



CRESTHAVEN ACADEMY

CHARTER SCHOOL

SCHOLAR & FAMILY HANDBOOK 2017-2018

Monica Villafuerte
Executive Director | Founding Principal

Meghan Brady
School Business Administrator | Board Secretary

530 West 7th Street | Plainfield, New Jersey | 07060 | Phone: 908.756.1234
www.cresthavenacademy.org | facebook.com/cresthavenacademy | IG @cresthaven_academy

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Dear Cresthaven Academy Families,

Along with our founding families, it is our pleasure to welcome our new families to Cresthaven Academy Charter School. We are very excited and honored to be on the lifelong journey of learning with our kindergarten and first grade scholars. We look forward to working with you and your child this year, and the many years to come.

At Cresthaven Academy it is our belief that all children, regardless of race or economic status, can succeed when given equal access to a high-quality education. We will provide them with a comprehensive education that develops the whole child through academic excellence, physical wellness, emotional health, and character enrichment.

We recognize that fulfilling our mission and reaching our goals will take a tremendous amount of teamwork on the part of our families, our staff, and our scholars. Our dedicated staff will work very hard to meet the individual needs of all scholars, and maintain personal connections with our families.

We invite you to become an active participant in our school community. A large part of having a strong community is having excellent communication. This *Scholar & Family Handbook* is an introduction to important information. We want to ensure our families understand the policies and procedures that we have designed to help us provide a consistent, safe, and excellent learning environment for our scholars. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to us. We are always happy to assist in any way that we can.

Thank you for trusting Cresthaven Academy to provide your scholar with an outstanding educational experience.

Sincerely,

Steven Colson
Board President | Lead Founder

Monica Villafuerte
Executive Director | Founding Principal

Whole child. Whole future.

WHAT IS A CHARTER SCHOOL?

Charter schools are independent public schools that provide another education option to parents and students. They were created to give educators and parents the freedom to innovate and develop successful teaching models to increase student achievement. Because a charter school is not managed by the local school district, it is free to design the environment it believes will best serve students' needs.

High-quality charter schools are making a difference. Across the country, charter schools are associated with higher proficiency rates in math and English, as well as higher rates of high school diploma attainment.

Charter schools don't charge tuition and don't require any entrance exams or interviews. All children who live within a charter school's district, including children with special needs and English Language Learners, are eligible to attend a charter school on a space-available basis.

(Source: NJ Charter School Association)

WHAT IS A SCHOLAR & FAMILY HANDBOOK?

A Scholar & Family Handbook cannot possibly take the place of the use of sound judgment. It is expected that all staff members, parents/guardians, and community members will exercise sound judgment in their actions and act in the best interest of all students at all times with total attention to the safety and welfare of everyone in the building.

It is understood that by receiving this *Scholar & Family Handbook* and being enrolled at Cresthaven Academy Charter School, that all parents/guardians understand the expectations for all the policies and procedures listed in this guide. It is not possible to list everything that we might encounter, but it is expected that all staff, parents/guardians, and community members will support and follow all school-wide decisions, policies, and procedures set at any time. All

decisions, policies, and procedures will always be in the best interest of all scholars at Cresthaven Academy Charter School, and will always be made available in their most current form for parents/guardians, community members, and staff.

WHO WE ARE

MISSION:

Cresthaven Academy Charter School is a K-8 public school and exists to provide a comprehensive education to our scholars that develops the whole child through academic excellence, physical wellness, emotional health, and character enrichment.

VISION:

Our school is built on the belief that all children, regardless of race or economic status, can succeed when given equal access to a high-quality education. Each of our scholars will be empowered to overcome challenges and equipped to sustain their success in school and beyond.

OUR CORE VALUES:

- **Joy:** Acknowledging the purpose of your mission in a manner that is not dependent on a particular emotional state.
- **Grit:** Following through on commitment in spite of adverse circumstances. Sticking with your future, day in and day out.
- **Empathy:** Identifying with someone else's feelings, experiences, and opinions. Creating an atmosphere of social trust and shared human experience.
- **Courage:** Acting bravely in the face of fear. The strength within your heart that enables you to overcome that which previously hindered you.
- **Humility:** The willingness to acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of every person, including yourself, and to seek help from those that can complement your giftings.

- **Excellence:** Refusing to settle for anything less than your personal best. 'Leaving it all on the field,' even in the mundane rituals of daily life.
- **Self-control:** Managing your emotions as indicators of your needs, without allowing them to control your actions and responses

SCHOOL COLORS, MASCOT, AND MOTTO

Cresthaven Academy's colors are red and blue. The school mascot is the lion. The school motto is, "Whole child. Whole future."

SCHOOL CALENDAR

CRESTHAVEN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL | 2017-2018 CALENDAR

Half Day = 12:45 pm School Dismissal; 6:30 pm After-School Dismissal

Early Dismissal = 12:45 pm School Dismissal; 3:30 pm After-School Dismissal

<p>4 Independence Day - Closed</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">JULY 2017</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>Th</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	JULY 2017							S	M	T	W	Th	F	S							1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">JANUARY 2018</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>Th</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1 Winter Recess - Closed 2 School Open after Winter Recess 15 M.L. King Day - Closed 16 End of Quarter 2 24 Report Cards/Parent Teacher Conf. Half Day - Scholars 29 School Closed - Scholars</p> <p>Total Days = 20</p>	JANUARY 2018							S	M	T	W	Th	F	S									2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
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<p>22 Meet your teachers - 3pm- 5pm 24 Kindergarten - First day of school Half Day - Kindergarten Scholars No after school programming 25 Half Day - Kindergarten Scholars No after school programming 28 1st Grade - First day of school 28-31 No after school programming</p> <p>Total Days = 6</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">FEBRUARY 2018</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>Th</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>16 School Closed - All 19 Presidents' Day - Closed 20 Progress Reports #3</p> <p>Total Days = 18</p>	FEBRUARY 2018							S	M	T	W	Th	F	S									1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																										
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GENERAL INFORMATION & PROCEDURES

Cresthaven Academy Charter School welcomed 75 kindergarten scholars in our founding year, and they are now our first graders. This school year, we welcomed 75 new kindergarten scholars to NYU, Kean, and Clemson University. We will continue to expand one grade yearly until the school is fully grown with kindergarten through eighth grades.

The shared goal of the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff is to contribute to the expansion of high-quality educational opportunities for children in Plainfield, New Jersey. We all agree that a dynamic education is the best tool to combat societal inequity and the best way to provide a bright future for each of Plainfield’s citizens. Our school’s rules, policies and procedures are designed for each scholar to have a rigorous education in a disciplined, orderly environment.

The Board of Trustees is the primary governing body of the school and is responsible for the establishment of policy, the appointment of the Executive Director/Principal, finances, facilities, and programs. Regular board meetings are open to the public. They are usually held at 7:00 PM on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, at the school.

WHO DO I CALL?

Our goal is to provide timely, accurate responses to all of your concerns. Please use this chart to help you to determine the best person to speak with to address a particular issue. Please call the main office at 908.756.1234. Your call will be returned within 24 hours.

Who do I call?	For what?
Ms. Wanda Rodriguez, Office Manager (Habla español)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School operations (openings, closings) ● Change in dismissal arrangements ● Bus transportation concerns or questions ● Required forms (medical, enrollment) ● Updates in contact information - if you move, we must get new documentation ● Student attendance ● Student enrollment ● School uniform ● Breakfast/lunch questions or concerns
Ms. Stephanie Avallone, Student Support Coordinator/ School Psychologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discipline ● Special education services, including 504s ● Student evaluations ● Questions about scholar learning
School Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required medical forms ● Questions about screenings (vision, hearing, scoliosis) ● Family support (health related)
Ms. Monica Villafuerte, Executive Director/Principal (Habla español)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Executive Director oversees all aspects of the school and can be reached by calling the main office at 908.756.1234.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

ADMISSION

Cresthaven Academy Charter School is a free, open enrollment, public charter school in Plainfield, New Jersey. Applications for student enrollment are available online and on paper throughout the year. Applications can be submitted online by visiting our website at www.cresthavenacademy.org You can also fill out an application at the school or mail it to 530 West 7th Street, Plainfield, NJ. Applications and waitlists do not carry over from one year to the next. A family with a student on the waitlist must reapply each year and the student is then entered into the random lottery which usually takes place in January of each year. If a current scholar has a younger sibling, we must receive an application before the lottery for the child to get sibling preference.

SCHOLAR WITHDRAWAL

When a family decides to withdraw their child from Cresthaven Academy Charter School for any reason, they must complete a mandatory Transfer Form. Transfer Forms can be obtained from the main office in advance. Parents must indicate the new school of enrollment. No student records will be released to subsequent schools if a Transfer Form is not completed. Once withdrawn, a student must complete a new student application if planning to re-enroll at Cresthaven Academy Charter School. Please note that once a seat is vacated, that spot may be filled by a student on the waitlist; a former student who seeks to re-enroll may be put at the bottom of the waitlist.

RE-ENROLLMENT

Current students receive first preference to Cresthaven Academy during each subsequent academic school year. Parents/Guardians are required to complete a Re-Enrollment Form by a specified deadline and all applicable related paperwork by the last day of the current school year. Reminders will be sent home well before the deadline. Parents/Guardians of current students who miss the deadlines will not be given preference once open-enrollment starts for prospective students.

PROOF OF RESIDENCY

In order to receive an admissions preference, the enrolling parent/guardian must be a resident of Plainfield, New Jersey, and able to provide supporting documentation, using the documents outlined in our Registration Packet, by the deadline specified by the school, both during the initial enrollment, and on each subsequent re-enrollment.

ATTENDANCE, TRANSPORTATION, & SCHOOL CLOSINGS

LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY FOR SCHOLARS

School begins at 7:45 AM and ends at 3:45 PM each day. We try to open our doors at 7:35 AM to accommodate families. However, we ask that you wait with your child until school staff comes out to greet them. Do not leave children unattended outside of school in the morning. If you are dropping off in a car, please remain in your vehicle so that we can keep that line moving once we begin.

SCHOLAR ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for success in school. We ask that you ensure that your child does not miss school for family commitments, including vacations.

Parents/Guardians are required to do the following:

- Notify the school if their child is going to be absent that school day by 8:30 AM.
- Submit written documentation stating the reason for the child’s absence when the child returns to school. (Ex: Handwritten note from parent/guardian for unexcused absence or note from medical/dental appointment, etc. for excused absences). If a child is able to return to school after an appointment, we highly encourage it.

ATTENDANCE RUBRIC				
Tardies	<i>1st - 4th:</i> Automated call	<i>5th - 9th:</i> Automated call & Letter of Concern	<i>10th - 14th:</i> Automated Call, Letter of Warning & Contact with parent	<i>15th or more:</i> Meeting with parent, possible referral to I&RS
Excused Absences	<i>1st - 4th:</i> Automated call, excused absence slip from parent with reason of absence	<i>5th - 9th:</i> Automated call, excused absence slip from parent with reason of absence	<i>10th - 14th:</i> Automated call, letter of concern, excused absence slip from parent with reason of absence, and contact with parent	<i>15th or more:</i> Automated call, letter of concern #2, excused absence slip from parent with reason of absence, meeting with parent & team, attendance contract or Chronic Illness form, possible referral to I&RS
Unexcused Absences	<i>1st - 2nd:</i> Automated call	<i>3rd - 4th:</i> Automated call, letter of warning #1, parent meeting scheduled	<i>5th or more:</i> Automated call, letter of warning #2, parent meeting required with team, possible referral to I&RS, and attendance contract signed	<i>10th or more:</i> Automated call, parent meeting required with team, and contact Child Protection & Permanency

At the school’s discretion, a scholar with more than 10 absences may be retained in grade (consistent with the requirements of applicable law and regulation, including 18A:35-4.9).

EXCUSED & UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Though we code absences as “excused” or “unexcused,” please note that if your child misses school for any reason, it counts as an absence, unless the scholar is attending a school-sponsored trip away from the school’s campus. This includes absences for illness,

religious observance, or suspensions. We publish our school calendar well in advance of the school year so families should use the calendar as a guide to plan medical appointments, and family outings and trips during school vacation times, teacher professional development days when there is no school for students, or at other times outside of school hours. For child safety reasons, we investigate any scholar absence for the first five days of school, or for 3 or more consecutive days during the year, if we are unable to contact the scholar's family or obtain a satisfactory explanation for the absences. Students with 10 cumulative unexcused absences in school year are considered truant, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-27, and the school will make a mandatory referral to the court program required by the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts.

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP OF SCHOLARS

Habitual tardiness to school establishes a pattern of behavior that is contrary to the educational goals of Cresthaven Academy and the best interest of our scholars. It is important that each scholar arrives to school on time each day, every day, for the full day, in every grade. Late arrivals or early dismissals cause scholars to miss important instructional time, which is very difficult to make up when a scholar is tardy on a regular basis. Just as it is important for scholars to arrive on time, it is **important for scholars to remain in school for the entire school day**. As the day ends, we may not be able to grant early dismissals because it disrupts the dismissal process and pulls staff members from fulfilling their responsibilities to ensure an orderly process for the entire school.



From 7:45 AM to 8:00 AM, scholars should be dropped off at school. Please note that school begins at 8:00 AM *sharp*. Scholars that arrive to school late, after 8:00 AM, should come in through the front of the building, **accompanied by their parent/guardian** in order for the child to be signed in by an adult. Those late scholars will receive a late pass to class with the time and date.

Please be sure to park your car in an appropriate spot (not in the driveway) and walk your child into school. Do not ask your child to walk themselves up by themselves. If you have someone else provide a ride for your child, please communicate this expectation with them.

The day ends at 3:45 PM. Please do not pick up your child before the school day ends at 3:45 PM. Scholars who are picked up early miss valuable instructional time, and it disrupts the routine for the teachers and class. An early dismissal means the teacher must stop what they are doing to help your scholar pack up and get their homework assignments. We must comply with our charter which requires that each student be in school for 190 days per year. Cresthaven Academy is a public charter school. **When you choose Cresthaven Academy, you are choosing to ensure your child attends school on time, every day, for the full day, in every grade because attendance matters!**

Specific arrival and dismissal procedures will be distributed at the beginning of each school year. In addition, we want to reinforce that scholars should be escorted directly to or from their cars by the person picking them up from school or by Cresthaven Academy employees when possible. **Scholars should never walk to their cars without an escort.** Cars should not be left unattended in front of the school or in the driveway, nor should cars be parked in the school bus/fire lanes during dismissal.

All persons picking up a child from school must be on the child's approved dismissal list, must be at least 14 years old, and must be prepared to present identification, upon request, to school personnel. We urge you to be as consistent as possible with who picks up your child for safety reasons.

Scholars need to be picked up in a timely manner. All scholars, who are "pick up" and not enrolled in the after-school program must be picked up **no later than 4:00 p.m.** Scholars must be supervised at all times. *Any scholar that is not picked up by 4:00 p.m. will be automatically sent to the afterschool program at a rate of \$10 per day.* The after-school program runs until 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Failure to pick up your child by the end time will result in a **charge of \$1 per minute penalty** (this will be strictly enforced) and may also mean that we will call Child Protection and Permanency (formerly DYFS). Failure to pay the after-school charge will automatically disqualify your scholar from being sent to the program. If there is continuous failure to pick up your child in a timely manner, we will have to take appropriate actions.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Monday through Friday - 3:45 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Half-days - 12:45 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Early dismissal days - 12:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Should you have any questions regarding the after-school program, please contact Cresthaven Academy Foundation at 908-756-1234.

NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES IN DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENTS

To ensure proper communication and supervision, requests for changes to dismissal arrangements should be received no later than **2:00 p.m.** Monday through Friday. Last minute dismissal arrangements are a disruption to school operations and should be reserved only for genuine emergencies.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

All scholars who are Plainfield residents residing **more than two miles** away from the school are eligible for transportation provided by Plainfield Public Schools, pending final approval from Plainfield Board of Education. **All bus arrangements are made by Plainfield Public Schools and not by Cresthaven Academy Charter School.** Consequences for violating bus rules range progressively in the following order: 1) Oral warning, 2) Written warning, 3) 1-Day bus suspension, 4) 3-Day bus suspension, 5) 5-Day bus suspension, 6) Permanent loss of bus rider privilege. Due to the unpredictable nature of traffic and weather, bus pickup and drop-off times are approximate, though typically accurate within a 10-minute window (later or earlier than scheduled). Parents or guardians must be on time to pick up their child at their designated stop, or risk revocation of the district's bus privileges. Bus transportation home **will not** be available after 3:45 PM on school days. If your child stays for the after-school program, you are responsible for picking them up.

Should you have any questions regarding bus transportation for your scholar, please contact the Plainfield Board of Education at 908-731-4350 (1200 Myrtle Avenue).

BUS RULES & PROCEDURES FOR SCHOLARS

Procedures

1. Upon boarding the bus, greet the bus driver by saying "Good morning" or "Good afternoon."
2. Sit in the same assigned seat every single day.
3. Place your book bag (and any other belongings you have with you) in your lap as soon as you sit down.
4. Speak softly only to the person seated beside you. No one else should be able to hear your voice.
5. Remain seated on the bus until it arrives at your stop AND comes to a complete halt.
6. As you are leaving the bus, say "Thank you" or "Have a good evening" to the bus driver.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Cresthaven Academy Charter School administrators will determine if and when school is closed due to inclement weather. Cresthaven Academy typically, though not always, follows the same school cancellation policies as Plainfield Public Schools. Cresthaven Academy will post updates on our website and send automated telephone messages to families regarding school closure. If you are not receiving text messages and/or emails, please contact our main office.



Web information and social media links are as follows:

www.cresthavenacademy.org

facebook.com/cresthavenacademy.org

twitter: @cresthavenNJ

instagram: @cresthaven_academy

EARLY CLOSING

In cases of half-days or early dismissals, school will close at 12:45 PM. Inclement weather or another emergency may also cause the school to close earlier than the regular 3:45 PM dismissal time. Parents/guardians should make contingency arrangements for their child in the event of an early school closing.

The after-school program runs from 12:45-6:30 on half-days and 12:45-3:45 on early dismissal days.

SUPPLIES & UNIFORM DRESS CODE

SCHOLAR SUPPLIES

Cresthaven Academy Charter School will provide most of the necessary consumable school supplies for scholars at the beginning of the year. However, we do send out a list of suggested supplies in June for the following school year. We appreciate any support you can offer in sending these supplies with your scholar on the first day of school. Each family is also responsible for supplying a large backpack that can hold a few folders, the student's winter coat, and a lunch bag (if needed).

ELECTRONIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ITEMS

School personnel will confiscate non-academic items brought to school, such as toys or electronic devices. School staff will confiscate phones from scholars who display, use or attempt to use a cellphone at school. If a phone rings during school hours, it will also be confiscated and returned to a parent or guardian. A parent or guardian will have to meet with the Principal or assigned designee to retrieve any confiscated items.

SCHOLAR UNIFORM POLICY

To promote an effective environment for learning and foster school unity and pride, the school has a strict dress policy for scholars for all regular school days. Parents should contact the school if there are ANY challenges in obtaining the school uniform. Once the school year has begun, ALL students are expected to adhere to the uniform policy at all times.

The school uniform can be purchased at **Shopper's World** located at 686 Oak Tree Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ 07080. The store has the red unisex polo with embroidered logo, navy blue unisex cardigan with embroidered logo, boys' navy blue uniform pants (SKU 4000-79895109), girls' navy blue uniform pants (SKU 4000-412-13566), and girls' navy blue uniform skirt/skooter (SKU 4000-33481096). We are including the SKU numbers for your reference since Shopper's World may accidentally place other articles under our signage.

Scholars must wear the red polo with embroidered logo and navy blue uniform pants or skirt every day. If a student is cold, they may wear the navy blue cardigan over their red polo with logo. Scholars may also wear a red long-sleeve shirt under their red polo with logo. No other sweaters, sweatshirts, thermal shirts or hats will be allowed. The required footwear is an all black shoe or sneaker; no additional colors, designs, or lights are allowed. Navy blue, white, black, and red socks and tights are preferred.

FEMALES	MALES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Red polo shirt with school logo ● Navy blue uniform khaki pants (no cargo pants, leggings, skinny fit, etc.) ● Navy blue uniform skirt with built-in shorts underneath 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Red polo shirt with school logo ● Navy blue uniform khaki pants (no cargo pants, skinny fit, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Black shoes or sneakers (no additional colors, designs, lights, etc.) ● Navy blue, black, white, or red socks or tights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Black shoes or sneakers (no additional colors, designs, lights, etc.) ● Navy blue socks are preferred
<p style="text-align: center;">Optional: Navy blue unisex cardigan sweater with school logo</p>	

ENRICHMENT

FIELD TRIPS

Parents are welcome to chaperone field trips if space allows. Field trips will be fun and educational, and offer opportunities to connect classroom learning, with real-world experiences. We expect all scholars to attend all field trips scheduled on school days. They will supplement



the curriculum and enhance the total educational program of the student. If a parent has questions or concerns about field trips, they are encouraged to speak with the principal as soon as possible. Each grade level will identify various age-appropriate standards-based field trips throughout the year. A combined total of 2-4 weekday field trips will occur for each grade level each year. These off-campus excursions provide opportunities for children

to engage in experiences that broaden their knowledge of the world in general, and of specific topics being studied as part of the instructional program. As part of the school's college-preparatory mission, a college trip is always included in every grade's schedule of trips.

There is a general field trip permission slip that all parents/guardians can sign. This allows your child permission to attend each field trip. A student without an accompanying permission slip will not be permitted on a trip. Teachers will inform parents/guardians in advance of all field trips. If you do not wish to have your child attend a field trip, you must inform your child's teacher.

Occasionally, a child's behavior may present such a threat to the safety of other students and staff and/or to the orderly operation of the field trip that the child may not be able to attend the trip, or may only be allowed to attend with special provisions. In such cases, a parent or adult family member may be required to serve as the child's chaperone and assume responsibility for him/her in order for the child to attend the trip.

Chaperones are greatly appreciated for the contribution they make to our scholar's learning experiences. To ensure safety, chaperones are expected to be attentive and aware, while on the bus, during transitions and at the trip's venue. As such, chaperones may not smoke, wear headphones, have extended conversations on cellphones, or leave the group to which they are assigned.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Subject to space available, Cresthaven Academy families may elect to place their child(ren) in the Foundation's fee-based after-school program. On Mondays through Fridays, the program runs from 3:45 PM - 6:30 PM. On half-days, after-school programming will begin at 12:45 PM

and end at 6:30 PM. In case of early dismissals, the after-school program will begin at 12:45 PM and end at 3:45 PM. This program will include homework help, art, music, sports training, and more. Each scholar registered for the program will receive an individual schedule of daily activities and times.

HOMework

Homework is an essential part of the educational success for every child that maintains the partnership between families and our school community, when used appropriately. We believe homework should be designed to reinforce skills taught in the classroom, enhance understanding of content, and promote positive study habits. Parents are encouraged to set a homework routine such as a common place to work, set a designated time for homework to be completed, have materials needed, and encourage the learning process. Cresthaven Academy Charter School assigns developmentally appropriate amounts of homework nightly and on weekends. All homework is purposeful and important. We ask that parents sign the reading log and behavior log every night. Failure to sign it will be reflected in the report card.

HOMework CONSIDERATIONS & CONSEQUENCES

- Monitored daily for neatness, completion, and effort.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted if homework does not meet the school's standard.
- Scholars may be required to miss recess or other discretionary time in order to have the opportunity to complete homework.
- Homework missed due to absence remains the responsibility of the scholar on the night in which it was assigned since it is distributed each Monday for the whole week. In case of absence, the parent/guardian should call the main office after 10:30 AM to make arrangements for pickup or ask if additional homework was distributed for that day.

SPECIAL SERVICES & PARENTAL RIGHTS

INTERVENTION & REFERRAL SERVICES (I&RS)

Cresthaven Academy Charter School uses a multi-tier approach for early identification and support of scholars with learning and behavior needs. The I&RS process begins with all scholars having access to high-quality instruction, a positive behavior support system, and universal screening within the general education classroom. Scholars who are identified as at-risk through a multimodal approach are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers and/or specialists.

Once a scholar's needs have been identified, they are entitled to receive tiered instruction. Cresthaven Academy provides a multi-tier approach to efficiently differentiate instruction. The model incorporates increasing intensities of instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to each scholar's needs. Scholars identified as being "at-risk" through universal screenings and teacher data will be referred to the I&RS team to determine the need for supplemental instruction during the school day within the general education classroom. The length of time for this step can vary. During this time, scholar progress is closely monitored. Scholars that have shown significant progress with the support of general education interventions will remain at Tier 1. The scholars that have not shown adequate progress are moved to Tier 2.

Scholars not making adequate progress within the general education classroom in Tier 1 are provided with increasingly strategic instruction matched to their needs on the basis of levels of performance and rates of progress. The intervention services can be provided in small-group settings in addition to instruction in the general curriculum. A longer period of time may be required for this tier. Scholars who continue to show too little progress at this level of intervention may then be considered for more intensive interventions as part of Tier 3. Scholars can be referred for academic and/or social-emotional needs.

At Tier 3, the scholars receive individualized intensive interventions that target the scholars skill deficits. Scholars that do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions can then be referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for special education services under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004* (IDEA 2004).

Each individual scholar's progress is closely monitored throughout the I&RS process to assess both learning rate and level of performance. An educational decision about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual scholar response to instruction. Throughout the I&RS process, scholar progress is monitored frequently to examine achievement. Decisions are made regarding the scholars instructional needs based on multiple data points taken in context over time. The data is used to determine which scholars need closer monitoring or intervention. Ongoing assessment and progress monitoring provides information about a scholar's learning rate and level of achievement. Anytime during the I&RS process, scholars may begin the Student Support Team Process (SST). This process allows the school and home to come together on a consistent basis to closely monitor the scholars growth and provide additional strategies for continued success.

Cresthaven Academy parents and guardians are involved in the I&RS and SST process. Parents and guardians are provided with information about their child's progress, instruction and interventions used, the staff delivering the instruction, and the specific academic or behavioral goals for their child. Parents are also informed that under IDEA 2004, at any time during the

I&RS process, they may request a formal evaluation to determine if their child is eligible for special education services.

GROWTH YEAR

The term “Growth Year” means an additional year in the current grade level to allow a student to develop and grow with current expectations in all areas. This will include growth in both academic and social-emotional development. A growth year is determined based on accumulated data regarding a student’s academic and social-emotional growth. It should be the last option, once a student has been supported through the I&RS process. The school may recommend your child as a strong candidate to benefit from a Growth Year or a parent may make a request. A meeting will be held with all stakeholders to review the data and make a decision in the best interest of the child.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

Section 504 is a federal statute designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of a disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. In accordance with Section 504, a qualified student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities shall not, on the basis of that disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in any program or activity offered by Cresthaven Academy Charter School.

Qualifying a student under Section 504 is made on a case-by-case basis. The Student Support Team (SST) along with the Section 504 Coordinator will review each referred child’s individual profile to determine whether there is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.

The SST/Section 504 Coordinator will convene a Section 504 meeting with the parent(s) or guardian(s) to review the nature and severity of the impairment, its duration or expected duration and the impact of the impairment on the child’s opportunity to access and benefit from programs and activities offered by Cresthaven Academy.

If a student is determined eligible for services under Section 504, a plan will be developed that specifies the adaptation, accommodations and modifications that a student may need to participate in programs and activities offered by Cresthaven Academy.

If you believe that your child has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, you may contact the Section 504 Coordinator at the school. The name of the Section 504 Coordinator may be obtained at the school’s front office.

SECTION 504 - NOTICE OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

This is a notice of your rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”). These rights are designed to keep you fully informed about the school’s decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of those decisions.

If your child is in the process of being considered for Section 504 eligibility or has been identified for Section 504 accommodations/services, you may have the right to the following:

- Have your child participate in and benefit from the school’s education program without discrimination based on disability.
- Receive notice with respect to any action taken regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
- Refuse consent for the initial evaluation and initial placement of your child.
- Have your child receive a free, appropriate public education. This includes your child’s right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school provide related aids and services to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school activities.
- Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided to non-disabled students.
- Have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions for your child based upon information from a variety of sources, by a group of people who know your child, your child’s evaluation data, and placement options.
- Have your child be provided an equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities offered by the school.
- Have educational and related aids provided to your child without cost except for those fees imposed on the parents/guardians of non-disabled children.
- Examine your child’s education records and obtain a copy of such records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records.
- A response to your reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child’s education records.
- Request the school to amend your child’s education records if you believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school refuses this request, you have the right to challenge such refusal.
- Request mediation or an impartial due process hearing to challenge actions regarding your child’s identification, evaluation, or placement. You and your child may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent you. Hearing requests can be made pursuant to the school’s grievance procedure.

IDENTIFICATION OF ELL STUDENTS

Cresthaven Academy Charter School uses the Home Language Survey (HLS) as a means of identifying potential ELL students. The parents of each enrolled student are required to complete the Home Language Survey as part of the enrollment process. Once each student has met the requirements for enrollment, the HLS of each student is reviewed by a member of the Cresthaven Academy staff to determine if they will be screened and possibly be considered candidates for the ESL program. Each survey that indicates that a language other than English is spoken in the home is flagged as a possible candidate for ESL.

Cresthaven Academy Charter School adopted WIDA English Proficiency for grades K-3. Additionally, in compliance with NCLB Cresthaven Academy will administer ACCESS (*Assessing Communication and Comprehension*) as the yearly assessment for measuring growth towards attaining English language proficiency.

Our ESL and Bilingual teachers will pull out students needing assistance and/or instruct them in their classroom setting or both depending on need. At the end of the year each student is administered the ACCESS assessment to determine rate of progress. Students who meet the exit criteria are transitioned out of the program. The ESL and Bilingual teachers will then only meet with such students to help them transition back into the regular classroom.

The Principal, ESL Coordinator, and Student Support Coordinator monitor the program to make sure that each identified student receives the required services. They also monitor service providers by reviewing their lesson plans each week and by requiring the ESL and Bilingual teachers provide a summary of the activities used with their students, indicators of student mastering and/or progress.

Students who have transitioned to the general education program will exit this program once it has been determined that they no longer need the assistance of the ESL and/or Bilingual teacher. This determination will be done based on multiple criteria and involving the ESL Coordinator, Student Support Coordinator, classroom teachers, and Principal.

FERPA - NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974 and implementing regulations ("FERPA") is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records.

Cresthaven Academy Charter School (the "School" or "Cresthaven") recognizes the need to safeguard the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding its eligible, thought

to be eligible, and protected handicapped students (if not protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) in accordance with FERPA as well as the IDEA and its implementing regulations.

Education records are records that are directly related to the student, including computer media and videotape, which are maintained by an educational agency or by a party acting for the agency. “Educational agency”, for purposes of this notice, means Cresthaven Academy. For all students, the educational agency maintains education records that include but are not limited to:

a) Personally identifiable information (“PII”) is confidential information that includes, but is not limited to, the student’s name, name of parents and other family members, the address of the student or student’s family, and personal information or personal characteristics which would make the student’s identity easily traceable.

b) Directory information is information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student’s name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, sports activity sheets showing weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honor roll, recognition lists, awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. “Parent(s)” for purposes of this notice means a parent of a student and includes a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. Parents have the right to inspect and review a child’s education record. Cresthaven Academy will comply with a request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an Individualized Education Plan “IEP” or any due process hearing, but in no case more than forty five (45) days after the request has been made.

Requests should be submitted in writing, indicating the records the parents wish to inspect, to the Principal or assigned designee. Parents have the right to a response from Cresthaven Academy to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. Parents have the right to request copies of the records. While Cresthaven Academy cannot charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information, it may charge a copying fee as long as it does not effectively prevent the parents from exercising their right to inspect and review the records. Parents have the right to appoint a representative to inspect and review their child’s records. Cresthaven Academy must receive a signed, dated and written consent from a parent that specifically states a representative may inspect and review their child’s records. Such release must be sent to the Principal or designee and must specify the records that may be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure and the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be

made and the time period that the release is in effect. If any education record contains information on more than one child, parents have the right only to inspect and review the information relating to their child.

If parents/guardians think information in an education record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of their child, they may request amendment of the record. Requests should be in writing and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. Cresthaven Academy will decide whether to amend the record and will notify the parents in writing of its decision.

If Cresthaven Academy refuses to amend a record, it will notify the parents of their right to a hearing to challenge the disputed information. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The school will provide, upon request, a listing of the types and locations of education records maintained, the school officials responsible for these records, and the personnel authorized to see personally identifiable information. Such personnel receive training and instruction regarding confidentiality. The school keeps a record of parties obtaining access to education records, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

Parents have the right to consent or refuse to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from student's education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations.

"Consent" means: the parent (s) have been fully informed regarding the activity requiring consent, in their native language or other mode of communication; they understand and agree in writing to the activity; and they understand that consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time, information may be disclosed without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); state agency representative, person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Directory information may be released without parent consent. Parents have the right to refuse to let an agency designate any or all of the above information as directory information. Parents are required to submit written notification to the Principal, by September 30th, or within two weeks after enrolling at

Cresthaven Academy if later than September 30th, if they do not want the school to release directory information.

Parents have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Cresthaven to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

Parents are also encouraged to contact the Principal or assigned designee to discuss any concerns regarding FERPA.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to a specific state law.

TITLE I

Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA) provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards and to increase parental involvement. Federal funds are currently allocated through four statutory formulas that are based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND PARENT'S RIGHT TO KNOW TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

(Compliance with P.L. 107-110, Section 1111 (h) (6) (A)): The federal *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 requires school districts that receive federal Title I funding to notify parents of their right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child.

As a recipient of these funds, Cresthaven Academy Charter School will provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI"), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 ("The Age Act"), Cresthaven Academy Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding Cresthaven Academy Charter School's Non-Discrimination policies:

Executive Director or Designee
Cresthaven Academy Charter School
530 West 7th Street, Plainfield, NJ 07060
(908) 756-1234

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Cresthaven Academy Charter School believes that all children with healthy minds and bodies are best prepared to be high achievers. As such, we have created policies that promote the health and wellness of each scholar.

NUTRITION

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the state of New Jersey have enacted policies to restrict the kinds of foods that can be distributed or served during the school day. As such, foods with little or no nutritional value should not be consumed at school during regular school hours.

SCHOOL MEALS

Cresthaven Academy Charter School offers breakfast, lunch, and snack to every scholar. We ask that each family complete the Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals, even if you choose to send a lunch from home. If your child packs a lunch from home, it is recommended the lunch include healthy options. Please do not send unhealthy foods such as candy, chips, and soda or drop off any fast food lunches for your child because we are required to ensure that all food is nutritious. The school cannot heat up lunches brought from home.

Breakfast and lunch orders are placed at least one week in advance. We ask that any parent or guardian wishing to have their scholar bring breakfast and/or lunch from home, communicate this clearly to Ms. Brady, School Business Administrator. Please note that if you communicate that you will be sending a meal and then forget, your child may not be fed because food orders are placed in advance and meals are not prepared on-site. We encourage you to work closely with us on this matter to ensure that your child has a nutritious meal every day.

If you have communicated to the school that your child will be eating meals provided by the school, please do not send supplemental items such as drinks or snacks.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Although Cresthaven Academy is not an allergen free school, we do have students that have serious food allergies and may need to delegate certain classrooms or spaces as peanut-free or nut-free areas. A list of students with serious food allergies is given to teachers and posted in the cafeteria. The school nurse is trained in food allergy management and emergency response. In order to help families in making safe food choices, school menus are sent home at the beginning of the month and copies are available in the school office, and a current menu will be available through the school's website. **To assist the school in our efforts to keep ALL children safe, we do ask parents to refrain from bringing in snacks/treats that contain peanuts, tree nuts, and or products containing nut oils.** Classrooms with identified food allergies will have a sign posted outside the classroom.

SNACKS & LUNCHES

Scholars are given a snack daily, provided by the school. These snacks meet the USDA standards and are chosen based on the dual criteria of taste and nutritional value. We expect lunches brought from home to meet the same criteria. We contract with a food service provider committed to providing the best quality food prepared in a healthy manner.

***Please note that all school lunches are nut-free.**

A child may be eligible for free or reduced cost lunches. Eligibility will be determined after the appropriate form is completed, and parents will receive notification of their child's lunch status. All matters regarding free, reduced, or paid lunch are kept confidential.

BIRTHDAY OR HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

During the daily Morning Meeting, scholars may receive special recognition on their birthday, or on the closest school day prior to their birthday. Parents may provide a **one-item treat** for the classroom (26 students) according to the following guidelines:

- Must be arranged at least 24 hours ahead of time with the teacher for planning purposes.
- The celebration must occur at the end of the day between 3:15pm and 3:30p.m. Parents may not arrive earlier or stay later as it disrupts the dismissal routine for the school.
- There should be enough treats for every scholar in the classroom. Extra treats may not be distributed to scholars or staff members by walking around to other rooms.
- **Foods brought for the class by students must be store-purchased, indicative of being prepared in an establishment licensed by the Board of Health. If the items**

do not appear to be store-purchased, the Principal, or her designee, may refuse to allow for the treats to be distributed.

- Please make arrangements with the classroom teacher(s) prior to sending any treats to avoid potential allergy issues or conflicts with the date and time.
- No more than two adults (or one adult and another child) from the family may be a part of the celebration. We limit the number of family members to minimize the disruption to our learning environment.
- Siblings or relatives from other classrooms cannot leave their classrooms.
- Invitations to private birthday parties or any other party are not to be passed out at school unless every child in the classroom is invited to attend.
- Parents cannot bring a special lunch or meal to the student or class.
- Attendance Note: Absence due to birthday is not an excused absence.

To minimize any health challenges that may arise from scholars eating unfamiliar foods, parents or guardians must notify the school if they do not want their child to participate birthday celebrations, which may involve treats or other foods brought in to the school. Please note that we cannot vouch for the ingredients in, or mode of preparation of these foods, thus parents should consider any dietary restrictions that their child (ren) might have as they make this decision.

RECESS

The school values the social and physiological benefits that regular physical activity provides. As such, the school conducts a 25-30 minute daily recess period. If the temperature outside ranges between 33 degrees Fahrenheit and 90 degrees Fahrenheit, recess will be conducted outdoors. When temperatures are extremely warm or cold, or when there is inclement weather, i.e. excessive snow, hail, or rain (not mist), recess will be conducted indoors.

Please note that recess privileges may be withheld for willful, significant behavioral infractions. In addition, students who do not complete the previous night's homework may be obligated to use the recess period to complete these crucial academic tasks.

SCHOOL NURSE

A certified school nurse is employed by the school to conduct health screenings, promote health and wellness, dispense medications, and administer basic first aid for scholars in case of minor cuts, scrapes or bruises at school. Please notify the school nurse of any health changes the scholar may experience such as allergies, asthma, required daily medications, serious injuries, etc. If a scholar exhibits serious symptoms of illness, a parent will be contacted to pick up his/her child. Students who are sent home from the Nurse's Office may not participate in

after-school activities that day. It is vital that all contact information is current and accurate in order to ensure that families can be quickly contacted in case of a medical emergency.

EMERGENCY FORMS

An emergency form will be sent home to parents/guardians the first week of school. This form must be completed and returned to school as soon as possible to have information available in case scholars become sick or injured at school. **It is important that parents notify the school immediately whenever phone numbers (home, work, and cell), address or emergency contacts have changed.**

MEDICATIONS/PRESCRIPTIONS

Cresthaven Academy Charter School has a strict medication policy. No prescription or over-the-counter medication can be administered by the School Nurse without written permission from a parent/guardian **and** a written doctor's order. All medication must be in the original bottle labeled with the student's name, name of medication, dosage, and time the medication must be taken/number of times per day. All medication will be kept in the nurse's office in a locked cabinet. All permission forms must be renewed annually. Students are not to carry medication to self-administer at school.

Scholars with asthma or those who have the potential to experience severe allergic reactions may be able to carry and dispense their own medication. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Any abnormalities found during the screening process will be reported promptly to parents so that they can follow up with other health professionals as necessary.

ILLNESS

If a child has any of the following symptoms, he or she should not attend school. Any student with these symptoms will be removed from the group and parent/guardian will be contacted:

- Constant runny nose
- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea
- Acute vomiting
- Elevated oral temperature
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- Blood in urine
- Red eyes with discharge
- Skin rashes lasting more than 24 hours
- Swollen joints

The following is a list of commonly seen illnesses and the exclusion time from school in an effort to control the spread of communicable diseases from the classroom:

- Fever: A student with a temperature of 100 degrees or more is excluded from school and shall not return until remaining fever free for 24 hours.
- Pink Eye: Students need to be on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours and have no purulent discharge from the eye.
- Ringworm: Students with ringworm may be sent to school if lesion is covered and verified that antifungal treatment was given.
- Sore Throat/Strep: Students need to be on antibiotic therapy and have no fever for 24 hours.
- Chicken Pox: All lesions crusted or until 7 days after onset.

PROCEDURE FOR REMOVING A SICK CHILD FROM SCHOOL

- Parents/Guardians must provide valid contact information to the school. Any time any of this information changes, parents are required to notify the school office immediately.
- Parents will be called and asked to take the child home.
- Parents must pick their child up in a timely manner (preferably within 1 hour of being contacted).
- All parents should see or call the nurse before returning the child to school.

Depending on the severity of the illness, if parent/guardian cannot be contacted, Child Protection and Permanency (previously DYFS) and 911 may be contacted.

STUDENT INJURY POLICY

- Injured student(s) should receive immediate attention from the School Nurse, teacher, and/or Principal.
- The parent/guardian of the student should be notified immediately.
- Student(s) will be transported to the nearest hospital for further attention whenever necessary.
- The School Nurse or assigned staff member must complete all appropriate forms.

IMMUNIZATIONS

New Jersey State Law mandates immunizations as a safeguard against certain communicable diseases. The law allows exemptions based on specific criteria pertaining to medical or religious reasons. Official documentation of immunization, or exemption from immunization is required upon enrollment.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Bloodborne pathogens are biological agents that may be present in human blood and can cause disease. Examples of pathogen include the *Hepatitis B Virus (HPV)*, *Hepatitis C (HCV)*, and *Human Immunodeficiency (HIV)*.

In any situation where we may be exposed to bloodborne pathogens, we will use Universal Precautions and try to minimize exposure by always:

- Wearing latex gloves.
- Covering broken/damaged skin.
- Washing hands/skin immediately after exposure and after removal of gloves.

If exposed to blood or bodily fluids, we will:

- Wash the exposed area thoroughly with soap and running water. Use antibacterial soap if possible.
- If blood is splashed in the eye or mucous membrane, flush the affected area with running water for at least 15 minutes.
- Report the exposure to the School Nurse as soon as possible.

STUDENT HEALTH POLICY

The following up-to-date information MUST be maintained by parent/guardian regarding the health of their children:

1. Physical Exams
2. Immunizations
3. Dental Exams

Parents/Guardians MUST provide the School Nurse with any documentation of all treatments. Failure to comply may result in the child being excluded from school until parent/guardian is in compliance.

REQUIRED REPORTING

It is the policy of Cresthaven Academy Charter School to ensure the safety and well-being of every student. When a concern of possible abuse/neglect arises, we will act swiftly in an organized manner and respond. As a preventative measure, each staff member of Cresthaven Academy is a trained mandated reporter and are not required to notify the parent of such reporting by law. If a staff member receives a disclosure of abuse or neglect from a student or observes something of concern (incident, marking on child, etc.) they are required to IMMEDIATELY report their concern to the Principal or assigned designee. If bruising or markings are observed, or hints of such markings are included in a student's disclosure, the Principal or assigned designee will IMMEDIATELY escort the child to the Nurse's Office to be examined by the school nurse.

HEALTH EDUCATION

The school's health education curriculum provides scholars with the knowledge and skills to make well-informed health decisions. The curriculum covers a wide variety of topics, including human sexuality; the content of this portion of the curriculum is developmentally appropriate and is taught solely in alignment to New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Parents or guardians have the right to exempt their children from any portion of a curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues by submitting written notification to the Executive Director. A child who is exempted will not be penalized because of the exemption. The school will provide an alternative assignment for exempted scholars. Information regarding the health education curricula and related materials is available at the school.

STUDENT CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

DISCIPLINE

Corporal punishment of any kind is strictly forbidden. Parents may not use corporal punishment in the school or on school grounds. Failure to comply with this policy may result in a parent/guardian's immediate removal from school premises, and Division of Child Protection & Permanency and/or Plainfield Police may be notified.

Discipline is one aspect of the school's operation that is of equal concern to teachers, parents, and students. Without some system of order, very little learning can take place.

The dictionary defines discipline as "training that teaches one to obey rules and control behavior." Before we consider some guidelines concerning discipline, we should first be aware of the fact that the parent is the first teacher.

Our goal at Cresthaven Academy Charter School is to create a caring school community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. To discipline is to teach acceptable behavior and respect to each student, teacher, parent, and staff member.

BULLYING POLICY

A key responsibility of Cresthaven Academy Charter School is to provide educational services in a respectful and positive environment free of disruption to the educational process. Acts of bullying, harassment, and intimidation violate core Cresthaven Academy values. Cresthaven Academy has established an anti-bullying policy. This policy protects the dignity and safety of the Cresthaven Academy community.

Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR) – New Jersey’s anti-bullying law that includes the requirements school districts and schools must follow in preventing and responding to harassment, intimidation and bullying. The ABR is the basis for this guide. It is available on the New Jersey Legislature’s website at http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2010/Bills/PL10/122_.PDF

Definition: The Anti-bullying Bill of Rights Act defines harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by an actual or perceived characteristic, such as:

- Race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability or by any other distinguishing characteristic; and that
- Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or
- Off school grounds, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; and that
- A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property; or
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
- Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student. (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14)

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING

Acts on bullying, including cyber bullying, are prohibited:

1. On Cresthaven Academy Charter School’s grounds and immediately adjacent property, at Cresthaven Academy Charter School sponsored or related events on and off Cresthaven Academy Charter School grounds, on any vehicle used for Cresthaven Academy Charter School business, through the use of any electronic devices owned by Cresthaven Academy Charter School, leased by Cresthaven Academy Charter School or used for Cresthaven Academy Charter School business;

2. And at a location or function unrelated to Crethaven Academy Charter School, through the use of any electronic devices, including those not owned or leased by Crethaven Academy Charter School, if the acts of bullying or cyber-bullying create a hostile environment at Crethaven Academy Charter School for the victim or witnesses, infringe on their rights at Crethaven Academy Charter School, or materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of Crethaven Academy Charter School.
3. Retaliation against anyone who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying are also prohibited. The intentional filing of false claims and allegations of acts of bullying that are proven may be considered to be an act of bullying itself, intimidation, etc. and may be reported to authorities. The full policy may be requested from the school.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION POLICY

Crethaven Academy Charter School recognizes that suspension or expulsion from the school is the most severe disciplinary procedure that can be imposed on a child and will only be considered after all other disciplinary measures and procedures have been exhausted. Children must be given due process in all disciplinary situations. A parent has the right to a conference with the Principal regarding the reason (s) for suspending their child. The parent has the right to appeal the Principal's decision within three (3) days after the conference. All appeals must be made in writing to the Executive Director and addressed to Crethaven Academy Charter School's at 530 W. 7th St., Plainfield, NJ 07060.

“Suspension” is the temporary exclusion of a student from the Crethaven Academy Charter School program. Students may receive in-school suspension as well as suspension that prevent the student from entering the school for a specified period of time. Students may be temporarily excluded from school/class by the Principal or Designee.

CAUSES FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF STUDENTS

A Crethaven Academy Charter School's student shall not be suspended or expelled from school unless that student has materially and substantially interfered with the maintenance of good order in Crethaven Academy Charter School or unless it is necessary to protect the student's' physical or emotional safety and well-being.

Any student who commits an assault upon a Teacher, Administrator, and/or other employee of Crethaven Academy Charter School acting in performance of his/her duties and in a situation where his/her authority to so act is apparent, shall be immediately suspended from Crethaven Academy Charter School consistent with procedural due process.

The Federal Gun-Free Schools of Act of 1994, which applies to public schools states that a student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school must be suspended for at least one calendar year. School Administrators, however may modify this suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis. Weapon, as used in this law, means a “firearm,” as defined by 18 USC s982 I, and included firearms and explosives.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCEDURES

1. No student shall be deprived of the right to an education at Cresthaven Academy Charter School without notice of the changes and an opportunity to be heard in his/her own behalf before the Principal or Designee.
2. Each student shall be afforded an informal hearing before the start of a short-term suspension or if circumstances prohibit, as soon as possible after the suspension begins.
3. If a suspension is to last ten (10) days or more, a full due process hearing will be held. Such a full hearing shall take place not later than twenty-one (21) calendar days.
4. All parents/guardians of suspended students will be notified by telephone and official letter at the time of suspension is instituted. No student will be permitted to leave school until a parent or guardian appears to take custody of the student.

DISCIPLINE - STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities have the same corrective responses. Discipline of a classified student will be accordance with the following:

1. Students for whom the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) includes specific disciplinary guidelines will be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines. If the disciplinary guidelines appear not to be effective, or if there is concern for the health and safety of the student or if those guidelines were followed with respect to a specific infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the Student Support Coordinator for action.
2. Students for whom the IEP does not include specific disciplinary action may be disciplined in accordance with standard school policy relating to each infraction. The Student Support Coordinator and Principal must be notified immediately of any suspension from classes, and will arrange appropriate alternate instruction.
3. Upon the accrual of 10 days of suspension, the Student Support Coordinator will explore whether the infraction is a result of the disability. If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of of the school year for a total of ten days, such student must be immediately referred to the Student Support Coordinator for a manifestation meeting. Special education services are not to be interrupted during the manifestation process of long term suspension. If it is determined that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student’s disability and the student is suspended beyond ten

(ten) days, educational services, including access to the general curriculum, must continue.

In considering the placement of the students referred because of disciplinary problems, the Student Support Coordinator will follow its ordinary policies with respect to parental notification and involvement.

SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities will not be suspended until the Principal has consulted with the Student Support Coordinator and they agree that suspension is warranted. If a suspension or expulsion is requested for a child who is a student with a disability, the team will meet to determine whether the student's behavior is a result of his or her disability. If the behavior in question is judged to be a result of the student's disability, the disciplinary process will be discontinued and the record of the suspension or expulsion requested removed. If the behavior in question is determined to be unrelated to the student's disability, the case will follow normal protocol.

“Expulsion” shall be the permanent exclusion of a student from the Cresthaven Academy Charter School. No student shall be expelled from school without the approval of the Executive Director.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF, PARENTS, AND VISITORS

At Cresthaven Academy Charter School we are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body. Our parents recognize that educating children is a process that involves a partnership between parents, teachers, and the community. All stakeholders must understand the importance of a good working relationship in order to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we continue to welcome and encourage parents, caregivers, and the community to participate fully in the life of our school.

The purpose of this notice is to provide a reminder to all stakeholders about their expected code of conduct. This is so we can continue to enable children to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

Understandings

- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and, therefore, set a good example in their own speech and behavior.

- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Approach the school positively to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Avoid using physical actions and/or threats to admonish children's behavior in the school.

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, the following behaviors and actions are not acceptable within the school or on school grounds:

- Disruptive behavior with interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, office or any other area of the school grounds.
- Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper.
- Inappropriate or offensive appearance including but not limited to clothing that reveals private body parts and or displays defamation, showing of undergarments, and any other unacceptable appearances deemed by school administration.
- Threatening to harm a member of school staff, visitor, fellow parent, or student.
- Damaging or destroying school or staff property.
- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications.
- Defamation of the school or staff character on Facebook or other social networking sites.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child or children.
- Smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs and or the suspicion based on evidence.
- Pets being brought on school premises.

Should any of the above behaviors occur on school premises, the school will take any and all necessary actions. We trust that all stakeholders will help in implementing this policy and we thank you for your continued support.

SCHOOL SAFETY

VISITOR POLICY & PROCEDURES

Any person not employed by the school or not enrolled in the school as a scholar is considered to be a visitor. For safety reasons, all visitors – including parents and guardians – are required to report directly to the Main Office to sign in, provide identification, and obtain a pass before

moving throughout the building. The visitors' passes are to be displayed at all times while in the building. Any visitor who does not report to the office, or is found in the building without authorization and a visitor's pass, will be asked to obtain a pass, or leave immediately. Visitors should not attempt to engage teachers, teacher's assistants, or scholars in conversation while class is in session. All classroom visits must be arranged in advance in an effort to preserve maximum instructional time, and prevent unscheduled disruptions. Visitors should deactivate all cell phones or other noise-making devices upon entering the building.

All visitors to the school are expected to conduct themselves in a civil manner while on the premises. Loud speech, vulgar language, or threats are considered uncivil, and offenders will be asked to leave the building voluntarily. If necessary, the school will seek assistance from law enforcement to manage any situation where a school visitor becomes particularly unruly or uncivil.

FIRE SAFETY & EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Cresthaven Academy has an evacuation plan that clearly outlines appropriate procedures for safety in case of building evacuation. Evacuation drills are conducted regularly to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the way to respond in the event of an emergency. In case of an emergency – if a scholar sees fire or smells smoke—he or she should notify an adult immediately who will take the appropriate steps to ensure the safety of all. School staff will adhere to the safety plan created in conjunction with the Plainfield Fire Department and posted in each room. Scholars should follow the direction of staff members who will lead scholars outside the building to a designated location, where school staff will line up scholars by class and take attendance.

EXTRA CHANGE OF CLOTHES, LOST & FOUND

All scholars should have a change of clothing at school, to be used in the event that there is an accident that requires a wardrobe change. A large plastic bag with sealable opening will be provided to each scholar's family for this purpose. Failure to provide this may result in temporary, unnecessary discomfort for a scholar.

Each scholar's belongings, including clothing and books, should be marked with her/his name written with a permanent marker. Misplaced items not clearly identified will be placed with the Office Manager in a box in the main office where families may retrieve them. Twice yearly, unclaimed items may be donated to charity.

POTTY TRAINING

It is required that all students must be fully potty-trained by the time they are enrolled. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardian to see that this takes place.

DRUG FREE SCHOOL POLICY

Cresthaven Academy Charter School prohibits the illegal sale, purchase, or possession of any intoxicating substances. No student or non-student, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use, or distribute drugs on school grounds.

SMOKE FREE SCHOOL POLICY

Cresthaven Academy Charter School recognizes the danger smoking and passive smoking causes to health, as well as the need for the school and its staff to provide positive role models to students. Consequently, for the protection of staff and students, smoking is not permitted within any area of the school property, nor at any school related activity or function by parents, staff, or visitors.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

Purpose:

To provide for the orderly evacuation of Cresthaven Academy Charter School at West 7th Street in the event of a fire or other emergency that would required immediate evacuation.

Objective:

To provide a mechanism whereby all individuals may evacuate without loss of life or injury.

Applicability:

The plan applies to all persons located in the building when facilities must be evacuated.

Responsibility:

All Cresthaven Academy Charter School staff is responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with and comply with all aspects of the evacuation plans.

General

- 1. Evacuation Doors:** In the event that it is necessary to evacuate the Cresthaven Academy Charter School at West 7th Street, all persons located in the facility will evacuate them through designated doors as reflected in the floor plans below.
- 2. Student Classroom Evacuation:** The classroom teachers have the primary responsibility for ensuring all students are evacuated from their respective classrooms.

Upon receiving written, verbal or electronic notice of an evacuation, the teachers will immediately instruct students to proceed in an orderly manner to the classroom door. To ensure a fast evacuation, students and staff are not permitted to hinder the evacuation process by retrieval of personal items, such as coats, book bags, etc.

3. **Outside Assembly Areas:** Once outside, students and staff will assemble in the Outside assembly areas.
4. **Assembly Area Supervision:** Unless otherwise instructed, teachers will remain in Assembly Areas and be responsible for the supervision of all children in the Assembly Area.
5. **Facility Check:** After evacuation and unless instructed otherwise, maintenance staff will check classrooms, offices, restrooms and other required areas of the facility, to ensure that everyone has evacuated the building.
6. **Re-entry into the Facility:** Under no circumstance will anyone re-enter the facility until the "ALL CLEAR" has been given by the Principal.
7. **Drills:** Fire Emergency Evacuation Drills will be conducted on a monthly basis. A record of each drill will be recorded. Critiques of each drill will be conducted no later than 48 hours after the drill.

SECURITY PLAN

Purpose: The purpose is to establish security procedures for Cresthaven Academy Charter School and to delineate duties of the security staff in providing a safe environment for students, staff and visitors.

Goal: The goal is to provide a safe environment conducive to uninterrupted teaching and learning.

Applicability: This plan applies to all Cresthaven Academy Charter School staff, students and visitors.

General: Hours of Operation: Cresthaven Academy Charter School is open during the hours of 7:30a.m. and 4:30p.m. Monday through Friday for the purpose of school business and/or student instruction.

Security Check/Rounds: Periodic security patrols will be conducted to ensure safety and security.

Response to Calls for Assistance: Calls for security assistance will receive top priority with security staff responding in a prompt, expeditious manner.

Access During Non-Operating Hours: The use of Cresthaven Academy Charter School during non-operational hours will be coordinated through the Principal and Security.

SAFETY PLAN

Purpose: To provide guidelines geared to ensuring the safety of student, staff and visitors.

Goal: To provide an environment conducive to the safety of all individuals located on the premises of Cresthaven Academy Charter School.

General: To ensure safety and to reduce unsafe practices, the following procedures will be followed:

Student Outdoor Activity: At all times that students are engaged in activities outside, they will be supervised by a member of Cresthaven Academy Charter School. Under no circumstance will students be allowed outside without adult supervision.

Security Rounds: To demonstrate a security presence and to detect any unsafe conditions, a member of security will make periodic rounds of all areas occupied by students and staff. These rounds include visiting outdoor areas.

Visitor Control: All visitors are required to stop in the Main Office, sign in, receive and display a visitor's badge after which they may be allowed to proceed to their destination.

Early Dismissal: In cases of an extreme emergency or student illness Parents/Guardians will be permitted to pick up a student prior to the normal dismissal time (3:45 p.m.). The parent will be required to sign the student out. The Parent/Guardian will be required to present a picture I.D.

Control of Students during Dismissal: Each student must be picked-up by the parent/guardian designee. Students not picked up by 3:55 p.m. are to be escorted to the after-school program. The late fee of \$10/day will be applied. If the child has not been picked up and the school has received no communication from the parent/guardian by 5:00 p.m., appropriate authorities may be notified.

Door Usage: To reduce the possibility of unauthorized entry into the premises, with the exception of members of the maintenance staff and vendors access exits from the building is restricted to the main entrance doors on West 7th Street. Doors marked as "Emergency Exit" doors will not be used to enter or exit except in the event of an emergency.

Reporting of Suspicious Persons: *All suspicious persons, whether observed inside or outside, are to be reported to security.*

All members of Cresthaven Academy Charter School are considered members of the Security Team. In this regard, staff members must be alert in recognizing and reporting known or suspected situations that would, if not corrected, adversely affect the safety and well-being of students, staff or authorized visitors. Any known or suspected safety violation may be reported to a member of Security or the Principal.

SCHOOL EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

- Cresthaven Academy Charter School Executive Director/Principal
- School Business Administrator/Director of Finance & Operations
- Student Support Coordinator/School Psychologist
- Office Manager
- School Nurse
- Cresthaven Academy Foundation Executive Director

SCHOOL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Lockdown Procedures: The purpose of a “lock down” is to provide the person in charge with a mean for alerting staff and students that there is an emergency situation in the school and that for a period of time movement is restricted.

Types of Lockdowns:

1. Lockdown - Continued Instruction

- When there is an alert within the school neighborhood that is not of imminent threat and the interior and exterior of the school itself is generally safe.
- **NO ONE CAN LEAVE OR ENTER THE BUILDING** until the “All Clear” signal is given. Any visitor or volunteer must remain where they are assuming they are either in a classroom or in an office. If in neither location, they should report to the nearest classroom or office area and follow instructions. Instruction continues with limited movement within the building. No one is to be outside of the building.

2. Lockdown - Safe Spots - Silent Building

- When there is an alert that poses an immediate potential threat to the safety of everyone within the school.
- **NO ONE CAN LEAVE OR ENTER THE BUILDING AND NO MOVEMENT WITHIN THE BUILDING** until the “All Clear” signal is given. Every person in the building must be in a safe hiding spot within designated rooms. No one is to be near a window, door, or glass area. Rooms are to be silent. There is to be no movement within the building unless directed by police or other safety agencies. No one is to be outside of the building.

Lockdown Decision

This is at the discretion of the person in charge when in his/her opinion an emergency crisis has occurred and it required the holding of students for a period of time. The School Emergency Response Team is activated and its members must report to the Main Office/Command Center.

Crisis Threats - Bomb

1. Notify the Principal immediately
2. Try to obtain the following information from the informant:
 - (a) Identify the informant - his address and telephone number

- (b) Record any pertinent information that the informant is willing to give.
- 3. The receiver of the threat should report the following:
 - (a) The time the threat was received
 - (b) How it was received, via letter, telephone, in person, etc.
 - (c) Name of person receiving threat
 - (d) If anonymous - state whether male or female, adult or teenager.
- 4. All of the above should be reported to the Principal ASAP.

CHILD FIND

If you suspect a child of having a development delay or disability, Cresthaven Academy Charter School can open a window of hope for a brighter future. Services at no cost to the family are available to all eligible individuals from 3 through 21 years of age (starting at birth for auditory and/or visual impairments) regardless of the severity of their disability. Special services are available to children identified with a disability who may be experiencing difficulties in one or more of the following areas:

Auditory Impairment, Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Emotional Disturbance, Intellectual Disability, other Health Impairment, Orthopedic Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language, Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Visual Impairment, etc.

GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Rationale

Cresthaven Charter School, PC ("School") recognizes and respects the integral roles that parents and teachers play in the education of its students. The Board's objective is to strengthen that partnership and foster an open and productive line of communication between not only parents and teachers, but also the School Leader, administrative staff, and the Board of Trustees. To that end, the Board wishes to institute a fair and efficient process by which internal grievances can be resolved amicably and consistent with the law. If a Board employee, trustee, or parent/guardian has a complaint or dispute with any Board policy or action of a school employee or trustee ("grievance"), it should be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution proceedings set forth in this Policy, or as otherwise mandated by law or an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

2. Procedure

a. Informal Grievances.

- i. Any person who has a grievance shall discuss it first with the School Leader, in an attempt to resolve the matter informally, within ten (10)

school days from the time when the person knew or would have known of its occurrence.

- ii. However, should a complaint or concern arise between a parent and a teacher or staff member, parents are encouraged to first attempt to resolve said complaint or concern directly with the teacher or staff member by scheduling a conference to discuss the issue. The School Leader reserves the right to redirect parents to the involved teacher or staff member if that step has not been taken. If, after meeting in conference with the immediate source, the parent deems the initial response/course of action insufficient, or in the event that a meeting with the immediate source is not practicable or reasonable because of the nature or subject matter of the grievance, an informal meeting with the School Leader may be requested in an attempt to resolve the concern or complaint.
 - iii. If the complainant is satisfied with the response of the School Leader, no further action will be required, and the grievance will be considered resolved.
- b. **Formal Grievances.** If the grievance is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction through informal discussion with the School Leader, the complainant must submit a formal, written grievance to both the School Leader and the Board Secretary within five (5) school days after meeting with the School Leader. The written grievance must recite the matter that was originally submitted informally to the School Leader, explain the basis for the complainant's dissatisfaction with the decision previously rendered, and specify the desired remedy.
 - c. **Referral to Committee.** The Board Secretary and Board Chair shall determine, upon consultation with counsel if necessary, whether the nature of the grievance requires that it be considered by the Board Grievance Committee, the Advisory Grievance Committee pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-15, or per a grievance process in an applicable collective bargaining agreement. The jurisdictional limits of each committee are described below in their applicable sections.
 - d. **Committee Meetings.** Within fifteen (15) school days of its receipt of the written grievance, the applicable committee will meet with all concerned parties. The Board will provide an opportunity to the complainant to present his or her grievance and to persons responding to the grievance ("respondents"). These presentations will be informal as no sworn testimony will be given. There will be no right to cross-examine witnesses. Whether the presentation is held in public or private session of a Board meeting will depend on the subject matter of the grievance.
 - e. **Resolution.** Soon thereafter, the applicable committee shall present a non-binding recommendation to the Board concerning the disposition of the grievance. The Board will review the applicable committee's recommendation at its next regularly scheduled meeting and make a decision within thirty (30) days of its receipt of the applicable committee's recommendation.

3. **Advisory Grievance Committee**

- a. **Jurisdiction.** Any grievance that alleges a violation of the provisions of the New Jersey Charter School Programs Act shall be directed to the Advisory Grievance Committee, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-15.
- b. **Composition.** The Advisory Grievance Committee shall consist of one (1) parent/guardian, one (1) teaching staff member and one (1) Board trustee. Each year, by no later than October 15, parents/guardians, teaching staff members and trustees will select an individual from their membership to serve on the Advisory Grievance Committee. The terms of service for each member of the advisory grievance committee will be one (1) year. The persons receiving the most votes from their constituent members will be selected. In the event that the teaching staff members and/or parents/guardians are unable to appoint members, the Board shall accept nominations and shall make the necessary appointments to constitute the Advisory Grievance Committee. The Chair of the Advisory Grievance Committee will be selected by the other Advisory Grievance Committee members. If an Advisory Grievance Committee member has a conflict of interest pertaining to a grievance, that member shall recuse himself or herself from serving on the Advisory Grievance Committee regarding said grievance.

4. **Board Grievance Committee**

- a. **Jurisdiction.** The Board Grievance Committee shall consider grievances related to all other matters not otherwise excluded here or that are subject to the Advisory Grievance Committee's jurisdiction set forth in section (c) above. However, the Board Grievance Committee reserves the right to decline to review grievances that it deems to fall primarily under the purview of the managerial discretion of the School Leader. In such event, the Board Grievance Committee shall work in conjunction with the School Leader in an advisory capacity. Grievances arising specifically under the school laws may be subject to review and consideration by the Commissioner of Education only.
- b. **Composition.** The Board Grievance Committee shall consist of the Board Chair and two (2) other trustees selected by the Board. The term of service for the trustees shall be one (1) year. If a Board trustee has a conflict of interest pertaining to a grievance, that trustee shall recuse himself or herself from serving on the Board Grievance Committee regarding said grievance. The conflict of interest should be reported to the Board Chair as soon as it is discovered.

5. **Other General Guidelines for Grievances**

- a. A complainant or respondent may represent himself/herself at all stages of the grievance proceeding or may be represented by the person of his or her choosing.
- b. There shall be no retaliation against any person for initiating a grievance proceeding.
- c. The information gathered in a grievance proceeding shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible and as mandated by law.

- d. This grievance process shall not be applied to change the allocation of responsibilities between the School Leader (to administer the school) and the Board (to set policy and oversee the administration of the school.)
- e. This Policy does not affect any grievance provisions in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, which shall be given effect per that collective bargaining agreement.