



Greater Brunswick Charter School

Member Handbook 2011-2012

Greater Brunswick Charter School
429 Joyce Kilmer Avenue
New Brunswick NJ 08901

Phone: (732) 448-1052

Fax: (732) 448-1055

<http://greaterbrunswick.org>

Established 1998

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide our students with an education of the highest standards that incorporates their individual interests and learning styles, and nurtures their intellectual, social, emotional, and physical wellbeing within a learning community; and to share our best practices with other schools and educators.

VISION STATEMENT

To be a community focused public school where students demonstrate a passion for learning, strong academic and social skills, independence and self direction, confidence, and responsibility for their education, school, family, and community.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Continually Improve Student Achievement

Goal 2: Build an Environment of Involvement, Respect, and Support

Goal 3: Develop Effective Business Systems

Goal 4: Achieve Planned Growth and Sustainability

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2011–2012	2
GENERAL INFORMATION	3
CONTACT INFORMATION	3
Mail	3
Telephone	3
Fax	3
Email	3
Web	3
HOURS.....	3
ARRIVAL.....	3
DISMISSAL.....	4
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF.....	5
EDUCATIONAL DIRECTORS	5
SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR.....	5
ASSISTANT TO THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.....	5
SUPPORT STAFF.....	5
SCHOOL NURSE.....	5
SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER	5
CUSTODIAN.....	5
TEACHING STAFF	6
TEACHERS.....	6
TEACHING ASSISTANTS.....	6
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS	6
SUCCESS PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS	6
ESL INSTRUCTORS	6
ATTENDANCE	7
ABSENCES	7
LATENESS	7
UNEXCUSED ABSENCES OR LATENESS.....	7
VACATIONS.....	7
PERMISSION TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY.....	7
SCHOOL CLOSINGS/EARLY DISMISSAL	8
RADIO	8
TELEVISION	8
WEB SITE.....	8
EMAIL	8
TELEPHONE	8
DELAYED OPENINGS	8
EARLY CLOSINGS	8
TRANSPORTATION	9
BUSES	9
TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT	9
BUS CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE	9
BUS DROP-OFF CHANGES	9
CARPOOLING	9

WALKING HOME 9
 CHANGES TO TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS 9
 PARKING AND VISITING..... 9

LUNCHES AND SNACKS 10

BREAKFAST PROGRAM 10

STUDENT RECORDS 10

 IF YOU MOVE 10

HEALTH SERVICES 11

 HEALTH SCREENING..... 11
 IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS..... 11
 COMMUNICABLE/INFECTIOUS DISEASES 11
 SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS 11
 MEDICATION 12
 EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION 12

ACADEMIC PROGRAM 13

 OUR MISSION 13
 CONSTRUCTIVISM 13
 GREATER BRUNSWICK CURRICULUM 13
 PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP) 13
 PROGRESS SUMMARIES 14
 PORTFOLIOS 14
 PARENT/TEACHER/STUDENT CONFERENCES 14
 STANDARDIZED TESTING..... 14
 HOMEWORK 14
 COMPUTER POLICY..... 14
 FIELD TRIPS..... 14
 TEXTBOOKS..... 15
 SUPPORT SERVICES 15
 Special Education 15
 The Success Program 15
 PHYSICAL EDUCATION..... 15
 GUIDANCE AND STUDENT COUNSELING 15
 AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM..... 15

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE..... 16

 POSITIVE DISCIPLINE 16
 GBCS CODE OF CONDUCT..... 16
 Lunchroom 16
 Hallways and Entrances..... 17
 Bathrooms 17
 Computer Lab..... 17
 Assemblies and Performances..... 17
 DISCIPLINE AND SUSPENSION POLICY..... 17
 Level 1 Incidents..... 17
 Level 2 Incidents..... 18
 Level 3 Incidents..... 19
 Suspensions..... 19
 Expulsions 19
 SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY 19
 WEAPONS POLICY 20

BULLYING POLICY..... 20
DRESS CODE 20
PROHIBITED ITEMS..... 20
SCHOOL GOVERNANCE 21
 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP 21
 BOARD OF TRUSTEES 21
 Board Meetings 22
 COMMITTEES 22
 School Review Committee 22
 Membership Committee 22
 Strategic Planning & Development Committee 22
 Facilities Committee 22
 Policy Committee 22
 Outreach/Enrollment Committee 22
 Grievance Committee 22
MISCELLANEOUS 23
 LOST AND FOUND 23
 STUDENT PHOTO AND VIDEOTAPING.....23

GREATER BRUNSWICK CHARTER SCHOOL

School Calendar 2011 -2012

August		
	29-30	New Staff Teacher Orientation (Prof. Dev.)
	31	All Staff Teacher Orientation (Prof. Dev.)
September		
	1	All Staff – Teacher Orientation (Prof. Dev.)
	6	All Staff- Team Preparation
	7-9	Students Return – Early Dismissal
	7	First Day of Afterschool
	22	Back to School Night
	30	Professional Day for Staff – School Closed for students
October		
	10	Professional Day for Staff – School Closed for students
	17-21	Conferences – Early Dismissal for students
November		
	10-11	N.J.E.A. Convention – Schools Closed
	23	Harvest Festival in Classrooms - Early Dismissal for all (No After School)
	24-25	Thanksgiving Recess – Schools Closed
December		
	7	Last Day of Trimester
	19	Progress Summaries go home!
	23-31	Winter Break – Schools Closed
January		
	3	Return to School
	9-13	Conferences – Early Dismissal for students
	16	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Schools Closed

February		
	17	Professional Day for Staff – School Closed for students
	20	Presidents'*** Day – Schools Closed
March		
	14	Last day of the trimester
	16	Professional Development Day for Staff – School Closed for students
	26	Progress Summaries go home!
April		
	6-15	Spring Break - Schools Closed
	23-27	Conferences – Early dismissal for students
	23-26	NJ ASK 7 th and 8 th grade
	30	NJ ASK 5 th and 6 th grade
May		
	1-3	NJASK 5 th and 6 th grade
	7-10	NJASK 3 rd and 4 th grade
	11	NJASK 4 th grade
	19	Walkathon (subject to change)
	28	Memorial Day – Schools Closed
June		
	13	Field Day
	14	8 th grade dinner
	15	8 th grade graduation
	14-15	Early dismissal for students
	18-20	Early dismissal for students
	20	Last Day for Students**, Last Day of Afterschool
	22	Last Day for Teachers**

This calendar reflects 180 student days and 190 staff days.
The third Wednesday of each month = Staff Meeting

THIS CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

- * This calendar provides 2 days for emergency/snow closings. If days for emergency closings are not necessary, the last day for students will be June 18th and the last day for staff will be June 20th.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Contact Information

Mail

Greater Brunswick Charter School
429 Joyce Kilmer Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Telephone

Main Number: 732.448.1052
Educational Program:
 Patrick Mulhern – ex. 116
 Donna Medea – ex. 105
Business Office: ex. 107
School Nurse: ex. 109
School Counselor: ex. 108
Administrative Asst: ex. 103
Receptionist: ex. 101
Family Coordinator: ex. 104

Fax

732.448.1055

After School Program:

Site Coordinator: 732-668-6313

Email

Educational Director: patrickmulhern@hotmail.com
Assistant Educational Director: dmedea@greaterbrunswick.org

Web

<http://greaterbrunswick.org>

Hours

School Hours

429 Joyce Kilmer Ave and 35 Elizabeth Street

8:15 am to 3:00 pm, Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday, Friday
8:15 am to 1:30 pm, Wednesday and Early
Dismissal Days

Office Business Hours:
through Friday

8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday

Early Drop Off for Breakfast Program

7:30 am Monday through Friday

After School Program:

Until 5:30 pm

Arrival

The front door of the school will be open and attended by staff every day at 8:15 AM. Please do not drop your child off any earlier than 8:15 am (unless they are enrolled in the Breakfast Program), as he or she will not be able to enter the building before that time.

Please get your child to school on time! The first twenty minutes of the day are crucial to helping our students get off to a good start.

Students are considered late at 8:25. Classes begin at 8:30 am for all K-8 Students. Students who arrive late must be signed in by a parent or guardian. **Parents/guardians bringing late K-5 students must accompany the students to the office to sign them in.**

Dismissal

429 Joyce Kilmer Avenue and 35 Elizabeth Street 3:00 pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday
1:30 pm, Wednesday and Early

Dismissal Days

Students who ride the bus are dismissed directly to their bus.

Students who wish to walk home must have signed permission slips from their parents (we have a form for parents to complete). No student will be allowed to walk home without a signed permission slip.

Parents who are picking up students by car should stay in their cars and line up along the side of the parking lot and turnaround loop (429 Joyce Kilmer Ave). **Parents must not double-park and must stay in their cars.** If a staff member asks you to move your car from a bad location, please comply immediately.

Please do not park in the bus zone (directly in front of the door) or block the school buses. Of course, handicap parking spots are solely for the use of individuals with handicap registration for their cars.

Students who are being picked up will be dismissed directly to their parents' cars by school staff. If staff members do not personally recognize the adult picking up the student as an authorized person, they will check the identity and verify that the individual is listed on the approved pick up list provided by the student's parents. This is done to ensure the safety of your child. **Please be patient during the first few weeks of school as we confirm the identities of adults picking up children. The process becomes much faster as the year progresses.**

If you wish to come inside the school, please park your car in a proper parking spot before coming inside. Additional parking is available across the street from the school at the shopping center. There is also parking on the streets surrounding the school. Do not double-park or leave your car unattended outside a striped parking spot at any time—we will have cars towed if they obstruct buses or emergency access to the school.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Patrick Mulhern, Education Director
Donna A. Medea, Assistant Education Director
Carl Seils, School, School Business Administrator
Irma Ayala, Assistant to the Educational Program
Ana Calderon, Family Coordinator
Rebecca Lescano, Receptionist

The administrative staff at GBCS is responsible for the overall operation of the school. In addition to supporting the educational program, they handle communications with the New Jersey Department of Education, our sending districts, and the community at large. In essence, they perform all the tasks of a public school district in New Jersey.

Educational Director

The Educational Director is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the school's educational programs as outlined in the Charter. The Educational Director supports and evaluates staff members, directs professional development, and recommends teaching staff for rehire and tenure.

In addition, he ensures the smooth and efficient daily operations of the school, initiates efforts to promote efficiencies and improvements in running the school, and participate in strategic planning and budget development.

School Business Administrator

The School Business Administrator (SBA) oversees school financial processes, including purchasing, payments to debtors, and payroll. He or she also manages the school accounts and bookkeeping, and participates in the annual audit.

Assistant to the Educational Program

The Assistant to the Educational Program manages student and staff information, including attendance, student transportation, and the lunch program. She works closely with the Educational Director to provide mandated reports and ensure the efficient implementation of the educational program.

SUPPORT STAFF

School Nurse

The School Nurse oversees the health needs of our students and staff. This includes performing mandated health screenings for hearing, eyesight, scoliosis (curvature of the spine), and height/weight; finding community resources to meet student health needs; giving medication and treatments as prescribed by students' doctors.

The Nurse also provides Health instruction in sex education, personal hygiene, nutrition, and other areas as needed. The Nurse is the primary point of contact for parents/guardians who wish to discuss the health or medical needs of their students.

School Social Worker

The Student Counselor is a licensed School Social Worker who provides counseling services to students, initiates character education programs, and organizes child study team meetings and other meetings at which a student's well being and related services are discussed. The Student Counselor is available to address any concerns parents, students, or teachers may have about a student's well being, academic, emotional, or physical.

Custodian

The Custodian maintains our building and grounds, performs repairs, and assists in the overall running of the facility. The Custodian is also viewed as another adult within the school who is available to students to provide mentoring or support within the limitations imposed by his/her other responsibilities.

TEACHING STAFF

Teachers

Teachers are the leaders and managers of their classrooms. All GBCS teachers are certified in the State of New Jersey in Elementary Education or other areas as needed to comply with Highly Qualified Teacher criteria as per the No Child Left Behind Act.

Teachers have complete authority to implement the school's programs and policies and assess student work, and they are the main point of contact for members who have questions about the educational program and related policies as implemented in their classrooms. Within their classrooms, there is no higher authority, including school administrators.

Teachers are charged with implementing the school's curriculum, supervising teaching assistants and volunteers, collaborating with students and parents/guardians to create Personal Education Plans for all their students, and maintaining a peaceful and respectful classroom.

GBCS teachers are specially trained in Positive Discipline, Differentiated Learning, the Adaptive Learning Environment Model, Constructivist teaching techniques, the Schools Attuned methodology that emphasizes accommodation for different student learning styles, and many other techniques and practices that support our school's mission.

Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants instruct students in collaboration with teachers. They assist the teacher in generally running the classroom and provide particular support for students as needed. They participate in professional development activities similarly to Teachers and Teacher Apprentices.

Special Education Teachers

Special Education Teachers provide instruction as mandated by student Individual education plans (IEPs), participate in child study teams, and ensure that student goals are addressed with the general education classroom.

Success Program Instructors

Success Program Instructors provide Basic Skills support to students who have been identified through assessments and teacher referrals. They may provide services only with parent/guardian permission.

ESL Instructors

ESL Instructors are specially trained to support students who speak English as a second language. They also help families work effectively with the other teachers and staff.

ATTENDANCE

Parents/guardians are responsible for their child's punctuality, attendance, cleanliness and appropriateness of dress.

Absences

State school attendance laws require that students between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school during all of the days and hours that the school is in session.

Students may be excused from school for personal illness, religious holidays or other family circumstances. In each of these instances, you must notify the school of the reason for your child's absence. Students should return to school with a written note stating the reason for the absence. An absence will not be considered excused without a note. If your child is ill for five or more days, we request a note from an attending doctor when the student returns to school.

If your child is absent five or more times, we will contact you to review their attendance record. If your child is absent more than 10 days, he/she is at risk of failing to meet academic requirements for advancement to the next grade.

Lateness

Students must come to school on time. Children who enter school after 8:25 (K-8 students) are late and must sign in at the Office with their parents.

Please make every effort to arrive on time!

Unexcused Absences or Lateness

Parent/Guardians who habitually bring their students late to school, or whose students have excessive unexcused absences, may be required to attend a Board hearing to address the issue. The Board may act to exclude students who are absent or late excessively (without an adequate excuse) from the program for the following year. Excessive unexcused absences also fall under state laws regarding truancy, and the school may pursue legal action in extreme cases.

Vacations

Parents/guardians must encourage students to attend school whenever school is in session. We strongly encourage you to schedule vacation in accordance with the school calendar. The school does not encourage trips taken during school time. Vacations are considered an unexcused absence. If a child is going to be absent for any period of time due to vacation, it is the student and parent's responsibility, prior to the absence, to make arrangements with the teacher regarding schoolwork that may be missed.

Permission to Leave School Early

We ask parents not to arrange medical and dental appointments during the school day. When this is absolutely necessary, please notify the school in advance and come to the Office when you arrive to sign out your child.

Students cannot be signed out early after 2:45 pm

Students will not be allowed to leave school early on a routine basis unless there is a documented medical need.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS/EARLY DISMISSAL

In the event that the Greater Brunswick Charter School is closed due to bad weather or emergency conditions, you can find radio and television announcements as follows:

Radio

<u>Radio Station</u>	<u>Dial Setting</u>	<u>Announcement Schedule</u>
WCTC	1450 AM	between 5:45 a.m. and 8:45 a.m.
WGMQ	98.3 FM	between 5:45 a.m. and 8:45 a.m.
NJ 101.5	101.5 FM	between 5:45 a.m. and 8:45 a.m.

Television

News 12 New Jersey Channel 12 beginning at 5:30 a.m.

Web Site

<http://greaterbrunswick.org>

Email

Email notifying you of school closings, delayed openings, or early dismissals will be sent to all members who provide the school with a working email address.

Telephone

You may contact the school directly at (732) 448-1052 and a message will indicate a delayed opening or school closing. The message will be in place by 7:00 am. In case of a delayed opening, lunches will be provided as usual; however, there may be changes in the lunch schedule and menu.

Global Connect message will go out to community members regarding closings and delayed openings.

Delayed Openings

If it appears that early morning weather conditions make it advisable to delay opening, the school will open one-and-a-half (1 ½) hours later than usual and all morning pupil transportation will be delayed for one-and-a-half (1 ½) hours.

Delayed openings are not possible on Wednesdays—the shorter day makes it impractical to hold school. In the event of bad early morning conditions on Wednesdays, school will be closed.

Early Closings

In the event that school closes early due to bad weather or an emergency situation, the After School Program will not run. Parents or their emergency contacts will be notified to pick up their children at school. Please arrive promptly to pick up your child.

TRANSPORTATION

Buses

Bus transportation is handled by your local school district. GBCS coordinates information with the districts and the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission. Be sure to complete and return the Transportation Form provided at enrollment and on a yearly basis thereafter. This form is absolutely required for transportation services or reimbursements.

Transportation Reimbursement

Students who are eligible for bus transportation but are not provided with service are eligible for a refund of transportation costs from their sending school district. The amount of the refund is determined by your local school district, and is payable in two installments – one in January and one in May.

Bus Conduct and Discipline

Students must abide by the GBCS code of conduct and the bus driver's rules while on any bus going to and from GBCS. Inappropriate behavior can lead to the distraction of the bus driver and affect the safety of all students riding the bus. Students must wear seat belts whenever the bus is moving.

Students riding the bus must obey the bus driver or aide. Students who misbehave on the bus or refuse to cooperate with the driver or aide will not be allowed to ride the bus.

When the school bus does not arrive at the bus stop on time because of mechanical failure or road or weather conditions, please wait for at least 30 minutes.

Bus Drop-off Changes

Student generally cannot change bus stops. If it is necessary to change stops, please notify the office in writing so we can make arrangements with the bus company. Please do not change any bus arrangements without confirmation from the office.

If your child is not going to ride the bus home on a particular day, you must notify the office. The student will be instructed to board the bus if we do not receive other instructions.

Carpooling

GBCS will help families interested in carpooling find other families that live nearby. Please call the Office if you are interested in setting up a carpool.

Walking Home

Students may walk home from school only with written permission from a parent/guardian. We will provide a form for granting this permission. No student will be allowed to walk home without written permission.

Changes to Transportation Arrangements

All changes in your child's transportation arrangements must be provided to the school in writing. Notes may be faxed to our office (732.448.1055). In emergencies only, a phone call is acceptable if it is impossible to provide written permission.

We will not allow students to walk home, go home with friends, or accept rides from other parents unless we have written or direct verbal permission from a parent/guardian.

Parking and Visiting

We encourage all our members, as well as the wider community, to visit our school.

Once students have entered the building at 8:25 AM, the outside doors are locked. While this is an inconvenience at times, it is important to know who is entering the building. Visitors should enter the front door and ring the bell at the reception window. **Everyone entering Greater Brunswick is required to sign in and receive a visitor badge at the Office.**

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Our students have 30 minutes to eat their lunch every day, including early dismissal days. Students also have a 20–30 minute recess.

Students can purchase lunch for \$3.00 per day. Milk by itself is available for \$0.40. A menu is sent home each month. Please pay for lunch on a weekly basis to ease the volume of office paperwork.

If children forget their lunch or lunch money, they must notify their teacher by 9:30 am, or the school cannot guarantee them a lunch.

Free and reduced price lunches are available to qualified students; please fill out and return the application that is sent home during the first week of school.

If your child brings a lunch to school, please be sure that it is labeled with his or her name. Refrigeration is not available. Please do not send any glass containers.

Lunches and snacks should consist of nutritious foods and drinks only. Candy, cookies, cakes, soda, highly sweetened beverages, potato chips, and other junk food should not be brought to school. Staff members may confiscate inappropriate foods and replace them with school–provided food or drinks.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

We provide an early arrival/breakfast program for a fee of \$3.00. Students must register in advance to attend. Qualified students may receive this service at a reduced price or for free. The program begins at 7:30 am.

Students arriving after 7:50 am cannot be guaranteed breakfast service.

STUDENT RECORDS

All student records are kept confidential, maintained securely, and limited in access to authorized persons as mandated by law. Parents are encouraged to review their child's records from time to time. All requests to review these records should be made in writing to the Director.

If You Move

If you move while your child is attending GBCS, you must notify us immediately (preferably in advance of the move). If you are moving to a different school district, you must register in the new school district and complete a transfer form—just as you did in your previous district.

Failing to register in your new district will cause a loss of funding to the school and may result in the loss of your child's place in GBCS.

HEALTH SERVICES

Greater Brunswick Charter School has a full-time School Nurse who provides health services, health instruction, and contributes to the healthy living environment of the school. According to State regulations, treatment by the School Nurse is limited to first aid care for injuries occurring at school.

Health Screening

The School Nurse conducts regular health screenings during the year, including visual, auditory, height and weight measurement, scoliosis (curvature of the spine), and blood pressure monitoring. These screenings are completed as required by law, and parents/guardians are notified of the results.

Immunization Requirements

State law requires medically validated records of immunization to be on file for all students. Any student whose immunization records are not complete will be subject to exclusion.

- PHYSICAL EXAM: Grades k, 3 and 7; all new students entering the school from other schools.
- POLIO Three doses of oral vaccine, with one dose given on or after the fourth birthday,
- DIPHTHERIA-PERTUSSIS-TETANUS (DPT) Minimum of four doses, with at least one booster having been received after the fourth birthday or any five doses.
- MEASLES: two doses of a Measles-containing vaccine given after the first birthday and before entering kindergarten.
- RUBELLA AND MUMPS: one dose of each vaccine must be given after the first birthday OR laboratory evidence of immunity.
- MUMPS One dose only.
- HIB (Haemophilus Influenzae) (Under 5 years only) One dose.
- MANTOUX TUBERCULIN All 8th grade students must be given this test since GBCS is located in New Brunswick, which is a high-risk area.
- HEPATITIS B vaccine series Three doses required for children born on or after 9/2/96 (5 years old and older) who are entering or attending kindergarten. Three doses for children born on or after January 1, 1990 and who are entering grade 6.
- VARICELLA - One dose given on or after the first birthday or proof of disease immunity.
- Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) booster required of students entering 6th grade
- Meningococcal vaccine also required upon entering 6th grade.

All immunizations must have medical verification.

Please contact the School Nurse if you have a question about state requirements or have a problem completing these requirements due to religious or medical reasons. Free clinics are sponsored by the Health Department; call your local Health Department for information on dates and locations of clinics.

Communicable/Infectious Diseases

Students with a fever or communicable diseases cannot attend school. Parents/guardians must pick up their children as soon as possible should the child become ill or injured. **Please make sure that you—or someone you designate—is available to pick up your child within one hour after receiving the call that they are sick. This is especially important if you do not work nearby or are unable to leave your job.**

If your child exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease, he or she must be excluded from school until proper treatment and care has been initiated and the condition has improved. The

ultimate decision concerning exclusion issues rests with the School Nurse. A physician's statement may be required before a child is allowed to return to school.

Special Health Needs

To address your child's special health condition such as asthma, allergies or diabetes, the School Nurse will require a physician's letter to be kept on file at the school. The letter should state the required medication, Physical Education limitations, and/or emergency care and actions necessary at school. The School Nurse will contact the physician for any information regarding any special health need, requiring medications, procedures, or care at school. Special health needs and information will then be shared with the appropriate school staff that care for your child.

Medication

All medication to be taken during the school day requires a written prescription from a doctor or dentist; this includes over-the-counter medications such as aspirin. Please make every effort to give all medications at home; if you are sending medications to school, they must be in their original container. The School Nurse will keep all prescribed medications in a locked closet and administer them as prescribed. Any medications must be distributed to your child by the School nurse; no self-medication is permitted.

Emergency Contact Information

Please make sure that the School Office and Nurse have current emergency contact information, and notify them of any changes to your home and/or work phone numbers, as well as the phone numbers of your emergency contacts. It is crucial that we have updated information in the event that your child becomes ill or injured while at school.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Our Mission

The mission of the Greater Brunswick Charter School is to provide our students with an education of the highest standards that engages their individual interests and learning styles, and develops their intellectual, social, emotional, and physical well-being within a learning community. Our teachers use a constructivist method of teaching, and set up their classrooms as learning centers that support independent student work.

At GBCS, we strive to understand each student as an individual and to differentiate the instruction to meet each student's needs. This requires a strong partnership between teachers, parents/guardians, and students.

Constructivism

Constructivist learning is based on students' active participation in problem-solving and critical thinking, where they regard learning as an activity that is relevant and engaging. They are "constructing" their own knowledge by testing ideas and approaches based on their prior knowledge and experience, applying these to a new situation, and integrating the new knowledge gained with their prior experience. The teacher is a facilitator or coach in the constructivist learning approach.

Constructivism is a movement away from the days when students sat at their desks in rows and listened to someone lecture them. Constructivism is based on the theory that all people learn best when they are given the opportunity to discover material themselves and relate it to their own experiences and prior knowledge. Our teachers are trained to introduce curriculum materials to our students in ways that will engage both their prior knowledge and their individual learning styles.

Curriculum development and instruction are a three-step cycle in a constructivist classroom: The teacher provides an open-ended environment where students interact with carefully selected materials and learning centers. The students will generate questions and hypotheses, and thus make "discoveries." These "discoveries" are derived from the student's own world of experiences and knowledge.

The teacher then presents the "concept" and uses the students' discoveries and questions to provide meaning to the concept. In other words, the teacher helps the student take his or her own world's experiences and knowledge to the understanding of the concept.

The teacher then gives the students opportunities to practice, experience, and apply the new concept.

Greater Brunswick Curriculum

The Greater Brunswick Charter School Curriculum combines the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) with the mission, goals, and objectives of the GBCS Charter. Teachers modify the instructional program according to a student's needs to accommodate student learning styles and interests.

The curriculum addresses not only academic goals, but social and emotional goals as well. We are committed to educating the whole child—programs to develop social skills are an important part of the program.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

Each child at GBCS has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that lists their interests and learning styles. It also lists individual goals and strategies for success as developed by the student, teacher and parent/guardian.

Your child's PEP will contain:

- a list of GBCS curriculum goals to be achieved during the school year;
- an assessment of your child's individual learning styles, developed by the teacher during the first weeks of class;
- information on learning style strategies that will work with your child's style;
- your child's interests, which are determined by the child during the first weeks of class.

When you and your child meet with your child's teacher at the October conference, you will develop together your child's academic and intellectual goals for the year. The completed PEP then becomes the blueprint for the individual education that GBCS provides to your child. The Personal Education Plan is reviewed and revised, as needed, at each of the three annual parent-student-teacher conferences.

Progress Summaries

The evaluation of your child's progress takes place in the form of the Progress Summary three times throughout the year. Progress Summaries offer parents and teachers an alternative to traditional report cards, providing a more detailed view of a student's progress and performance. Student progress is reported to parents using a scale that includes Advanced Proficient (AP), Proficient (P), Developing Proficiency (D), or Needs Practice and Support (N). A different scale is used for younger students.

Portfolios

Every student has a Student Portfolio, which is a collection of student work. The Portfolio accompanies students from grade to grade, giving teachers, parents and students insights into each student's learning achievements. The Portfolio also provides the benchmarks necessary to assess the academic, social and emotional growth of the student. The Portfolio is the documentation for guardians, staff, students, and outside assessment teams regarding the academic achievements and progress of each individual student.

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

Parents and students must attend three conferences each year with the student's teacher (or teachers). The dates for these conferences are noted on the school calendar. Teachers will send home sign-up sheets for conferences—you must sign up for an appointment and arrive on time.

At these conferences, teachers, students and parents draw up the goals of the PEP, with its curriculum requirements, areas of strength, areas for growth and strategies to achieve that growth. You are able to review your child's Portfolio, discuss concerns and satisfactions and commit to the course of educational progress that you, your child and your child's teacher will follow for the upcoming semester. These conferences are the place to set goals not just for this year, but also for the course of your child's education at GBCS.

Standardized Testing

Like all public schools in New Jersey, the Greater Brunswick Charter School administers the statewide tests required by New Jersey law: NJASK for 3rd through 8th graders

Standardized tests are a valuable tool when considered in the context of broader assessments. GBCS is committed to helping our students do well on these tests, and we conduct test preparation that is consistent with our overall educational program.

Homework

Homework helps students to develop good study habits, reinforces materials covered in class and communicates to students the concept that learning takes place within our entire community. Homework can also help to develop organization and time-management skills as well as build a sense of responsibility.

In line with the GBCS philosophy of child-centered learning, we do not have a fixed guideline based on grade levels for the amount of time or homework that should be done each day. Homework requirements will be set according to the child's individual needs, in coordination with the student, the teacher and the parent/guardian.

Computer Policy

The school's charter calls for technology to be incorporated into daily classroom activities. Teachers and staff monitor Internet access from the classroom or the school's computer lab. If you wish to limit your child's access to the Internet, please place such a request in writing to your child's teacher, with a copy to the Educational Director.

All students and parents must sign the school's Acceptable Use Policy before they may use school computers.

Field Trips

Well-planned and supervised field trips may be scheduled during the year. Written permission from the legal guardian is required for any student taking the trip; without written permission, a student will not be able to accompany the class and must remain on school premises. A permission form for field trips is sent home with students prior to the activity. Parents are encouraged to allow students to participate in the field trips, since they are planned to enhance the educational experience and information gained in the classroom.

Students are expected to abide by all Greater Brunswick Charter School rules of behavior while participating in all off-site school activities.

Textbooks

GBCS philosophy of a child-centered, constructivist learning environment means that each child's course of instruction will be individually guided while still meeting state curriculum standards. This means that textbooks may or may not be utilized in your child's classes. The teacher's curriculum determines the use of textbooks by your child.

Support Services

Greater Brunswick Charter School participates in all mandated Special Needs, Basic Skills/Title I, and ESL academic support services. Please contact the Educational Director or refer to the Greater Brunswick Charter School Policy Manual for details. If you believe that your child may benefit from evaluation for any of these services, please speak with your child's teacher.

Special Education

GBCS complies with all state and federal laws and regulations applicable to special education. Our program emphasizes inclusion in the general education classroom for all students to the greatest extent possible.

Occasionally, our Child Study Team determines that a student's needs cannot be met within the GBCS program. The Team will then identify a suitable public or private school placement for the student that best meets the student's needs and facilitate their placement in that program.

The Success Program

The GBCS Success Program is a Basic Skills Instruction program for students who meet the criteria for this service. Parents must approve the testing and placement of their students in this program.

The Success Program teacher, or another staff member, will contact you as needed to discuss your child's participation.

Physical Education

Every student must take at least 150 minutes of Physical Education/gym and Health per week. If you wish your child to be excused from physical education activities, she or he must have a note from her or his guardian. If the excuse is for more than three days, a statement from a medical doctor is requested.

All students are expected to wear appropriate clothing for gym class. Please bring sneakers to gym class. Hard-or black-soled shoes, open-toed shoes, sandals and thongs are not permissible, as they can damage the gym floor or pose a health risk.

Guidance and Student Counseling

Greater Brunswick Charter School has an on-site student counselor, who provides counseling, guidance, drug and substance abuse training, and assists in Character Education courses.

After-School Program

Greater Brunswick has an After-School Program from dismissal until 5:30 each day. Students must register in advance to attend; there is a \$10 yearly registration fee and a daily fee of \$10.00 per day, \$6.00 for siblings.

Students are expected to abide by all GBCS rules of conduct while participating in the After-School Program. Students who behave violently or disruptively, or who do not cooperate with staff, will be excluded from the After School Program.

Full details, including monthly activity calendars, are available from the Office at the beginning of the school year. There is no After-School Program on half-days prior to holiday closings, or on days when school closes early for bad weather.

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Greater Brunswick Charter School is a school committed to creating and maintaining a peaceful and respectful environment where all staff members are role models for the school membership by acting and speaking respectfully to students, parents and each other. Respect for one another at all times is the foundation of our interactions. The simple rules of courtesy and consideration for and encouragement of others should govern student behavior. Conduct must support the mission of the school, which is to nourish personal excellence, support and encourage one's peers, and practice collective responsibility.

GBCS has adopted the use of the Positive Discipline program to ensure a universal approach that is kind and firm when dealing with conflict. In conjunction with Positive Discipline, the students and staff use Conflict Resolution and participate in a variety of school programs in which respect skills are taught, practiced, and implemented.

Positive Discipline

An essential purpose of education is to prepare children for responsible citizenship. Positive Discipline in the Classroom is a program that prepares children for responsible citizenship by encouraging the development of emotional intelligence and the important life skills and perceptions of capable people.

Positive Discipline is based on the philosophies of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs who believed that all human beings have equal rights to dignity and respect. All Positive Discipline methods are non-punitive and non-permissive. They are kind and firm at the same time: kind, because that shows respect for the child (and for the adult), and firm because that shows respect for what needs to be done.

All Positive Discipline methods meet the following "Three Criteria for Discipline that Teaches":

- Is it respectful?
- Is it effective long-term?
- Does it help children develop valuable life skills for good character?

Positive Discipline in the Classroom is an excellent character education program in which children are involved in the creation of safe and caring communities. GBCS teachers use Positive Discipline Class Meetings to teach students essential skills and empower young people with a positive attitude for success in all areas of life: school, work, family, and society.

GBCS Code of Conduct

The GBCS Code of Conduct consists of behaviors, rules and procedures developed by the Student Body, as well as the School Review Committee, and formally adopted by the Board of Trustees.

In the first year of our school's operation, the Student Body developed and adopted the following rules:

- No hurting people.
- Use good language, nice language, at all times.
- Don't call names and don't be mean.
- Threats will be taken seriously whether they are words or object and things.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- No gum chewing.
- Only bring the things you need for school to school - no toys.
- No running in school and on the street.
- Listen to your teacher.
- Be here on time, every day.

Rules and Procedures developed by the School Review Committee:

Lunchroom

- Create a calm, relaxing atmosphere.
- Talk in conversational voices.
- Ask permission to use the restroom. Only two students are permitted in the restroom at a time.
- Remain seated, except to clean up.
- Cleanup the whole table, including under the table, as well as your place.

Hallways and Entrances

- No running, pushing, shoving.
- When in line, keep to the right hand side of the hallway or stairwell, and hold door open for others.
- Quiet talking or no talking, as staff instructs
- No yelling or loud noises in hallways.

Bathrooms

All students in K-1 use bathrooms contained within their classrooms. When necessary other students will be escorted to the bathrooms or use the buddy system.

5th-8th grade students may use a sign-out system for bathroom privileges and must receive permission from the teacher or teachers' assistant when leaving the room.

Computer Lab

- Students are allowed in the computer room only with adult supervision.
- No food or drinks are allowed in the Computer Lab at any time.
- Students are not allowed to play computer games during school hours.
- Some computer games may be permitted during After School Program at the discretion of supervising staff; however, no games that involve shooting, fighting, or violence of any type are permitted. The prohibition on shooting games includes games that target non-human or "mechanical" targets.
- Games or web sites containing materials deemed inappropriate by supervising staff are also prohibited. Inappropriate materials are any materials not suitable for classroom use by K-8 students.
- Students found to be playing inappropriate games will lose computer privileges.
- All students and their parents/guardians must sign the GBCS Acceptable Use Policy before using Internet-connected computers.

Assemblies and Performances

- All students must sit in their class's pre-assigned seating area.
- No rude or disruptive behavior while in the auditorium.
- Students must be silent and respectful during performances and speakers.
- Students must follow instructions of the teachers while moving to and from the assembly.

Discipline and Suspension Policy

Greater Brunswick Charter School follows the Positive Discipline model in its daily activities. Our students are expected to be respectful and responsible. We believe that all members of our community deserve respect and to exist in an atmosphere of peace and safety. Our expectations of respect and civility are one of the foundations of our charter and will be taught and explained to our students and members, along with our discipline policy.

In general, teachers handle the vast majority of disciplinary issues within the context of the classroom. However, disciplinary incidents that move beyond those addressed by the teacher within the classroom may qualify a student for suspension or expulsion.

Aggressive and disrespectful behavior of any kind is not permissible and will result in consequences. Any instance of violent behavior—such as physical assault or fighting—will result in an immediate suspension, either in school or out of school, as per the GBCS Discipline Policy.

Behavior incidents are divided into three categories: Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3. Those behavior incidents noted here as Level 2 and Level 3 incidents are directly related to issues of safety and law; for these, the consequences are clearly stated and consistently applied and always result in some level of immediate suspension.

Suspension and expulsion of students from the Greater Brunswick Charter School will be done in compliance with all applicable state laws, particularly N.J.S.A 18A:36A-9 Charter School Program Act of 1995. The criteria for either suspension or expulsion include, but are not limited to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2:

Level 1 Incidents

Level 1 behavior incidents include:

- Continued and willful disobedience;
- Open defiance of the authority of any teacher or person having authority over him/her;
- Verbal Threats
- Cheating/Plagiarism
- Academic Misconduct
- Unexcused Absences
- Forgery
- Verbal Abuse
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Lying
- Gang Activity

Level 1 incidents are addressed through Positive Discipline techniques, and handled in a consistent and fair manner. Repeated infractions may also result in additional consequences. Excessive behavior in these areas may also be grounds for suspension or expulsion. Other behavior incidents as determined by teachers and staff will also be handled by Positive Discipline techniques.

Level 2 Incidents

Level 2 behavior incidents include:

- Conduct of such character as to constitute a continuing danger to the physical well-being of other students;
- Physical assault or emotionally abusive behavior toward another student, teacher or staff member;
- Fighting;
- Aggressive Behavior towards school staff;
- Taking, or attempting to take, personal property or money from another student, or from his/her presence, by means of force or fear;
- Theft of property or money from school premises or any member of the Greater Brunswick Charter School community which occurs on school grounds;
- Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to school property;
- Participation in an unauthorized occupancy by any group of students or others of any part of any school or other building owned by any school district, and failure to leave such school or other facility promptly after having been directed to do so by the director or other person then in charge of such building or facility;
- Incitement which is intended to and does result in unauthorized occupation by any group of students or others of any part of a school or other facility owned by any school district

- Incitement that is intended to and does result in truancy by other students.

Level 2 behavior incidents have the following consequences:

The first incident will result in immediate in-school suspension in the quiet room or designated site.

However, incidents that involve any physical violence or inappropriate physical contact will result in immediate out-of-school suspension. Additionally, incidents that involve insulting or aggressive behavior towards staff will result in immediate out-of-school suspension. The student cannot be released from school until parents or guardians retrieve the student before the end of the school day. A responsibility conference with parents, student, and teacher must be held at that time.

The second incident will result in an immediate suspension from school, the length to be determined by the school administration in consultation with teaching staff. **However, if the second incident involves any physical violence or inappropriate physical contact, or if it involves insulting or aggressive behavior towards staff, the student will receive a long-term suspension, pending a hearing before the Board of Trustees to determine whether it is possible for the student to safely attend GBCS.**

The student cannot be released from school until parents or guardians retrieve the student. A responsibility conference with parents, student, teacher and Director must be held at that time with additional meetings or hearings scheduled as needed.

The third incident will result in immediate long-term suspension from school with the possibility of expulsion. The student cannot be released from school until parents or guardians retrieve the student.

Expulsion from Greater Brunswick Charter School may also be determined at any time by the Board of Trustees depending on the seriousness of the behavior incident. No suspension of a student shall be continued longer than the second regular meeting of the Board of Trustees after such suspension unless the same is continued by action of the Board, and the power to reinstate, continue any suspension reported to it or expel a student shall be vested in the Board of Trustees.

Level 3 Incidents

Level 3 behavior incidents require mandatory immediate out-of-school suspension. The student will be removed from the school according to law and the Memorandum of Agreement between the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office and the Board of Trustees. Excessive behavior in these areas will be grounds for expulsion.

Level 3 behaviors include:

- Drug and alcohol violations.
- Possession of deadly weapons and dangerous implements
- Firearm violations

Any student who commits an assault upon a teacher, staff member, board member or other visitor to the school not involving the use of a weapon or firearm, shall be immediately suspended from school.

Suspensions

The Educational Director or Executive Director in consultation with other staff members determines the length of a suspension. Some sample suspensions from recent years are as follows:

- Disruptiveness in class - one day

- Habitual disruptiveness in class – 22 days suspension and a Board hearing followed by a student contract.
- Disrespect to a teacher or student – one day
- Physical violence against a student or teacher – minimum of one day (for very minor cases), but possibly longer.
- Repeated physical violence (fighting or assault) 24 days suspension and a Board hearing followed by a student contract.
- Bringing a dangerous item—other than a weapon—to school (such as a firecracker): three to six days.
- Bullying, teasing, or harassing – one to three days.

Persistent negative behavior, such as disruptiveness, disrespect, or bullying—even if it is non-violent—can result in longer suspensions and a hearing before the Board of Trustees if it is repeated.

The right of the student/parent to request a full hearing at which he/she may be represented by counsel and may confront and cross-examine witnesses occurs when the suspension extends to ten or more days or when the Board of Trustees expels a student from GBCS.

Please review the policy and be prepared to discuss it with your child/children. We must all speak with one voice in letting our children know that hitting and violence are never permitted at GBCS.

Expulsions

Expulsion at GBCS is very rare—as of the publication of this edition of the Parent Handbook (August 2011) none have occurred. However, the Board of Trustees has placed students on Home Instruction for periods of time as the result of persistent disciplinary incidents.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Greater Brunswick Charter School believes that every student has the right to attend our school and school-related activities free from all forms of discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment. We consider sexual harassment of students to be serious and will consider the full range of disciplinary options, up to and including expulsion, according to the nature of the offense. All students are expected to treat one another courteously, with respect for the other person's feelings; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop. All students are prohibited from engaging in offensive verbal or physical conduct directed toward another student or adult. This prohibition applies whether the conduct is by word, gesture or any other intimidating conduct. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with the Director.

Weapons Policy

The possession of knives, other weapons, and matches on school property is totally prohibited. Disciplinary measures will be followed according to the Greater Brunswick Charter School Weapons Policy, available in the Office.

Bullying Policy

GBCS has adopted a bullying policy that protects the rights of students to a safe and comfortable learning environment and we enforce it strictly. The policy is posted on our website.

Dress Code

Greater Brunswick Charter School has a flexible dress code that emphasizes individual expression within responsible limits.

Students should always be neat and clean while in school. Clothing should not be distracting or offensive, and should always embody respect for others in our school community. Hats and head coverings may not be worn in the classroom unless they are required by religious observance. All clothing and footwear should be compatible with safety, and should not interfere with the ability to participate in classroom or school activities. For example, flip-flops or thong sandals are not allowed, as well as clothing that limits physical mobility.

No clothing with offensive, violent, vulgar, or sexually suggestive messages will be allowed. For example, clothes that have words such as “Hottie,” “Sexy,” or promote violent films or other media are not allowed. Also, clothing that is inappropriately revealing, immodest, or uses graphic techniques to draw attention to students’ bodies in sexually explicit ways will not be allowed. Underwear must remain covered.

Students who arrive at school dressed in violation of the dress code will be given an opportunity to change to more appropriate clothing (if it is available) or sent home with their parents. Teachers are the primary authority within their classrooms to implement the dress code.

Prohibited Items

Greater Brunswick Charter School can assume no responsibility in the event of loss, theft or damage of personal property. Therefore, your child should not bring to school large sums of money, valuable jewelry, or any other items of value such as radios, tape recorders, tape decks, CD players, hand held electronic games, cameras, cell phones, etc.

Cell phones present a particular problem—they are extremely disruptive during school and are often misplaced or taken by other students. The school is not able to investigate the disappearance or misuse of student cell phones that are not properly secured.

Cell phones, if required by parents, must remain turned off during the school day and secured in backpacks or held in the office. Students may not use cell phones during the school day, during the After School Program, or on class trips. Students may use the office phone for urgent calls to parents or guardians.

Any cell phones seen by staff during school hours (including during After School Program) will be taken away and held until the end of the day. If there is a second incident, the parent will be required to retrieve the cell phone from the office.

In addition, toys, trading cards and other non-school-related items that interfere with or distract from the educational climate should remain at home. If your child brings any of these items to school, it will be confiscated for the day, and held in the Office until school closing.

Please give this policy your support and remind your son or daughter to leave these items at home.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

This section covers the democratic governance of Greater Brunswick Charter School. It contains information on the General Membership as a body, the Board of Trustees, the various standing Committees of the school, and the Student Council.

General Membership

We in the Greater Brunswick Charter School community have come together because we believe that education of children is a joint responsibility, shared between all members – parents/guardians, staff, students and the community at large. To ensure that the best interests of the child are served in this process, a strong program of communication between home and school must be maintained, and parental involvement is strongly encouraged. Events such as Membership Meetings, Family Sharing Night, and Parent/Teacher Conferences, as well as Weekly Updates and Monthly Newsletters, help to facilitate communication between home and school.

Parents and guardians have a primary responsibility to the school as members of the General Membership. More than a traditional Parent-Teacher Organization or Association, the General Membership plays an integral role in the governance of the school. This role is expressed in a number of ways:

- The General Membership votes on matters important to school operations, and elects Board and Committee members.
- The General Membership provides the members who serve on the Board of Trustees, School Review Committee, Grievance Committee, or other committees integrally involved in operating the school.
- It is every family's responsibility to have at least one family member attend each Membership Meeting held during the school year.

Parents/guardians are also relied upon to provide their expertise and labor directly to the school. Our charter calls upon the General Membership to assume tasks that would normally be handled by paid administrative or support staff in a regular district school, thus freeing our budget to cover instructional, rather than administrative costs. Parent expertise may take any form of involvement, from curriculum development, to facilities development, to budget and finance, to workplace readiness training.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the formal legal entity responsible for proper management of the school. It represents all parts of the school community—parents/guardians, staff and students—and serves as trustees for the interests of the children attending the school.

The Board of Trustees consists of eight parent/guardians who vote as members of the General Membership. The Board may appoint four additional voting members from the larger (non-school) community. The Directors and staff representatives hold non-voting positions.

The Board of Trustees has all powers and authority necessary for the management of the school. It has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that we fulfill the school's mission. The Board has all the authority to decide matters related to the operation of the school, including, but not limited to, budgeting, hiring, and operating procedures. Board meetings are where the official business of the school, such as contracts and resolutions, is carried out.

The five main responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are:

- Development of school policy.
- Financial and legal responsibility and oversight.
- Evaluation of the Directors.

- Long-term planning, and the development (with the Directors) of annual goals.
- Oversight and support of school committees.

Trustees have the following duties:

- Attending and publicly posting regularly scheduled Board meetings and publishing its proceedings
- Planning and participating in general meetings
- Articulating the school's mission and ensuring broad access of information about the school
- Approving major expenditures, curriculum and policies
- Participating in the annual evaluation of the Director
- Developing the school's long-term strategic goals & annual goals and periodically reviewing the progress towards their attainment
- Receiving state-mandated Board Member training
- Attending functions of state-wide charter school organizations
- Working to ensure the interests of charter schools are protected in state legislation
- Keeping up with developments (internal, external, financial) affecting the school
- Building involvement of Charter School community members and organizations in the wider communities

Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees meets every as per its published schedule. Meetings generally start at 7:00, unless otherwise noted. There is always a Public Comment section where school members can address any item that is on the agenda. Suggestions for items of business from any staff member, student, parent/guardian or citizen of the sending districts are welcome but must be introduced, in the form of a resolution, by a Trustee. If you have an item of business for the Board to consider, please approach a Board member to have it included on the agenda at least ten days before the scheduled Board meeting, in order to give all Trustees sufficient time to review the item before the meeting.

Committees

Our parent-student-teacher committees are where a lot of the discussion, brainstorming, research and work on school issues take place. Committees are formed primarily of parents and teachers. Typically, a Trustee will coordinate each committee and provide communication between the Board and the committee. We have both Standing Committees—those listed in our charter, which are always in existence—and Ad Hoc Committees, which are assembled as needed. Examples of Ad Hoc Committees include the Hiring Committee and Technology Committee.

School Review Committee

The School Review Committee, comprised of professional staff and parents, is the primary authority for all matters relating to curriculum and educational policy and practice. All such matters **must** be considered in this committee prior to consideration by the Board of Trustees. This committee ensures that the curriculum and educational program reflect the mission of the school, the expertise of our educational professionals, and the concerns of the General Membership. It is also this committee's responsibility to review and comment on matters before the Board, and originate recommendations to the Board on matters of school policy, staffing, parental involvement, and mission.

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee was formed to identify and meet the needs of our members through educational workshops and family events. Committee members work with the Family Coordinator, staff and students to offer events that provide opportunities for learning and socializing. Last year such events included Back to School Night, Family Sharing Night, Family Reading Night and Salsa Night. This committee will also administer and compile parent and student surveys twice yearly.

Strategic Planning & Development Committee

The Strategic Planning & Development Committee (or SP&D) was established initially in 2001 and revised in 2006. It establishes the mission and vision statements of the school and establishes the educational, organizational and financial goals. This document is available online through our web site <http://greaterbrunswick.org>.

Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee is responsible for the maintenance of our physical space, as well as development of new and expanded facilities. Parent members assist in coordinating & volunteering at work parties and, along with staff, helping to decide on the best use of our current space. In 2004, this committee succeeded in securing a permanent home for the school.

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee develops policies for Greater Brunswick Charter School that further the school's mission and lessen risks to the school and its community through appropriate governance oversight and assessment. The Policy Committee is responsible for ensuring GBCS has adopted all legally mandated policies, and that all policies are aligned with the charter and school goals.

Outreach/Enrollment Committee

The Outreach/Enrollment Committee serves as a link between GBCS and the surrounding communities. The committee's objectives are to: (1) establish relationships with local institutions in order to facilitate the development of mentoring, career days and related volunteer efforts for the students; (2) work with the Membership Committee to increase awareness of GBCS in all districts, especially New Brunswick, Highland Park and Edison; (3) work with the Directors to coordinate media relations for the school. The Outreach Committee also runs our Enrollment Drives and Open Houses.

Grievance Committee

The purpose of the Grievance Committee is to solve as fairly and equitably as possible issues that relate to concerns of the General Membership, issues regarding staff performance and complaints that arise from outside the school community. The Grievance Committee has five positions, at least one, but no more than three, of which must be filled by a member of the school staff. Grievance Committee members are elected by the General Membership and serve one-year terms.

MISCELLANEOUS**Lost and Found**

All of your child's personal items, such as lunchboxes, jackets, gloves, and other pieces of clothing, should be labeled with his or her name. If an item does get misplaced, you can look for it in the Lost and Found Box located in the Office. Please check it on a regular basis for your child's items – it can fill up fast! Items not claimed by the final day of the school year will be donated to charity.

Student Photo and Videotaping

From time to time, students may be photographed or videotaped as a part of school activities or for educational purposes. Photographs of the students taken for commercial purposes are not allowed.

When you accepted admission for your child at GBCS, or indicated your intent to return to GBCS, you indicated your permission (or lack of permission) for such uses.

Occasionally, a special project such as a documentary or publication may require an additional release form to use your child's image. Please complete the photo/video release forms and contact us if you have any questions about them.