

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology



PARENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME

Welcome to Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology (BMCAT), founded in 2014, we are a Christian based, coeducational school. Whether you are a first-time visitor, or a prospective parent, we invite you to look around our website to learn more about BMCAT. We believe that BMCAT is a special place, and we are delighted that you are visiting our site.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Parents and teachers need to communicate. Please feel free to talk to your child's teacher at school or drop a note at the office requesting a call back or a note of response.

Parents are expected to escort their child to the classroom. This is a good time to share a comment or a few words with the teacher, or to arrange a later time to talk.

PARENT BULLETIN BOARD

A bulletin board will be available with announcements for you to view and read. Please take the time to scan the Parent Board regularly to keep informed of the academies happenings and/or announcements. Weekly lesson plans and monthly plans will be posted for viewing.

ASSESSING YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

We will be observing your child throughout the year to assess their development, physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively, creatively, and language skills. Twice a year a —Child's Skills Checklist will be done. This information will provide the basis for parent-teacher conferences held in the fall and spring. Conferences can be held at any time if either parent or teacher requests one.

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

School hours are 8:30am -2:45pm. Students are expected to enter the doors on the side of the building, which will be open at 7:30. Parents may escort their child to homeroom. If you are picking up your child, please wait in the office until your child is dismissed. If someone other than yourself or another specified caregiver will be picking your child up, please inform the front office.

If someone other than persons on the "Authorized Pick-Up List" is to pick up your child, a written, signed note should be given to the director or person in charge by the parent or guardian at the child's arrival. BMELA must be able to contact the parent to verify the letter. The person picking up the child MUST have a valid I.D.

DRESS CODE

Boys' Dress Code

- Khaki, black or navy pants
- Brilliant Minds Collar Shirt (black, white, blue, gray or green)
- Green or blue pullover or cardigan sweater
- Black school jacket
- Dress shoes for special dress days, tennis shoes (solid black or solid white only) with non-marking soles with laces the color of the shoe.
- Socks must be worn at all times
- Shirts must be buttoned except for the collar button and the first button down and must be tucked into pants at all times while on school premises. Socks (white, black, or brown) must be worn at all times.

- Hair must be neatly cut above the collar in the back, and may not hang down over the eyes when combed forward. Students may not shave their heads.
- Extremes in hair color (green, blue, purple, pink, etc.) are not allowed.
- No visible body piercing/tongue piercing or tattoos.
- Shoes must be clean and in good condition and properly laced with laces the color of the shoes.
- Clothing must be sized appropriate to the student. No tight/loose or overly baggy clothing is allowed.

Girls' Dress Code

- Plaid skirt, skort, or jumper (must be no more than three inches above the knee).
- Khaki, black or navy pants
- Brilliant Minds Collar Shirt (black, white, blue, gray or green)
- Green or blue pullover or cardigan sweater
- Black school jacket
- Dress shoes for special dress days, tennis shoes.
- Socks (white, green or blue) or tights (white, green, or blue) must be worn at all times
- Hair must be neatly cut above the collar in the back, and may not hang down over the eyes when combed forward. Students may not shave their heads.
- Extremes in hair color (green, blue, purple, pink, etc.) are not allowed. Belts must be worn at all times--plain brown or black (no studded belts, no designs, or holes).
- No visible body piercing/tongue piercing or tattoos.
- Shoes must be clean and in good condition and properly laced with laces the color of the shoes.
- Clothing must be sized appropriate to the student. No tight/loose or overly baggy clothing is allowed.

Dress Day Out

Students are allowed to dress out of uniform on days designated as out-of-uniform days and the following rules apply:

- Blue jean days are specified. If blue jeans are allowed, only jeans with no holes or tears and ones that are not tight fitting are allowed.
- As a general rule of thumb, students should have as much skin covered when they are out of uniform as they do in uniform, therefore:
 - If shorts are allowed, they must be knee length.
 - Shirts or blouses must be suitable for school not the beach.
 - Tank tops, strapped tops, tube and crop tops, are not allowed. At no time should there be any inappropriately exposed skin.
 - Advertising on shirts must be school appropriate.
 - Shoes must be sensible-high heeled shoes are dangerous and are not allowed.
- On a child's birthday or half birthday, he/she may dress out of uniform following the above guidelines.

Halloween: Character Parade. Teachers will create costumes.

Valentine's Day: Red or pink shirts or socks with uniform skirt/jumper/pants

St. Patrick's Day: Green shirts and socks with uniform skirt/jumper/pants

If any other days occur that are out of uniform, a note will be sent home stating proper attire for the day. The day before Christmas break and the last day of school are full uniform days.

Clothing which may be appropriate for a recreational/social activity outside of school time is not necessarily appropriate for school. We rely on the sound judgment and good taste of parents in avoiding unsuitable clothing such as clothes that are ragged, too short and T - shirts that have inappropriate connotations. The school reserves the right to determine whether a student's dress and appearance satisfies our requirements.

****Label all clothing prominently with your child's name.****

TREASURES AND POSSESSIONS

Each child will have a specially marked cubby for jackets, extra clothes, and nap blankets and most treasured art projects. Please check your child's cubby each day to take home items that need not remain at school.

Sometimes, children need to bring special toys or new-found treasures to school to use as a bridge between home and school. On these occasions we will work with you and your child to make it a positive sharing experience. Past experience has shown us that lots of toys from home create many problems at school. We have a wide variety of materials as well as many opportunities to work on sharing at school. We encourage you to encourage your child to leave personal belongings at home.

IMPORTANT: Play guns, weapons and other toys that encourage aggressive play are never welcome in our classrooms. We are trying to build cooperation and concern for one another in our school; these items promote aggression, competition and hostile feelings. Please leave them at home.

LABELING

Please label all toys, books and clothing that is extra or removable with your child's name. This is very important for the teachers in determining ownership of these items. It is also important in helping a child learn to take care of his/her belongings.

LOCKERS OR CUBBIES

One is provided for each child and is marked with the child's name. Please check each day for art work, notes from teachers or office, personal items, etc. It is especially important to keep these cleared for other children who may share the cubby on another day.

BIRTHDAYS

If a birthday is to be celebrated away from school and the entire class is not invited, please mail the invitations. If the entire class is invited, please feel free to bring the invitations to school. Please be considerate of our children's feelings and comply with the above request.

Children are invited to celebrate their birthdays at school. If you plan to bring in a treat, please notify us ahead of time so we can plan snack around it. We will also inform you as to how many children to plan for. Parents are always welcome at their child's birthday celebration.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

You are the best judge of your child's health and we trust you will not bring a sick child to the academy. However, if in the opinion of the teaching staff your child is sick, we will call you to come and pick-up your child. All staff is trained in First Aid and to recognize the signs of communicable disease and other illness. Each child shall be observed daily.

Signs of illness include the following:

1. temperature of 100 degrees or more by axillary method
2. skin rash
3. diarrhea and/or vomiting two times or more in a 24-hour period
4. evidence of lice infestation, scabies or other parasitic infestation
5. severe coughing
6. difficult or rapid breathing
7. yellowish skin or eyes
8. evidence of conjunctivitis (pink eye)
9. stiff neck
10. untreated infected skin patches
11. unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
12. sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
13. complaints by child, fussiness
14. listless behavior
15. symptoms of a cold
16. decreased appetite

When a child exhibits one or more of behaviors 1 – 12, a determination will be made by the administrator regarding the discharge of the child to a parent. If the child is to be dismissed, the parent will be notified and the child must be picked up within the hour.

If the above listed behaviors 13-16 are noted, but none of the first twelve sign are observed, the parent will be informed and it will be their decision whether the child will remain in the care of the academy or be discharged. If the child remains at the academy but their condition worsens or they cannot participate in an activity, the child will be taken to the office and the parent will be notified that the child needs to be picked up within the hour.

In cases in which the parent cannot be reached, the emergency number listed by the parents will be called. The child will be released to that person.

Re-admittance into the academy is allowed after 24 hours of normal axillaries temperature (below 99) and/or no other signs of illness for 24 hours, or by a doctor's signed statement. (In the case of parasitic infestation, a child is readmitted when all evidence of the infestation is gone. This is determined by the office staff before the child can enter the classroom.)

Children returned to the Center with signs of illness or disease will be refused admittance.

MEDICATION

No medications, vitamins, or special diets are administered unless instructions to administer such items are written, signed and dated by a licensed physician and are prescribed for that child. This applies to over-the-counter pain relievers as well as prescription medicines.

There are special forms that must be completed by the physician, parent and staff who administer the medication. No medicine, vitamins or special diet can be administered without this completed form.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We have regular fire and disaster drills at school. We urge each family to plan what you will do if disaster strikes during the day when you are separated at work, school, etc. You will find helpful disaster planning information in your phone book.

The children are taught to listen to the teachers' directions. We will assemble and count everyone and give aid and comfort as needed. We will stay with your children until you or someone of your choice can get here.

We have stored flashlights, radio, first-aid supplies, food and water. Teachers have first aid training, many have had CPR training.

SNACKS

We provide a mid-morning and an afternoon snack daily. The children participate in preparing the snack as much as possible. We service nutritious snacks including natural foods, fresh fruits and vegetables and fruit juices.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology will try to accommodate children with special needs (physical, behavioral, cognitive, etc.). Close communication with the parents is essential to providing quality care. If the child has already been evaluated by his/her school system, we will work with them to implement the IEP that they develop. Parents are required to submit to us their child's most recent IEP, and keep us updated on progress. If we feel a child should be evaluated so that they can get extra help early on, we will make recommendations to the parents.

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology will not discriminate against children with special needs. We will admit any special needs child on a trial basis of one month, after which we will require a conference with the parent(s). At this conference, we will assess whether we are able to adequately care for the child within our current staffing patterns. If we are not able to meet the child's needs within our current staffing patterns, we will give parents the time and assistance needed to find more appropriate care.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

The term guidance is used for several reasons. It is a positive term, and implies working WITH the child to develop internal control of her/his behavior. Our goal is to encourage the children to become creative, independent, responsible, and socially mature human beings. This involves learning to make responsible choices, and accepting the consequences of such choices.

Guidance takes several forms;

1. Environment - A place designed for children. The furniture is child-sized, with lots of hands-on experiences.
2. Logical Rules – Such as keeping our hands to ourselves, and taking Care of the learning environment. These are discussed with the children, as well as why such rules are needed.

3. Curriculum – Is developmentally appropriate, based on the children’s interests and level of readiness.
4. Positive Behavior – We reinforce the behaviors we encourage. Catch them being good!
5. Redirection – Often interesting a child in another activity can eliminate a potential difficulty. We might ask a child to help us or send them to a different area to play.
6. Positive Reminder – Telling the child what we want them to do, rather than using no or don’t.
7. Renewal Time – Occasionally a child needs to be removed from the situation for a brief time allowing them to consider alternate behavior.

Any on-going situations will be discussed with the parents to ensure a cooperative approach. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns.

Note: No corporal punishment will be allowed. This is defined as the use of negative physical touching. (spanking, slapping, pinching, etc.) No unusual punishment will be allowed, such as humiliation, ridicule, threat, or coercion.

CHRONIC DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

We will make every effort to work with the parents of children having difficulties in the academy. We are here to serve and protect all of our children. Though, children displaying chronic disruptive behavior which has been determined to be upsetting to the physical or emotional well-being of another child may require the following actions.

1. Initial Consultation - The Director may require the parent(s) of any child who attends Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology to meet for a conference. The problem will be defined on paper. Goals will be established and the parent will be Involved in creating approaches towards solving the problem.
2. Second Consultation - If the initial plan for helping the child fails, the parent(s) will again be required to meet with the Director. Another attempt will be made to identify the problem, outline new approaches to the problem, and discuss the consequences if progress is not apparent.
3. Suspension - When the previous attempts have been followed and no progress has been made towards solving the problem, the child may be suspended from child care indefinitely. The Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology Director may immediately suspend a child at any time he/she exhibits a behavior which is harmful to him/herself or others. A parent may be called from work at any time the child exhibits uncontrollable behavior that cannot be modified by staff. That parent may be asked to take the child home immediately. Suspensions from the academy may vary from a few hours to an indefinite period.

DISCHARGE POLICY

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

1. Non-payment or excessive late payments of fees.
2. Not observing the rules of the center as outlined in the parent agreement.
3. Child has special needs which we cannot adequately meet with our current staffing patterns.
4. Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child.

HOLIDAYS

The following legal holidays will be observed and the Center will be closed:

Labor Day

Staff Development Day
Teacher Work Day
Thanksgiving Break
Winter Break
Teacher Work Day
Martin Luther King Day
President's Day
Spring Break
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Fourth of July
Teacher Work Days

We will have kids club open on the days BMELA is not closed. A sign up form will be sent out a week in advance so we can get an accurate count of attendance.

Times	Prices
VPK	\$15
School-age (elementary students)	\$20

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology offers a variety of classes for preschoolers during the year. The Academy's Supplemental Classes are held once a week. They are in addition to our regular preschool programming. Classes are limited in size and age groups.

VIDEOS AT SCHOOL

Videos are not regularly used in our school. Exceptions are made for very short films that relate directly to a topic that has been discussed with the children. On the rare occasion when there is extremely inclement weather for a long period of time, the afternoon teacher may choose to show a short video from our library of quality movies for children.

RECYCLING

When you clean your house, remember that we can use:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| -good used toys | -books |
| -dramatic play props | -phone |
| -dress up costumes | -jewelry |
| -purses | -good kitchen equipment of all sorts |
| -collage materials | -greeting cards |
| -ribbons | -spools |
| -calendars | -buttons |
| -tiles | -yarn |

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Staff members are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

Middle School 6th-8th Grade

Our Philosophy -- Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology students in grades 6-8 will develop a solid academic foundation and a love of learning. Students will draw upon that foundation to explore the world through project-based learning and thematic studies in science, math, and the humanities. Through service learning, Brilliant Minds seeks to cultivate students who are responsible citizens in the local and global community. In addition, Brilliant Minds students will build relationships with community mentors to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology focuses on meeting the needs of each child by challenging our high achievers with advanced academic programs or providing our average students with as much one-on-one attention as possible. We offer a progressive curriculum, bilingual education, the latest technology, hands-on learning, a family-style environment, very small classes, numerous extra-curricular classes & much more! The entire curriculum will also emphasize biblical ethics, STEAM and character development. With small student-teacher ratios, our teachers can focus on meeting each child's individual needs as they teach them with love.

Our students are encouraged to be leaders, innovators, explorers, and creators and to excel by reaching or exceeding their potential. We focus on ensuring that each child is happy and grows up to be responsible, ethical, and successful adults of tomorrow. Our very small student-teacher ratios, family-style environment, individualized learning, teachings of character education and core values, and emphasis on Christian education, make us unique.

In the Educational Program – Authentic, joyful, thoughtfully and comprehensively implemented, the Curriculum naturally fits every child because it is designed around researched child development theories regarding how children construct their knowledge. Children respond enthusiastically inside a small classroom, intrinsically motivating them to achieve. The Middle School classrooms are lesson-driven, child appealing, and individualized to help children exceed most expectations. Children are guided to reach their potential academically, personally, and socially. The Christian environment inspires the middle school child to develop an awareness of other people and participate with them in making the world more peaceful and productive.

In Governance – Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology approaches life and learning with a desire to help, understand, and respect. School governance policies and procedures are based upon these shared values and keep our education community focused on the school-wide goal of helping children grow and achieve and supporting all the learning community members.

In Policies and Procedures – Established upon the Christian values of respect and responsibility, school policies and procedures that affect children and adults in the school community reflect and support the school's mission to cultivate excellent, responsible, sensitive behavior.

Curriculum Plan

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology will use a traditional curriculum that accents the integrated quality of education. Indeed, all core academic areas are fully integrated, resulting in a remarkably authentic education that mimics the nature of society. Integrated curricula make studying individual subjects or ideas more relevant and related, creating a natural and authentic education that emphasizes biblical ethics, STEAM and character development.

During every child's elementary years, they must be challenged academically to prepare for their Middle School years. Our teachers are dedicated to giving every child the opportunity to be academically, socially, and emotionally the best they can be. Brilliant Minds elementary and middle school teachers are dedicated to challenging each student academically and providing them with multiple opportunities to grow socially and emotionally. Teachers are equipped with all the necessary resources to meet the school's academic goals and students' needs. In addition, classroom ratios are purposefully maintained low to provide individualized instruction better as needed.

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology blends The Benchmark for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards and ([CPALMS](#)) to offer advanced academics tailored to meet each student's needs. Students in 6th thru 8th Grade enjoy a digital curriculum (iPad program), including standards-aligned content, resources, and assessments. A variety of tools/resources/experiences are employed by teachers and students to enhance learning, including, but not limited to, the following:

Supplemental program resources are used as part of the Curriculum (see below).

CPALMS supports teachers and students in various ways, including providing resources and tools engineered and optimized for distance learning. Our Curriculum incorporates fun-based learning that seamlessly integrates the components of STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math - with the 4C skills of Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity to real-world applications. Brilliant Minds individualized Curriculum covers eight content areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Logic, Technology, Fine Arts, and Health Education. Each content area has state standards and benchmarks outlining specific content, knowledge, and skills that students are expected to learn in school by the end of every grade level. Teachers plan lessons providing students multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of these standards and benchmarks throughout the year. Teachers are equipped with all the necessary guidance and support to ensure they have the tools to instruct students effectively and lead a high-quality program.

The Benchmark for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards are broad statements describing the knowledge or ability that a student should demonstrate by the end of every grade level from first through twelfth Grade. The standards are subdivided into "benchmarks," which outline the specific content, knowledge, and skills students are expected to learn in school. These standards cover eight content areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Technology, Fine Arts, and Logic.

[CPALMS](#) is Florida's collaborative platform that connects education stakeholders, researchers, subject matter experts, practicing professionals, and professional organizations to Collaborate, Plan, Align, Learn, Motivate, and Share (CPALMS) instructional/educational resources and interactive tools that support standards-driven instruction. CPALMS is Florida's official source for the standards, course information, and assessment information and serves as the dissemination platform for professional development and digital resources. In addition to the CPALMS website, the system disseminates tools and content through mobile applications, email services, SMS, Widgets, an extensive API, and just-in-time reporting and notification services. Some of the existing and planned standards-based tools within CPALMS include an interactive lesson planning tool, a peer and subject matter expert review process and system, a dynamic and interactive curriculum planning system, an interactive learning

progression mapping tool, a formative assessment task builder tool, digital resource recommendation and authoring tools, a differentiated instruction tool, a professional development system, a lesson study support system, and many others.

Math- Middle School students solidify concrete math skills and enter the world of abstract thinking with the Saxon method of pre-algebra. They perform probability multiplication, solve slope-intercept equations, and calculate compound interest. This firm foundation enables them to grasp and apply advanced mathematical disciplines throughout their lives readily.

Language Arts- In Middle School, students become adept at diagramming complicated grammatical constructs. They identify and correctly use appositives and pronoun antecedents, edit and correct errors in mechanics, and successfully choose when to use active and passive voice. These skills aid both reading comprehension and writing effectiveness.

Social Studies- Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology teaches students how individuals in history learned from the past and used knowledge to improve their lives. In sixth Grade, students explore themes of commerce and humanism. They study the Renaissance, Enlightenment, and Reformation and their influence on the English, American, and French revolutions.

Logic - Thinking critically involves analyzing statements, situations, objects, or ideas. Middle School thinkers learn to recognize propaganda techniques and otherwise identify strengths and weaknesses of information to make independent, intelligent choices.

Science- The vast majority of scientific inquiry arises from a need, and nearly every innovation results from using the scientific method. Sixth graders learn from the discoveries of others in such areas as plate tectonics, astronomy, and ocean systems, and they apply the scientific method to make discoveries of their own.

Technology - In Middle School computer studies, the focus shifts from visual programming to processing lists and text. Students learn to handle user input and output. In the process, they grasp the fundamental difference between functions and procedures. They also learn how to nest functions, which teaches them to think several steps ahead.

Physical Education - Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology students learn various games, dances, and sports to apply the more significant concepts of physical fitness. Through flag football, soccer, and dancing, middle schoolers cultivate flexibility, power, and balance. They also work on coordination and rhythm as they learn basic choreography.

Fine Arts: Middle School students receive specialized speech, debate, and theater instruction. They perform choral recitations, give oral presentations for science and history, write and deliver persuasive speeches, and present an entertaining reader's theater program.

Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology strives to meet the following goals for each student:

Development of the student – Students will see their education as an incredible intellectual and personal journey. They will be independent, confident learners who meet rigorous academic and personal achievement standards, be excited by and crave learning, and be motivated to take the following steps in their education, community, and work beyond the school.

Academic Achievement- Upon the 8th Grade's completion, students will be able to demonstrate proficient or advanced competencies in Core Subjects: Reading, Written and Oral Communication, Mathematics, Science, History, and Social Studies as defined in the school's mastery checklists and

the and the B.E.S.T. Standards. The student will demonstrate habits of self-discipline, intrinsic motivation, persistence, intellectual risk-taking, and independence.

Personal Achievement – Upon the 8th Grade's completion, students will be able to evaluate and reflect on their work according to defined criteria. They will demonstrate Christian-based values of grace, courtesy, respect, empathy for others, and responsibility. Students can plan and work toward achievable goals through self-directed activity.

Community Awareness – Students will understand their place within large communities and be able to contribute productively through peaceful attitudes, effective conflict resolution, creative problem-solving, responsible action, and purposeful follow-through. Students will have contributed positively to collaboration with communities through projects and events.

Social Development – Upon completing 8th Grade, students will comprehend and appreciate the community in different contexts (global, local, school, classroom) and demonstrate respect for all people and cultural aspects in diverse communities. Students will integrate and apply academic competencies, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills to improve a community. Students will apply conflict resolution skills to achieve progress for individuals or a group.

Middle School Promotion Requirements:

A. Program of Study: General Requirements for Grades 6, 7 and 8 Pursuant § 1003.4156, F.S., in order for a student to be promoted to high school from a school that includes middle grades 6, 7, and 8, the student must successfully complete the following 12 courses:

Middle Grades Curriculum (Grades 6–8)	
Courses	Required number of courses
English Language Arts	3
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3

1. Language Arts Three years of successful completion of language arts are required for promotion to high school.

2. Mathematics Students are required to successfully complete three middle grades or higher courses in mathematics for promotion to high school. Middle school students have formal math instruction in small ability-level groups. These groups occur in the same daily time block of 40-70 minutes per day and allow us to offer more levels while maintaining the integrity of developmental placement.

- The levels offered in the sixth through eighth grade are Mathematics 2, Mathematics 3, Algebra I, and Geometry.
- The successful completion of Algebra I and Geometry are eligible for high school credit.

Students who pass course work for the high school Algebra I Honors course but fail the Algebra I End-Of-Course (EOC) assessment will receive credit for the course provided their final course grade, which includes the EOC as 30 percent, is a passing grade. Students who pass the course work for Algebra I Honors in middle school with a C or D but fail to pass the Algebra I EOC before they enter high school will retake Algebra, II Honors in their freshman year in high school. Students must pass the Algebra I End Of-Course (EOC) assessment or earn a comparative score on a state approved assessment to meet graduation requirements

3. Science Students are required to successfully complete three middle grades or higher courses in science.

4. Social Studies Three years of successful completion of middle grades or higher courses in social studies is required for promotion to high school. One of these courses must be at least a one-semester civics education course that includes the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; and the meaning and significance of historic documents, such as the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States. Each student's performance on the statewide, standardized assessment in Civics education constitutes 30 percent of the student's final course grade.

5. Physical Education and Health In accordance with §1003.4156, F.S., students are required to enroll in one semester of physical education in grades sixth through eighth. Students may waive the requirement if they meet any of the following criteria: • The student is enrolled in a remedial course. • The student's parent/guardian requests in writing that the student enroll in another course from among the courses offered as options by the school district by completing the Middle School Physical Education Waiver. • The student's parent/guardian indicates in writing that the student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement through the Middle School Physical Education Waiver and completion of the Physical Activity Log.

The comprehensive health education curriculum for students in grades 7 through 12 must include a teen dating violence and abuse component including, the definition of dating violence and abuse, the warning signs of dating violence and abusive behavior, the characteristics of healthy relationships, measures to prevent and stop dating violence and abuse, and community resources available to victims of dating violence and abuse.

6. Elective Program The remainder of the middle school experience will include elective courses. Electives may include but are not limited to: Fine Arts, World Languages, Technology, and Physical Education.

C. Grading System According to §1003.43, F.S., grades will be reported by letter grade or numerical score in recording student progress as follows:

Letter Grade	Numerical Score	Description
A	90–100	Outstanding Progress
B	80–89	Above-average Progress
C	70–79	Average Progress
D	60–69	Lowest Acceptable Progress
F	0–59	Failure

The grading system and interpretation of letter grades used for students in grades 6–8 shall be as follows:

Grade "A" equals 90 percent through 100 percent, has a grade-point average value of 4, and is defined as "outstanding progress."

- Grade "B" equals 80 percent through 89 percent, has a grade-point average value of 3, and is defined as "above-average progress."
- Grade "C" equals 70 percent through 79 percent, has a grade-point average value of 2, and is defined as "average progress."
- Grade "D" equals 60 percent through 69 percent, has a grade-point average value of 1, and is defined as "lowest acceptable progress."
- Grade "F" equals 0 (zero) percent through 59 percent, has a grade-point average value of 0 (zero), and is defined as "failure."
- Grade "I" equals 0 (zero) percent, has a grade-point average value of 0 (zero), and is defined as "incomplete."

Students who enroll in school or class late shall be allowed to make up the classwork. In order to receive full semester credit, a student must be enrolled in any school a minimum of forty-five days

F. Grading System and Reporting Procedures

1. Promotion and Retention Academic subjects required for promotion per the Florida A++ Legislation are defined as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Pursuant § 1003.4156 F.S., in order for a student to be promoted to high school from a school that includes middle grades 6, 7, and 8, the student must successfully complete 12 core academic courses to include 3 courses in each of the following academic areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (to include Civics).

At the end of each nine-week grading period, if a student is not meeting the state requirements for promotion in the courses of ELA, mathematics, science or social studies a Progress Monitoring Plan must be put into place immediately to support remediation, monitored throughout the school year, and placed in the student's cumulative folder. § 1008.25, F.S.

Parents must be notified when, during a reporting period, it is apparent that the student is failing or in danger of failing. In addition to report cards and interim reports, notifications may include letters,

documented telephone calls, emails, and/or parent conferences. The opportunity for a conference with the teacher or principal must be provided to the parent of any student who may be retained.

Student Promotions

- 6 th grade students with at least 2 core course completions and 1 year in middle school may be promoted to grade 7
- 7 th grade students with at least 4 core course completions and 2 years in middle school may be promoted to grade 8
- 8 th grade students must have successfully completed all 12 core academic courses to include 3 courses in each of the following academic areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (to include Civics)

Pre-Academies

Along with the core academic classes, students have academy classes to choose from. The Academy choices are listed below.

- Culinary
- Law
- Business
- Engineering

The Culinary Arts Pre-Academy gives students background and hands on experience in the food service industry.

Culinary courses offered in this academy include:

- Exploring Hospitality & Culinary w/Career Planning
- Fundamentals of Culinary
- Baking & Pastry
- Nutrition & Wellness

The Pre-Law Academy will provide all students with:

- Hands-on, cutting-edge program within a courtroom setting that addresses the energy and interest of middle school students
- Pre-Law studies utilizes concepts studied both in law and criminal justice.
- Opportunities to interact with professionals in law, juvenile justice, law enforcement, and criminal forensics.
- The curriculum provides project-based learning and a hands-on approach that is exciting and fun for middle school students.
- Students will participate in fingerprinting lab, mock trials, study case law, Law Day, Constitution Day, along with building Speech and Debate skills.

The Pre-Business Academy will study:

CAREER PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

- Career Research
- Going to College
- Joining the Workforce

MARKETING AND FINANCE

- Market Research
- Advertising and Product Promotion
- Stock Market
- Banking and Money
- Finance

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

- How Companies Function
- Business and Labor Laws
- Industries
- Leadership

COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Cover Letters and Resumes
- Job Interviews Skills (or Preparation)
- Web Design and Data Analysis

The Pre-Engineering Academy

With the notion that variety in gender, physical or mental ability, culture, and background is an asset to be cherished, the Pre-Engineering Academy aims to establish a demanding learning environment that sets high expectations for success for all of our students. The Engineering Process from Design to Creation will be the main focus of this academy's practical learning opportunities. Students will get the chance to use a variety of tools, materials, processes, and systems to solve technological challenges while learning about how technology affects our daily lives. Students should focus on continuing their STEAM education at the following levels and being ready for a career in technology.

ATTENDANCE

School Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

SCHOOL TARDINESS

A student is tardy if he is not in his class at 8:30 a.m. Students who arrive late should go to the school office for a tardy slip. We do not distinguish between excused and unexcused tardiness. A tardy is tardy. Habitual tardiness is grounds for dismissal.

CLASSROOM TARDINESS

Students in grades 6-8 who are not in their seat when the tardy bell finishes ringing will be marked tardy. Repeated tardiness will result in demerits. Habitual tardiness is grounds for dismissal. A student who is more than 10 minutes tardy to class will be marked absent.

ABSENCES

We do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. All absences are deemed excused, and students are granted permission to make up missed work.

Attendance in grades 6-8 is recorded as **period attendance**. Students are marked present or absent at the beginning of each class period.

SKIPPING SCHOOL

Students who intentionally arrive late or miss a class period or school day are deemed to be "skipping." The consequences for skipping include a zero for all assignments, quizzes, and tests that occurred during the skipped period or school day. The student will also be disciplined according to the Disciplinary policies outlined in this Handbook.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students are permitted one day of make-up for each day of an absence. For example, a student who is absent for two days would have two additional days to make-up the work. It would be due on the third day returning. Missed tests and exams must be taken by this third day as well.

The educational program offered by Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the schools during the days and hours that the school is in session. School attendance shall be the responsibility of parents and students. Absences shall be reported to the school attendance office by the parent or adult student as soon as practicable.

Educators have the responsibility to encourage regular attendance of students, maintain accurate attendance records, and follow reporting procedures prescribed by the Head of School. Schools will record absent and tardy students in the automated student attendance recordkeeping system.

Provision shall be made for promoting school attendance through adjustment of personal problems, education of parents, and enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws and related child-welfare legislation.

Accordingly:

- A. absences must be reported to the school by the parent or adult student as soon as practicable;

Failure to report and explain the absence(s) shall result in unexcused absence(s). The final authority for determining acceptability of the reason for the absence(s) shall rest with the

principal.

- B. teachers shall record absentees each period of the school day and report absences, excused and unexcused, as required by the school;
- C. insofar as possible, parents should be contacted each time their child has an unexcused absence, or an absence for which the reason is unknown, to prevent the development of patterns of nonattendance;
- D. when a student has at least five (5) unexcused absences or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month, or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a ninety (90) calendar day period, the teacher shall report to the Principal that the child may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. Unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, the principal will refer the case to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential resolutions. If the problem is not resolved, the child study team will implement interventions as provided in F.S. 1003.26.

Excused Absences

The school considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed at school:

- A. Personal illness of the student (medical evidence will be required by the principal for absences exceeding ten (10) days during the school year. After ten (10) parentally approved excused absences, a doctor's verification will be required. A Medical Documentation for Excessive Absences form will be used for documentation of a student's ongoing treatment for a medical condition.
- B. Court appearance of the student.
- C. Medical appointment of the student.
- D. Pregnancy related issues
- E. An approved school activity (absences recorded but not reported).
- F. Insurmountable conditions. Insurmountable conditions are extreme weather conditions, communicable disease outbreaks, and local conditions determined by the School District which, after taking into account the material circumstances, would render impracticable a

student's attendance at school. (F.A.C. 6A-1.09513)

- G. Other absences with prior approval of the principal.
- H. Significant community events with prior permission of the principal.
- I. Religious instruction or holiday.
- J. Illness or death in the immediate family.
- K. Trips with parents shall be prearranged and approved by the school administration. If such trips are not prearranged, the absences shall not be excused unless the trip was necessitated by an emergency. The principal will make the final determination.
- L. Appointments for a therapy service provided by a licensed health care practitioner or behavior analyst certified pursuant to Florida law for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder including, but not limited to, applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.

Absences not included in excused absences listed above shall be unexcused.

If the absences are excused, all educational requirements for the course shall be met before a passing grade and/or credit is assigned.

Students may not be given excused absences to remain out of school for the purpose of working unless the job is an integral part of the student's instructional program.

Habitual Truancy

Whenever any student has a total of fifteen (15) days of unexcused absence from school during any ninety (90) calendar day period, with or without the knowledge or consent of the parent, s/he will be considered habitually truant.

The Head of School is authorized to file a truancy petition under F.S. 984.151 if a student has accrued at least five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown within a ninety (90) calendar day period or has had more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a ninety (90) calendar day period.

Make-Up for Absences

For excused absences, the student shall have a reasonable amount of time, no fewer than the number of days absent plus two (2) to complete and hand in work for credit, to complete make-up work for excused absences. Principals may grant extensions to the make-up time limit for extenuating circumstances.

For unexcused absences, work missed during the student's first three (3) days of unexcused absences during a semester is expected to be made up. This includes absences caused by an out-of-school suspension. The right of students to make up work on the fourth unexcused absence and all other days of unexcused absences per semester may be denied.

Athletics:

If your child attends a private school that does not hold membership with the FHSAA, carries an enrollment of less than 125 students in the respective grade levels and does not offer the sport of interest, your child will automatically be allowed to participate in that sport for the public school they are zoned for based on their residence or the school they would normally attend. If they want to participate in that sport for a public school they are not zoned for, they are required to complete a Controlled Open Enrollment for Sports Participation application. The application period begins the first Monday in April and concludes the last Friday in April. All applications submitted during this period will be applied to the subsequent school year.

Code of Conduct and other policies:

CHEATING

It is a student's responsibility to refrain from the appearance of cheating. A teacher is not obligated to prove an incident of cheating, only to have probable suspicion. A student cheating may receive a zero for formative assessments (classwork, homework, etc.) or may be required to complete an alternate assignment in the case of cheating on a summative assessment (tests, quizzes, projects, etc.). Students may also receive a one-day suspension with required questions to reflect on in writing or with a teacher. Repeated incidents of cheating will result in expulsion or dismissal. Forms of cheating include looking at another student's test paper, talking while a test is in session, using prohibited items (cheat sheets, calculators, textbooks, etc.), or other behavior inconsistent with the teacher's guidelines for testing procedures. A violation of the testing environment (i.e., talking while testing in session) also constitutes cheating and carries the same consequences. **Allowing or facilitating cheating carries the same consequence as cheating.**

PLAGIARISM

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, to plagiarize is "to use and pass off the ideas or writings of another as one's own; or to appropriate for use as one's own passages or ideas from another." Plagiarism is a form of cheating and holds the same consequence. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to copying homework from another student, copying material from a book to use in a written assignment without proper citation, copying the back cover of a book for use in a book report, using "cut & paste" to copy material from an internet site for a written assignment.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

The best discipline is self-discipline. The policies of the school are designed to help students and faculty work with each other in a pleasant atmosphere. We expect the student to know the rules and obey them.

CLASSROOM RULES

Each teacher is given the liberty of making and enforcing classroom expectations in a manner that they feel is in accordance with school policies and administrative directives. Each classroom teacher will provide students with instruction on specific classroom rules and procedures. Once learned, students will be expected to follow these with occasional reminders. Repeated misbehavior will result in warnings, and finally, consequences.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

To establish reasonable consistency in the school, a uniform Discipline Policy has been developed. The school administrators and teachers are responsible for discipline and will determine the level of the behavior and its appropriate consequence. Consequences may include detention, suspension, and expulsion.

DEMERIT SYSTEM

A demerit system will be used for grades 6-8. Students receive demerits for Level I, II, & III infractions. The number of demerits is based upon the severity of the infraction and the number of previous infractions. For every 3 demerits earned, a student is assigned to a Detention.

A student who accumulates 30 demerits during the school year may be dismissed at that time.

LEVEL I DISCIPLINE

Level I Discipline: Level I offenses are minor acts of misconduct which interfere with orderly classroom procedures, school functions, extracurricular activities, or a student's own learning process.

Examples of infractions of a Level I offense include:

- disrupting class
- disrespectful conduct
- horseplay without injury
 - chewing gum
- prohibited items in school (non-educational items)
- not following classroom rules
 - throwing objects
- hurtful or harmful language
- failing to complete assignments
- misuse of technology
- uniform violations
- tardiness

Actions taken for a Level I offense may include:

- 1 demerit
- temporary loss of privileges

LEVEL II DISCIPLINE

Level II Discipline: Level II offenses are intermediate acts of misconduct that require more serious intervention, including repeated misconduct of Level I offenses, inappropriate acts against persons or property but without seriously endangering the health or safety of others.

Examples of infractions of a Level II offense include:

- repeated level I offenses
- missing detention
- blatant disobedience
 - vandalism
- leaving the campus without permission
- lying
- stealing
- bullying (verbal or physical threat of harm)
- language infractions (vulgarity, gossip, slander, offensive slang, etc.) ● public displays of affection (holding hands, kissing, etc.)
- student parking violations
- inappropriate reading materials, music, pictures, etc. at school
- cell phone violation (first offense)
 - sexual harassment
- physical assault without injury

Action taken for Level II offense:

- 3 Demerits
- Detention OR Suspension (for 1 – 3 days)

LEVEL III DISCIPLINE

Level III Discipline: Level III offenses are serious acts of misconduct, including repeated acts of Level II offenses, serious disruptions of the orderly conduct of the school, and threats to health, safety, or property.

Examples of infractions of a Level III offense include:

- repeated Level II offenses
- missing detention two or more times
- fighting

- cheating/plagiarism
- malicious vandalism
 - drinking or possession of alcoholic beverages at any time
 - use or possession of tobacco products/e-cigs/vaping at any time
- use or possession of illegal or unprescribed drugs at any time
- sexual immorality
- sexual assault
- gambling
- involvement in witchcraft, the occult, or astrology
 - skipping school or class
 - cell phone violation (repeated offense)
- viewing of, or distribution of, pornographic content at school
- possession of fireworks, matches or lighters on school grounds
- possession of any weapon (whether real or fake) on school grounds

Actions taken for Level III offense:

- 5 Demerits per day suspended
- Suspension (from 1 to 10 days) or Expulsion or Dismissal

RELATIONSHIPS

Public displays of affection or sexual comments or actions are not permitted at school or school-related functions (field trips, etc.)

OFF-CAMPUS CONDUCT

While we understand that student behavior off campus is the responsibility of individuals and families, behavior that jeopardizes the testimony of the school will not be ignored. Conduct in 22 violations of our expectations, whether it occurs inside or outside of school may be grounds for disciplinary action and/or expulsion. This conduct includes alcohol consumption, use of illegal drugs and misuse of legal drugs, viewing or distributing pornography, fornication, bullying or cyberbullying, and criminal activity

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are expected to come to school prepared each day for the learning activities in which they will participate. This includes textbooks, paper, pencil or pen, homework assignments, project materials, student devices, etc. Items that are not relevant to the educational process are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to toys, electronic games & players, cellular phones, photos, sporting equipment, weapons, drugs, tobacco products, and alcohol. Any prohibited items found in a student's possession or on the school campus (backpacks, purses, vehicles) will be confiscated by the school and held by the administration. A parent will be required to come to the school and retrieve the item. It will not be returned to the student.

SEARCHES FOR SUSPICION OF ILLEGAL OR UNAUTHORIZED MATERIALS

The school reserves the right to search a student's person and belongings (including automobile, desk, purse, backpack, cubbies, gym bag, or electronic devices) in the event the school suspects the student possesses an unapproved item or is engaged in an activity that violates a school rule or policy. The search may be conducted without the student's or the parents' permission, and that registration of the child in the school constitutes parental consent to such searches

CELL PHONES & ELECTRONIC DEVICES (GRADES 6-8)

Please note that all electronic devices, including, but not limited to cell phones, laptops, tablets, iPads, headphones, AirPods, and portable gaming devices are always prohibited at Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology for students in grades 6-8. This includes before and after school, lunch, study halls, PE, assemblies, on school vehicles/buses, and on field trips. (Middle school students may use a phone after school to communicate with their parents via call or text.)

CELL PHONE & ELECTRONIC DEVICE INFRACTIONS

A student using a cell phone or other electronic device in violation of the established guidelines will receive detention on the first offense. A second offense will result in a one-day suspension. Continued repeated offenses will result in a multi-day suspension or expulsion. In each instance, the device will be confiscated, and a parent will be required to retrieve it from the school office. A student suspected of using a cell phone or electronic device to aid in cheating, to send, request, or access inappropriate material, or to engage in online bullying, will be suspended or expelled. If a teacher suspects a student has a cell phone or other prohibited device, the teacher will require the student to turn it over. If the child refuses, or denies having the device, he will be sent to the school office where he will be searched. If he refuses or is found to be lying, he will be expelled.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

"Sexual Harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology is committed to maintaining an academic environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect, and which is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation and harassment, including sexual harassment. Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination or expulsion.

Thank you for being a part of Brilliant Minds Christian Academy of Technology!