for “Children Having Original, Individualized, Creative Experiences”.

The TAB philosophy can be summed up in three points:

- ❖ What do Artists do?
- ❖ The child is the artist.
- ❖ The art room is the child’s studio.

In a choice studio, there is no prescribed “project”. Instead, students choose their subject, technique and media. Student artwork may look different than traditional teacher driven artwork, because it truly comes from the student. The main focus is for students to learn to behave like artists and express their own ideas and interests. The art room functions like an art studio where students are responsible for their own set-up, care and clean-up of materials. Each class begins with introducing a new artist, demonstration of a new technique, material, process, concept or style. Students will either take this further with their own experiments and explorations, or choose to work on something of their own choice. Zones in the art room will gradually open as students complete and demonstrate growth through skill builders.

Art Zone’s include:

- Drawing (B&W) - graphite, charcoal, pen & ink, etc.
- Drawing (Color) - colored pencil, marker, pastel(s), etc.
- Painting - tempera, watercolor, gouache, acrylic, oil, etc.
- Collage - printed paper, recycled paper, quilling, etc.
- Printmaking - mono print or linocut.
- Sculpture - wire, found materials, recycled materials, nature, manipulatives, etc.
- Clay - modeling, oven-bake, air-dry, celluclay, plaster, etc.
- Fibers - weaving, sewing, embroidery, knitting, crochet, macramé, etc.

WE CAN ALWAYS USE: Empty paper towel roll tubes, shoe boxes and other small, clean recycled items that students can build sculpture with, as well as any arts/craft supplies that you no longer need.

Health Course

This course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of health and wellness. Throughout the course, students will learn about the importance of making healthy choices, managing stress, and building positive relationships.

The following are some key topics that will be covered in this Health course:

1. **Nutrition and Physical Activity:** Students will learn about the importance of proper nutrition and physical activity for overall health and well-being. They will learn about the five food groups, how to read food labels, and how to plan and prepare healthy meals. They will also learn about the benefits of physical activity and how to develop a personal fitness plan.
2. **Mental and Emotional Health:** Students will learn about the importance of mental and emotional health, including how to recognize and manage stress, anxiety, and depression. They will also learn about healthy coping mechanisms, effective communication, and building positive relationships.
3. **Substance Abuse:** Students will learn about the dangers of substance abuse, including the risks associated with tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. They will learn about the effects of substance abuse on the body, the risks of addiction, and how to make healthy choices and avoid peer pressure.
4. **Reproductive and Sexual Health:** Students will learn about reproductive and sexual health, including the basics of human anatomy, puberty, and pregnancy. They will also learn about the risks associated with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and how to make healthy choices related to sexuality.

By the end of this Health course, students will have a strong foundation in health and wellness concepts and skills that will prepare them for making informed decisions and leading healthy lives.

History Courses

U.S History:

U.S. History is a year-long course that examines the major events and turning points of U.S. history from the Industrial Revolution through the modern age. The course leads

students toward a clearer understanding of the patterns, processes, and people that have shaped U.S. history.

VT History:

In this course, we will explore the history of Vermont from early days to the present. Students will explore political, social, cultural, and economic aspects of the history of our state.

Human Geography:

Human Geography is a year-long course that examines the study of the interrelationships between people, places, and the environment. Students will also learn how these vary spatially and temporally across and between locations.

Global Studies:

This course will introduce students to key cultural, economic, social and political processes that shape today's world. Students will identify key similarities and differences across continents, countries, and local communities.

Mathematics Courses

Pre-Algebra

Pre-Algebra is designed to prepare students for success in algebra and higher-level mathematics. In this course, students will develop a strong foundation in mathematical concepts, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking. Students will learn how to simplify expressions, solve equations and inequalities, graph lines and functions, and work with basic geometric concepts. By the end of this course, students will have a solid foundation in pre-algebraic concepts and be well-prepared for success in algebra and higher-level mathematics. They will also develop important problem-solving skills and critical thinking abilities that will serve them well in all areas of life.

Algebra

This course is designed to provide students with a solid foundation in algebraic concepts and problem-solving skills. Throughout the course, students will develop a deeper understanding of algebraic expressions, equations, functions, and graphs. The following are some key topics that will be covered in the Algebra course: Solving Equations, Graphing, Inequalities, Polynomials, Rational Expressions, Exponential and Logarithmic Functions. Throughout the course, students will also develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through practice and application of algebraic concepts to real-world situations.

Geometry

This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamental concepts and principles of geometry. Throughout the course, students will learn about geometric shapes, angles, measurements, and proofs. The following are some key topics that will

be covered in the Geometry course: Points, Lines, and Planes, Angles and Triangles, Polygons, Circles, and Three-Dimensional Figures. Throughout the course, students will also develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through the use of logic and proofs.

Probability and Statistics

This course is designed to provide students with a solid foundation in the fundamental concepts and principles of probability and statistics. Throughout the course, students will develop the skills needed to make informed decisions based on data and to understand and interpret statistical information. The following are some key topics that will be covered in the Probability and Statistics course: Probability, Descriptive Statistics, Inferential Statistics, Correlation and Regression, and Probability Distributions. Throughout the course, students will also develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through the use of statistical software and the analysis of real-world data.

Financial Literacy

Financial literacy spans the continuum of education and can help prepare our students with the knowledge and skills needed to make wise economic decisions throughout their lifetime. Students gain the knowledge necessary to make financially responsible decisions that are integral to their everyday lives, including a focus on both smart financial decision making and future goals. Personal finance education helps students understand their role as independent adult consumers, fully prepared to make wise financial decisions with regard to earning, spending, and saving, as well as managing credit, debt, risk and investment for a lifetime of economic security.

Science Courses

Earth Science

This course introduces students to the fundamental concepts of Earth and space science. Students will explore the interactions between Earth and the solar system, including the formation and structure of the Earth, the dynamics of plate tectonics, and the Earth's atmosphere and climate. They will also examine the formation and evolution of stars and galaxies, the properties of light and waves, and the fundamental principles of astronomy.

The course will be taught through a combination of lectures, classroom discussions, hands-on activities, and laboratory experiments. Students will be expected to participate actively in class and complete all assignments.

Life Science

Life Science is a high school course that introduces students to the basic principles of biology. Students will explore the diversity of life on Earth, from single-celled organisms to complex ecosystems. They will learn about the characteristics of living organisms, the basic chemistry of life, and the cellular basis of life. They will also study genetics and

evolution, exploring the mechanisms that allow living things to adapt and evolve over time.

The course will be taught through a combination of lectures, classroom discussions, hands-on activities, and laboratory experiments. Students will be expected to participate actively in class and complete all assignments.

Physical Science

Is a high school course that provides an introduction to the fundamental principles of physics and chemistry. Students will explore the nature of matter and energy, and how they interact with each other. They will investigate the basic laws of motion, forces, energy, and waves. They will also study the properties of atoms and molecules, and how they form chemical compounds.

The course will be taught through a combination of lectures, classroom discussions, hands-on activities, and laboratory experiments. Students will be expected to participate actively in class and complete all assignments.

Outdoor Education Course

Welcome to our comprehensive high school outdoor education class, where students dive into a diverse curriculum covering essential core proficiencies amidst the backdrop of nature's classroom. Throughout this immersive experience, participants develop physical fitness through activities like hiking, kayaking, and team sports. They hone their problem-solving skills through wilderness survival challenges and navigation exercises using maps and compasses. Environmental science lessons provide a deeper understanding of ecosystems, conservation, and sustainable practices. Leadership opportunities abound as students collaborate on group projects and support one another in overcoming obstacles. By embracing the outdoors, students not only cultivate resilience and self-reliance but also foster a profound connection to the natural world.

Post-Secondary Planning

Post- Secondary Planning will work on creating and supporting a PGP (personal growth plan) that follows students throughout their high school career. We will build achievable goals at various levels supporting student ability to make gains in their academic years. We will also work together to achieve what your plan is for after transition/graduation to assure you have the tools to be successful and supported.

Students will also go over their schedules, grades, attendance, and discuss other options for achieving high school credits that are best suited to their learning style. These can include job study, work study, alternative projects, interaction within current studies, hygiene, life skills, and community based skill sets.

Additionally daily support is available for students in need of an alternative location to work, and modifications or accommodations to assignments while ensuring their IEP goals are being met.

Electives

Psychology

Students will learn and understand the introductory concepts of psychology and its history. They will be introduced to concepts such as classical conditioning, cognitive and behavioral learning, social learning, the brain and memory, the basic senses, dreams, meditation, and other forms of consciousness. After introducing main concepts of psychology students will begin to learn about nature vs. nurture and social vs. personal development. They will have the opportunity to take the 16 personalities test and understand their traits in comparison to what they have grasped in the earlier quarter.

Cinema Studies

Students will study the concepts that go into making films, such as cinematography, different camera angles (bird's eye view, close-up shots, crane shots, continuity, cross cutting, deep focus, etc) and what these angles are able to accomplish in film making and adding to each film's main focus points. The main focus will also include lighting, editing, sound and the use of music, character evolving and expressions, dialogue, plot, setting, conflict and climax. They will have the opportunity to compare older films to their remakes and analyze the changes that take place.

Creative Writing/Lyrics

Students will learn and understand the concept of creative writing in short stories and poetry. They will have the opportunity to create writing pieces as a class unit and collectively encourage each other to creatively design a plot, storyline, and narrative piece as well as working independently but continuing to be encouraged to seek advice from their peers and other works of literature.

They will also learn the basics of songwriting and connecting poetry with song lyrics, understanding the basic elements of poetry including rhyming, scheme, verses, meters, and stanzas. Further into song writing, students will understand figures of speech, symbolism, allegories, syntax, and structures.

Criminology:

In this course, students are introduced to the basic concepts of criminology, which is the study of criminal behavior. Students will learn about the different types of crime and why and who usually commits them.

True Crime Studies:

In this course, students will explore the infamous true crime stories, solved and unsolved, that exist in our history. They will engage in weekly open discussions about

these stories, analyze the information that is given, research more information if needed, and present this information through projects, slideshows and oral presentations.

Digital Media:

Digital Media is a project based course that allows students to creatively express themselves through photography, videography, voice recording, print media, and other newly emerging forms of digital media. They will learn to record and edit their own original media, and choose how they wish to do it based on their comfortability and interests.

Hunting and Fishing

Hunting and Fishing is a high school course that provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in responsible hunting and fishing activities. Students will learn about hunting and fishing regulations, wildlife management, and conservation practices. They will also learn about hunting and fishing techniques, equipment, and safety procedures. In addition, students will develop an understanding of the ethical and cultural aspects of hunting and fishing.

The course will be taught through a combination of classroom discussions, hands-on activities, and field experiences. Students will be expected to participate actively in class and complete all assigned readings and homework assignments. Field experiences will require students to demonstrate proficiency in hunting and fishing skills and safety practices.

Introduction to Archeology and Paleontology

Archeology and Paleontology is a high school course that introduces students to the principles and methods of studying the human past and ancient life. Students will learn about the scientific methods used in archeology and paleontology, including excavation, laboratory analysis, and data interpretation. They will also examine the cultural and environmental factors that shaped human history and evolution, as well as the evolution of plants and animals.

The course will be taught through a combination of lectures, classroom discussions, hands-on activities, and laboratory experiments. Students will be expected to participate actively in class and complete all assignments. Laboratory activities will require students to demonstrate proficiency in scientific methods and data analysis.

Hand Tools Woodworking

Hand Tools Woodworking is a high school course that introduces students to the fundamentals of woodworking using hand tools. Students will learn how to safely and effectively use hand tools such as saws, chisels, planes, and hand drills to create functional and decorative woodworking projects. Students will also develop an understanding of the properties of different types of wood and the design and construction of woodworking projects.

The course will be taught through a combination of classroom discussions, hands-on woodworking activities, and project-based learning. Students will be expected to

participate actively in class and complete all assignments and woodworking projects. Woodworking projects will require students to demonstrate proficiency in safety practices, hand tool use, material selection, and project design and construction.

STEAM

STEAM Education is an approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. Students will take thoughtful risks, engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving, embrace collaboration, and work through the creative process.

Summer Offerings

BRIGHTality provides an extended school year offering and runs a variety of different programs available to students of all ages over the summer months. These programs change year to year based on individual need and interest.

Questions and Concerns

BRIGHTality welcomes any questions and concerns parents, guardians, and outside educators may have in regard to students. Our priority is to not only serve students in an individualized way that is cooperative and comprehensive to their unique learning needs, but to do so with transparency and open communication. For general questions and concerns please feel free to reach out to BRIGHTality's Director, **Jamie Seeholzer** or Assistant Director **Makayla Beauregard**. For more individualized information in reference to students' education, please also feel free to reach out to your assigned staff member via call, text, or by following the email format listed below. There are no questions too big or too small, BRIGHTality encourages all inquiries, as our main goal is to provide the best education to those we serve.

Jamie Seeholzer, M.Ed

Director

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Assistant Director

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BRIGHTality Policies

BRIGHTality upholds and adopts the Vermont Agency of Education policies on harassment and bullying, alcohol and drugs, weapons, firearms and explosives, and non-discrimination. These policies are detailed below.

Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy

Vermont State Standards for Prevention of Harassment and Bullying

“State policy. It is the policy of the State of Vermont that all Vermont educational institutions provide safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environments. Harassment, hazing, and bullying have no place and will not be tolerated in Vermont schools. No Vermont student should feel threatened or be discriminated against while enrolled in a Vermont school.”

Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students

BRIGHTality (hereinafter “District”) is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect.

It is the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Harassment may also constitute a violation of Vermont’s Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

It is also the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful hazing and bullying of students. Conduct which constitutes hazing may be subject to civil penalties.

The District shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing and bullying according to the procedures accompanying this policy, and shall take appropriate action against any person - subject to the jurisdiction of the board - who violates this policy. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, bullying, or hazing as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the board's disciplinary policies or the school's code of conduct.

The Model Procedures are expressly incorporated by reference as though fully included within this Model Policy. The Model Procedures are separated from the policy for ease of use as may be required.

II. Implementation

The headmaster or his/her designee shall:

1. Adopt a procedure directing staff, parents and guardians how to report violations of this policy and file complaints under this policy. (See Model Procedures on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students)
2. Annually, select two or more designated employees to receive complaints of hazing, bullying and/or harassment at each school campus and publicize their availability in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school. Please see below for designated staff.
3. Designate an Equity Coordinator to oversee all aspects of the implementation of this policy as it relates to obligations imposed by

federal law regarding discrimination. This role may also be assigned to one or both of the Designated Employees.

4. Respond to notifications of possible violations of this policy in order to promptly and effectively address all complaints of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.

5. Take action on substantiated complaints. In cases where hazing, harassment and/or bullying is substantiated, the District shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying; prevent its recurrence; and to remedy the impact of the offending conduct on the victim(s), where appropriate. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline.

Serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. It may also involve penalties or sanctions for both organizations and individuals who engage in hazing. Revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to operate or exist within the District's purview may also be considered if that organization knowingly permits, authorizes or condones hazing.

III. Constitutionally Protected Speech

It is the intent of the District to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purpose of this policy is to (1) prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that has the purpose or effect of substantially disrupting the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources or creates a hostile learning environment; (2) prohibit conduct intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate students in a manner as defined under this policy.

IV. Definitions. For the purposes of this policy and the accompanying procedures, the following definitions apply:

1. **“Bullying”** means any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:
 1. Is repeated over time;
 2. Is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
 3. (i) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity; or (ii) does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student’s right to access educational programs.
2. **“Complaint”** means an oral or written report provided by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying.
3. **“Complainant”** means a student who has provided oral or written information about conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying, or a student who is the target of alleged hazing, harassment or bullying.
4. **“Designated employee”** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of hazing, harassment and bullying pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. 570a(a)(7). The designated employees for each school building are identified in Appendix A of this policy.
5. **“Employee”** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District, an agent of the school, a school

board member, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, “agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.

6. “**Equity Coordinator**” is the person responsible for implementation of Title IX (regarding sex-based discrimination) and Title VI (regarding race-based discrimination) for the District and for coordinating the District’s compliance with Title IX and Title VI in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The Equity Coordinator is also responsible for overseeing implementation of the District’s *Preventing and Responding to Harassment of Students and Harassment of Employees* policies. This role may also be assigned to Designated Employees.
7. “**Harassment**” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment includes conduct as defined above and may also constitute one or more of the following:

- (1) Sexual harassment, which means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, that includes sexual violence/sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and includes situations when one or both of the following occur:
 - (i) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student’s education, academic status, or progress; or

(ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

Sexual harassment may also include student-on-student conduct or conduct of a non-employee third party that creates a hostile environment. A hostile environment exists where the harassing conduct is severe, persistent or pervasive so as to deny or limit the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program on the basis of sex.

(2) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to cultural customs.

(3) Harassment of members of other protected categories, means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

8. **“Hazing”** means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, against another student: In connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the educational institution; and
- (1) Which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, endangering the mental or physical health of the student.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extra-curricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

- (1) The goals are approved by the educational institution; and
- (2) The activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

With respect to Hazing, “**Student**” means any person who:

- (A) is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
- (B) has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or
- (C) intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.

9. “**Notice**” means a written complaint or oral information that hazing, harassment or bullying may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the hazing, harassment or bullying, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. If the school learns of possible hazing, harassment or bullying through other means, for example, if information about hazing, harassment or bullying is received from a third party (such as from a witness to an incident or an anonymous letter or telephone call), different factors will affect the school’s response. These factors include the source and nature of the information; the seriousness of the alleged incident; the specificity of the information; the objectivity and credibility of the source of the report; whether any individuals can be identified who were subjected to the alleged harassment; and whether those individuals want to pursue the matter. In addition, for purposes of violations of federal anti-discrimination laws, notice may

occur when an employee of the district, including any individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility, knows or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known about potential unlawful harassment or bullying.

10. **“Organization”** means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members primarily are students at an educational institution, and which is affiliated with the educational institution.
11. **“Pledging”** means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.
12. **“Retaliation”** is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment, hazing or bullying or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.
13. **“School administrator”** means an administrator, principal or his/her designee assistant principal//technical center director or his/her designee and/or the District’s Equity Coordinator.
14. **“Student Conduct Form”** is a form used by students, staff, or parents, to provide, in written form, information about inappropriate student behaviors that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

APPENDIX A

Designated Employees:

The following employees of the BRIGHTality School have been designated by the District to receive complaints of bullying and/or harassment pursuant to this policy and 16 V.S.A. § 570a(a)(7) and 16 V.S.A. §570c(7) and under federal anti-discrimination laws;

Name: __Lauren Turmel_____

Title: _____Art/ Steam Educator_____

Contact Information: **lauren.turmel@brightaity.org** or (802) 735-4029

Name: __Makayla Beauregard_____

Title: _____Assistant Director_____

Contact Information: **makayla.beauregard@brightality.org** or (802) 782-5059

^[1] Throughout this model policy and the related procedures, “District” shall apply to Independent Schools and should be substituted as appropriate. References to the administrator shall equate to “Head of School” or “Headmaster” as appropriate, with regard to Independent Schools. Where language suggests a “District” will take action, it shall be the administrator, the Head of School, the Headmaster or his/her designee.

BRIGHTality’s Drugs and Alcohol Policy

It is the policy of BRIGHTality that no student shall knowingly possess, use, sell, give or otherwise transmit, or be under the influence of any illegal drug, regulated substance, alcohol, tobacco or drug paraphernalia on any

school property (including transportation), or at any school sponsored activity away from or within the school. For the purpose of this policy, alcohol, tobacco, and drugs include substances that a student represents or believes to be a drug. The only exception to this policy is medication, authorized in writing in advance by a licensed health-care provider. Any student required to take medications during school hours is required to comply with school policies, procedures and regulations for the administration and possession of medications. It is also the policy of the school to make appropriate referrals in cases of substance abuse. The following protocol and subsequent consequences for violation of BRIGHTality's Drug and Alcohol Policy are outlined below.

Protocol:

1. Parents are contacted immediately upon handbook violation
2. Advise parent to pick their student up as soon as possible
3. Staff will document the incident through an incident report

First offense

First time offenders of violating the outlined expectations in the handbook will have an Incident report filed, a formal sit down conversation with the school Director, Assistant Director, Special Education Coordinator and Behavior Coordinator. During this sit down the perpetrator will be given guidelines and expectations moving forward that will need to be followed and met. The Expectations will be listed as follows and completed during school hours in a private space with a designated staff:

1. Students will write an essay to the best of their ability with the provided outline from BRIGHTality staff, on the topic in question (i.e drug paraphernalia).
2. Students will participate in a designated training from <https://www.drugfreeworld.org/course/> that BRIGHTality staff will assign and facilitate.
3. Student will summarize their knowledge gained from the previous two items in a follow-up meeting with BRIGHTality Assistant Director, and Behavior Coordinator.

It should be noted that students who are participating in work study may have their work day or job placement affected by these situations.

Subsequent Offenses

In the event of a recurring incident where a student is caught utilizing an illegal substance on school property multiple times the above protocol of parent/ guardian contact will be followed as well as the St. Albans Police Department being contacted. Students should be made aware that this contact may result in a Civil Violation Ticket and may have subsequent consequences of the student being referred to a Youth Substance and Prevention Program.

BRIGHTality's Weapons/Firearms/Explosives Policy

It is the policy of BRIGHTality to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 and state law requiring schools to provide for the possible expulsion of students who bring firearms to or possess firearms at school. And in the spirit, BRIGHTality is also including explosives and weapons that it deems dangerous. It is further the intent of the board to maintain a

student discipline system consistent with the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Vermont State Board of Education rules.

For the purposes of this policy, the terms “firearm” “school” “explosives” “expelled” and “weapons” shall be defined consistent with the definitions required by state and federal law. Sanctions Any student who brings a firearm to school, or who possesses a firearm at school shall be brought by the administrator to the school board for an expulsion hearing. A student found by the school board after a hearing to have brought a firearm to school shall be expelled for at least one calendar year. However, the school board may modify the expulsion on a case-by-case basis when it finds circumstances such as, but not limited to:

1. The student was unaware that they had brought a firearm to school.
2. The student did not intend to use the firearm to threaten or endanger others.
3. The student is disabled, and the misconduct is related to the disability.
4. The student does not present an ongoing threat to others and a lengthy expulsion would not serve the best interests of the pupil.

At the discretion of the school board and administration, an expelled student may be afforded limited educational services at a site other than the school during the period of expulsion under this policy. Policy Implementation An expulsion hearing conducted under this policy shall afford due process as required by law and as developed by the administrator or their designee. The administrator shall refer to the appropriate law enforcement agency any student who brings a firearm to a school under the control and supervision of the school district. The administrator may also report any incident subject to this policy to the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services. The administrator shall annually provide the Commissioner of Education with descriptions of the circumstances surrounding expulsions imposed under this policy, the number of students expelled, and the type of firearms involved.

BRIGHTality's Search and Seizure Procedure

Maintaining school security requires a balance between student privacy and student safety. When it has been determined that the search of a student's property is required, such determination shall be made by the administrator or their designee. Any searches will be based on a reasonable suspicion that a school rule has been broken, or a student has committed or is in the process of committing a crime. These are called "suspicion-based" searches. Any searches or seizures of property shall be

made by the administrator or their designee. All searches and seizures are documented in the students file along with the finding. Depending on the results of all searches and seizures, the findings will be reported to the student and/or their parents.

BRIGHTality's Non-Discrimination Policy

BRIGHTality has adopted the state of Vermont's Agency of Education policy on Discrimination. BRIGHTality does not discriminate and provides an equal opportunity education to all. The State's guidance is outlined below. For more information we encourage you to visit the State of Vermont Agency of Education website linked below.

Agency of Education Nondiscrimination Policy

The Agency of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, sex, disability, age, gender identity or sexual orientation in its programs and activities. Review the [DHR Discrimination Complaints Number 3.3 policy](#).

For further information on notice of nondiscrimination, visit [US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights](#) for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call (800) 421-3481.

Emergency School Closing and Inclement Weather Policy

Emergency School Closing

In the event of an emergency school closing students and guardians will be contacted by phone as well as through their preferred method of communication. A notice of the emergency closure will also be made available on the school's facebook page.

Inclement Weather

BRIGHTality will evaluate inclement weather and the determination of surrounding areas and if it is decided that a school closure is necessary, we will post it on our Facebook page, send out a confirmation email, as well as a direct message to parents and guardians notifying them of the closure.

Health Office/ Medication Dispensation

For a variety of reasons, a student may need to take medication during the school day. BRIGHTality has available, and will dispense, basic analgesics such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen with permission from a parent or guardian.

For prescription drugs a student may possess and administer a daily dose with permission from a parent or guardian. Alternatively, BRIGHTality can store and administer prescriptions with permission from a parent or guardian.

Discipline Policy

BRIGHTality uses, as a model, Choice Theory (or noncoercive discipline) to inform and guide our discipline policy. A certain amount of discipline is needed to learn and grow. Most of the time, students have the self-discipline to meet these goals. On occasions where self-discipline is lacking, BRIGHTality uses one or more of the following to help the student return to a point where they can learn and grow.

- a) Take a Break: Loss of self-discipline often happens when we feel overwhelmed or when we have few choices and limited power over events. Identifying when a student needs a break is basic to preventing loss of self-discipline and the first step to restoring it.

Opportunities for a break include such things as getting a snack, playing a game, going for a walk, listening to some music, or working on a different assignment. Taking a break is useful in confronting such issues as work refusal, tiredness, disrespect, and anxiety. This form of noncoercive discipline gives students some power over their basic needs and helps them return to a learning mindset.

- b) Records Review: Many discipline issues are ongoing. A records check will be conducted to ensure the student's accommodations are being met and to see if certain intervention strategies have been effective in the past.
- c) Meeting With Administrator: In cases of serious discipline issues, such as bullying, harassment, destruction of property, possession of a weapon or illegal drug, or other ongoing discipline problem, the student will meet with the administrator to clarify the problem and identify solutions.
- d) Team Meeting: A team meeting may take place in lieu of the Administrator meeting if it is felt that it would be beneficial to include a parent/guardian and/or LEA.
- e) Coordinated Services Plan (CSP) Meeting: In cases where a student is receiving multiple services, a coordinated services plan meeting may be held to develop a more comprehensive approach to finding solutions to the discipline issue.
- f) Meeting with LEA: A meeting with the LEA can happen at any time but may be called when the student's future enrollment at BRIGHTality is called into question unless the discipline issue is resolved.

BRIGHTality will work to handle incidents internally within their abilities. BRIGHTality carefully documents each incident following its occurrence.

Some incidents, depending on their severity, are reported to parents/guardians/local authorities if they are emergent, consistently repeated, places a student or others in harm, or disruptive to students' ability to learn.

Incidents That Require Reports:

- a) Unauthorized departure from school building.
- b) Unauthorized departure from school premises.
- c) Property destruction (to include punching/hitting/throwing/cutting/anything that alters the condition or integrity of furniture, walls, materials, etc. located in or around the school building and premises.
- d) Going through/taking/moving other staff or student personal property.
- e) Failure to attend classes repeatedly across multiple subjects despite accommodations or modifications to a student's class or schedule.
- f) Inappropriate cell phone usage that's disruptive to a student's or others' learning (please refer to the phone contract below that must be signed upon enrollment).

Incidents That Can Result in Immediate Dismissal of Enrollment:

- a) Inflicting serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Suspension/Expulsion Procedure

BRIGHTality follows Vermont Agency of Education Rule 4313.1; 34 CFR §300.530 regarding suspension and expulsion of special education students. This rule states,

“Authority of School Personnel Rule 4313.1; 34 CFR §300.530

Case-by-case determination School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis, when determining whether a change of placement, made in accordance with the following requirements related to discipline, is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a school code of student conduct.

General To the extent that they also take such action for children without disabilities, school personnel may, for not more than 10 school days in a row, remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct

from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting (which must be determined by the child's individualized education program (IEP) Team), another setting, or suspend the child. School personnel may also impose additional removals of the child of not more than ten 10 school days in a row in that same school year for separate incidents of Notice of Procedural Safeguards: Rights of Page 33 of 40 Parents of Students with Disabilities (Revised: June 1, 2018) misconduct, as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement (see Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals for the definition, below).

Once a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for a total of 10 school days in the same school year, your school district or supervisory union must, during any subsequent days of removal in that school year, provide services to the extent required below under the sub-heading Services.

Additional Authority If the behavior that violated the student code of conduct was not a manifestation of the child's disability (see Manifestation determination, below) and the disciplinary change of placement would exceed 10 school days in a row, school personnel may apply the disciplinary procedures to that child with a disability in the same manner and for the same duration as it would to children without disabilities, except that the school must provide services to that child as described below under Services. The child's IEP team determines the interim alternative educational setting for such services.

Services

The services that must be provided to a child with a disability who has been removed from the child's current placement may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

A school district or supervisory union is only required to provide services to a child with a disability who has been removed from his or her current

placement for 10 school days or less in that school year, if it provides services to a child without disabilities who has been similarly removed.

A child with a disability who is removed from the child's current placement for **more than 10 school days** must:

1. Continue to receive educational services, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; **and**
2. Receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, which are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not happen again.

After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for **10 school days** in that same school year, and **if** the current removal is for **10 school days** in a row or less **and** if the removal is not a change of placement (see definition below), then school personnel, in consultation with at least one of the child's teachers, determine the extent to which services are needed to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

For suspensions of more than ten days, schools are required to provide the following:

Manifestation Determination

Within **10 school days** of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct (except for a removal that is for 10 school days in a row or less and not a change of placement), the school district or supervisory union, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the school district or supervisory union) must review all relevant information in

the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by you to determine:

1. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; **or**
2. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the school district or supervisory union's failure to implement the child's IEP.

If the school district or supervisory union, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP team determine that the conduct in question was the direct result of your school district or supervisory union's failure to implement the IEP, your school district or supervisory union must take immediate action to remedy those deficiencies.

Determination that behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability

If the school district or supervisory union, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must either:

1. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the school district or supervisory union had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; **or**
2. If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Except as described below under the sub-heading ***Special circumstances***, your school district or supervisory union must return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless you and the school district or supervisory union agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

Special circumstances

Whether or not the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability, school personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting (determined by the child's IEP Team) for up to 45 school days, if the child:

1. Carries a weapon (see the definition below) to school or has a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the Vermont Agency of Education or a school district or supervisory union;
2. Knowingly has or uses illegal drugs (see the definition below), or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, (see the definition below), while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the Vermont Agency of Education or a school district or supervisory union; **or**
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury (see the definition below) upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the Vermont Agency of Education or a school district or supervisory union.

Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals

Rule 4313.7 34; CFR §300.536

A removal of a child with a disability from the child's current educational placement is a **change of placement** if:

1. The removal is for more than 10 school days in a row; **or**
2. The child has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because:
 - a. The series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year;
 - b. The child's behavior is substantially similar to the child's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals.
 - c. Such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity

of the removals to one another; **and** whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement is determined on a case-by-case basis by the school district or supervisory union and, if challenged, is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.



BRIGHTality

Cell Phone Contract

This contract between _____ and **BRIGHTality** , signed on the ____ day of _____, 20____, establishes cell phone usage rules and consequences.

I understand that having a cell phone is a privilege and that if I choose to disregard the following expectations listed in this contract, I am forfeiting my privilege of using my cell phone during school hours.

Cell Phone Responsibilities

L, _____, [student's name], understand that while at school or engaging in school based interactions or activities that I must:

- € Be courteous during instruction time by not interrupting the conversation or activity with my phone use.
- € Be in control of my phone, don't let my phone control me.
- € Do not take videos or photos of others without their permission.
- € Do not share videos or photos of others without their permission.
- € Lower my volume while using my phone so as to not disrupt others around me.
- € If I am asked to put my phone away, I will respect this request and follow-through by placing my phone in phone jail and having the privilege of charging at this time.
- € Turn my ringer to silent or vibrate when I'm with other people who might be disturbed by a call.
- € Don't put my phone on speakerphone when I'm with other people.
- € If I break or lose my phone it will be my responsibility.

Consequences

I, _____, [student's name], understand that if I choose to break the cell phone usage rules above then I am voluntarily forfeiting my privilege of having a phone at school.

Signed _____ [Student]

Signed _____ [Parent/Guardian]

Signed _____ [BRIGHTality Staff]

Acknowledgement of Handbook

My signature below indicates that I understand and will conform to the policies listed above. Prior to signing, I know that I am able to ask any questions to clarify any aspect of this handbook so that I can submit an informed signature.

Parent/Guardian:

Date:

Parent/Guardian (Print):

Student:

Student (Print):

Date:
