



**The Brooklyn Charter School
Student Handbook
2014-2015**

Building Bridges to Tomorrow!

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BCS Vision Statement

At BCS we have a precious opportunity to prepare children to be successful and to engage them in making meaningful contributions to the world in which we live.

BCS Mission Statement

The Brooklyn Charter School is committed to providing a nurturing and supportive community where all students feel secure, recognize their own potential, respect others regardless of race, religion or culture, and are instilled with the desire to learn and achieve. It is our aim to provide a rigorous academic program supported by the Arts and Technology that cultivates the whole child. Through achievement and creativity, and in partnership with our families, students will develop the necessary confidence, intellectual capacity and leadership skills to prepare them for an evolving global society.

History of The Brooklyn Charter School

The Brooklyn Charter School (BCS) opened its doors to the children of Bedford Stuyvesant in September of 2000. BCS is the first charter school of Bedford Stuyvesant and the first charter approved by the New York City Department of Education. Originally located on MacDonough Street, the school was small and very much family oriented. In its first year, the school served seventy-eight (78) kindergarteners and first graders. The BCS curriculum includes: Balanced Literacy; Investigations in Numbers, Data and Space (TERC), Project-Based Social Studies; and Inquiry Based Science through Full Options Science Systems and Science and Technology for Children. A rigorous academic calendar and strong, stable leadership from the founding Head of School, Mr. Omigbade Escayg, provide the platform for success at BCS and the school ranks among the highest performing schools in New York City. BCS's Assistant Principal (Math), Mary Kate Boesch, and Assistant Principal (ELA), Linda Hatfield, Ed.D., assist the Head of School in making BCS an academically competitive institution. Currently located on the third floor of the PS 23 Complex at 545 Willoughby Avenue, The Brooklyn Charter School serves approximately two hundred fifty students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Students and staff at The Brooklyn Charter School strive for excellence using the following tenets known as:

The BCS Cornerstones

We care about each other.

We listen to each other.

We help each other.

We are responsible for what we say and do.

BCS Motto

Building Bridges to Tomorrow!

BCS Statement of Excellence

Excellence is the path we travel that is lined with perseverance, determination, discipline and ambition where every moment is used to achieve our goals.

BCS Academic Program Description

The Brooklyn Charter School's educational program is designed to meet each learner at their point of entry. Our program is research-based, inclusive of all learning styles and abilities, and is focused on the development, growth and success of the individual learner. All learners are expected to meet and exceed the grade level benchmarks of the Common Core Learning Standards. To do this BCS implements a rigorous curriculum, uses the model of two teachers in the classroom, K-5, and maintains small sized classrooms that foster greater individual attention. The program has been created to raise achievement levels by preparing students with both basic and enriched skills in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. In addition, students are expected to experience and develop a cultural vocabulary in Music and Dance. Students are also taught citizenry and resilience through a daily Harambee (community gathering) and school-wide assemblies. Here, students and faculty work together to create a positive, respectful and nurturing community.

English Language Arts – The Literacy Framework

At BCS, the teaching of literacy forms the foundation for learning as it encompasses reading, writing, comprehension, and communication skills and processes. The BCS community believes that literacy is about making meaning. As such BCS has developed its Literacy Statement which reads:

Being literate means making use of one's innate, sensory, and cognitive abilities to access, understand, interpret, and communicate information and ideas about oneself, others and the world. Being literate is the goal of every student and adult at The Brooklyn Charter School.

The beliefs and assumptions about literacy at BCS are guided by research on what students should know and be able to do, best teaching practices, valid and reliable assessment and on the knowledge of experienced educators.

Effective literacy education involves guiding children through a variety of literary experiences and not just following a set program. Our role as teachers is to design the program our children need using a Comprehensive Literacy Framework, which is the basis of all literacy instruction at BCS; it is based on the way children learn. It contains a variety of instructional approaches and experiences that allow students to develop as independent readers, writers and thinkers. Using a variety of texts within a collaborative environment, students receive continuous feedback about their learning. Students learn to read, write and speak successfully when a variety of instructional approaches are made available. Within this framework students are provided with as many opportunities as possible to engage with texts by reading, listening, and responding. Students discuss their thinking in whole groups, small groups or pairs.

The beliefs and assumptions about literacy at BCS are guided by research on what students should know and be able to do, best teaching practices, valid and reliable assessment and on the knowledge of experienced educators. The Literacy Framework is comprised of strategies that are diverse and that complement each other. The main components of the Literacy Framework are Reading Workshop (Read Aloud; Shared Reading; Guided Reading; Independent Reading); Writing Workshop (Interactive Writing; Guided Writing and Independent Writing); and Language & Word Study, which include spelling and vocabulary instruction.

Reading workshop is an instructional model that focuses on the strengths and needs of each individual

reader. Teachers model reading behaviors through reading texts out loud and provide direct instruction on strategic reading through guided small group reading. Students are given time to read, an opportunity to choose their reading selections, and time to talk about books and strategies during readers workshop, through independent reading and literature discussion.

Writing workshop is an instruction model that focuses on the strengths and needs of each individual writer. Teachers provide direct instruction on the writing process, craft, genre and mechanics throughout the day through a writing process with the teacher known as Interactive Writing and Guided Writing. Students are given time and choice of what to write, and opportunities to share with audiences.

Mathematics – A Constructivist Approach

Brooklyn Charter School mathematics instruction is driven by the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics Content and the Common Core State Standards for Mathematical Practice. These Standards for Content define what students should understand and be able to do in their study of mathematics. The Standards for Mathematical Practice describe ways in which developing student practitioners of the discipline of mathematics ought to engage with the subject matter, as they grow in mathematical maturity and expertise throughout the elementary, middle and high school years.

BCS utilizes a constructivist approach in teaching and learning mathematics. The primary program used to support this approach, Second (2nd) Edition TERC Investigation in Number, Data and Space, focuses instruction on mathematical thinking and reasoning. It is carefully designed to invite all students into mathematics and to help them develop a deep understanding of fundamental mathematical ideas. Students with this understanding know more than isolated facts and procedures. They know why a mathematical idea is important and the contexts in which it is useful. Furthermore, they are aware of many connections between mathematical ideas.

TERC *Investigations* support students in exploring problems in depth. It encourages the student to find more than one way to solve many of the problems they encounter, to reason mathematically and develop problem-solving strategies while examining and explaining mathematical thinking and reasoning. Students are expected to communicate their ideas orally and on paper, represent their thinking using models, diagrams, and graphs, make connections between mathematical ideas, and prove their ideas to others. In mathematics, students develop computational fluency, choosing from a variety of tools and appropriate technology, and working in a variety of group settings - whole class, individually, in pairs, and in small groups.

Brooklyn Charter School's mathematics curriculum inspires all students to develop and expand their mathematical ideas. Teachers collaborate with the students and integrate curriculum materials to create the curriculum as enacted in the classroom. Each curriculum unit goes in depth on a specific content area, providing 2 to 5 1/2 weeks for students to develop and practice ideas across a variety of activities and contexts that build on each other. The units address the learning needs of all students in a wide range of classrooms and communities. The investigations are carefully designed to invite all learners into mathematics.

Social Studies- Project Based

The Social Studies program combines a project-approach with explicit content instruction. In kindergarten through third grade, the Teachers Curriculum Institute: Social Studies Alive (TCI) program provides students with a strong understanding of social norms, a historical perspective and geographical foundation by exploring new information through a project-based experience. Students in fourth and fifth grades use the McGraw Hill and Scott-Foresman text to outline U.S. and New York history. Additionally, Social Studies projects are designed by grade level teaching teams and are mandated to

include NY State Social Studies standards and key ideas. In projects, students may design artifacts, present information, or research an area of interest.

Science – Inquiry Based

Science is inquiry-based on all grade levels. Students study various scientific topics through hands-on, experimental activities. Full Options Science Systems (FOSS) and Science and Technology for Children (STC) kits are used in all classrooms. All kits include tools and materials for activities. For example: the third graders study Magnetism and Electricity using wires, circuits, batteries, light bulbs and magnets. The main objective of this unit is to create a working circuit and an electro-magnet. In Grades 3, 4 & 5, students also utilize A Closer Look-McGraw Hill text to support their science learning. In Grades 1-5, students participate in overnight scientific exploratory studies at the Clearpool Education Center in Carmel, New York. At the Center, BCS students enjoy and explore team building activities as well as ecosystem studies of forests, wetlands, ponds and lakes, weather, U.S. history and the night sky. These studies are designed to take BCS students beyond the classroom walls to enhance critical thinking and provide a connection to global ecosystems.

The Arts

BCS students participate in Dance and Music classes on a weekly rotating schedule. These classes are an opportunity for students to develop other skills, define their identity based on individual talents, and encompass projects that connect to both Literacy and Mathematics.

- **Dance** - The Dance class incorporates varied forms of dance. Depending on the grade, students learn, Traditional African dances, Jazz, Modern Interpretative, the Basics of Ballet, Liturgical, Hip Hop, Afro-Caribbean and/or Latin dances. Additionally, students learn the fundamentals of balance, coordination, and rhythm. Dance also includes proper aerobic, stretching, and strengthening of the body as defined by NYS Physical Education standards. Students will (1) identify and demonstrate movement elements and skills (such as bend, twist, slide, skip, hop), (2) demonstrate ways of moving in relation to people, objects, and environments in set dance forms, and (3) create and perform simple dances based on their own movement ideas.
- **Music** - The Music program concentrates on students learning to read, play and appreciate music. Once students learn to read music, they are given opportunities to learn keyboarding, recorder, and xylophone. Additionally, students work on vocals and percussion. Students will (1) be exposed to the basic elements of music, including rhythm, melody, harmony and form, (2) learn how to read music, (3) identify different types of musical forms such as classical, jazz, rhythm and blues, spirituals, gospel, rock and roll, and (4) understand the variety of musical settings, including orchestras, recitals, theatre, opera, ballet, movie soundtracks, marching bands, and jazz clubs. Students will be expected to identify major composers and their works, distinguish genres, identify musical instruments and their related families, and understand key musical elements and concepts.

Technology

The Brooklyn Charter School is engaged in using technology as an integral instructional tool through the use of specific software and hardware, and the worldwide web. BCS utilizes two Mac laptop labs across the school, ensuring that all students in grades K-5 have an opportunity to learn basic and some advanced computer skills. Teachers use the laptops to support instruction in all subject areas including reading, word work, writing, math, social studies, science and the arts. Students use the Internet to conduct research, use software connected to the approved curriculum and use various websites to support grammar, phonics, and math fact skills. BCS uses Epson interactive projectors (similar to Smart Boards) to provide students with another medium with which to view, interact with and manipulate information. The BCS technology plan integrates the use of specific technology, software and hardware across the school and incorporates the use of i-pads.

Mock Daily Schedule Overview

| Period | K-2 | Period | Grades 3-5 |
|---------------|---|---------------|---|
| 8:00 - 8:20 | Breakfast Program | 8:00- 8:20 | Breakfast Program |
| 8:30 – 11:00 | Instruction in Literacy/Mathematics Music & Dance | | Instruction in Literacy/Mathematics Music & Dance |
| 11:30 – 11:55 | Lunch | 12:00 – 12:50 | Lunch |
| 12:00 – 3:50 | Instruction in Literacy/Mathematics Social Studies & Science Music & Dance | 1:00- 3:50 | Instruction in Literacy/Mathematics Social Studies & Science Music & Dance |

This example schedule reflects an average day at BCS. Fifth grade students switch between the Math/Science teacher and the Literacy/Social Studies teacher.

Saturday Academy

BCS hosts a Saturday Academy for third, fourth and fifth grade students, beginning in the Winter. All upper elementary students are invited to participate. During Saturday Academy, BCS teachers provide specialized tutoring and Test Preparation instruction. Additionally, BCS provides small group intervention supports on selected Saturdays for selected students.

After-School Programming

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade can participate in various after-school activities that take place after 3:50 P.M. Monday - Thursday and after 3:00 P.M. on Friday. Families must make alternate transportation arrangements as regular school busing is not available at these times.

Extended Day and After-School Expectations

Students attending after-school are held to the same high expectations as throughout the regular daily school program. Students are expected to follow up with study, practice and completion of assignments. Students enrolled in Piano, Karate, Percussion and Vocals are required to perform in recitals/presentations held at least two times per year. Students can be asked to leave a program if behavior becomes a concern; a student may be denied performance or recital if attendance is at 50% or below. Families are required to pick up students on time. BCS does not provide transportation in the after-school hours.

Homework Policy

BCS students are expected to receive homework every day. Homework is connected to what was learned in school on a given day. Each teacher's distribution, return expectation, and grading policies are shared with families at the beginning of the school year. Students in upper grades (3-5) are expected to copy homework assignments into an assignment notebook (provided by BCS). Lower elementary students should be given a print out of the nightly/weekly homework assignments.

Homework might consist of the following:

Literacy- 20-40 minutes nightly reading, with log and reflection; reading and writing work from phonics or practice books, in addition to test preparation practice

Math—nightly fact practice, practice sheets from TERC or specialized problems; games for students to play with family members, in addition to test preparation practice

Social Studies and Science—research on certain topics, reflective writings about projects/experiments, test preparation practice (4th and 5th)

Arts—written reflection of class sessions, critiques of completed work, selected readings and listening (connected to unit of study), practice for performances

The table presents a suggested time-frame for home-work for each grade level:

| Grade Level | Time-Frame |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Kindergarten | 30 minutes |
| First Grade | 45 minutes |
| Second Grade | 1 hour |
| Third Grade | 1 hour and 15 minutes |
| Fourth Grade | 1 hour and 30 minutes |
| Fifth Grade | 1 hour and 45 minutes |

Promotion Policy

This policy articulates the specific criteria that define promotion from one grade level to the next for all students in the elementary grades at BCS. All students are expected to meet or exceed rigorous academic standards in performance-based core curriculum, aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, to be promoted to the next Grade and, ultimately, to be prepared for college and careers.

All students at BCS are held to specific criteria that define promotion. Those criteria exist in the areas of:

- Meeting the grade level Common Core Learning Standards for Literacy and Mathematics
- 90% annual attendance
- Comprehensive classroom assessments that include portfolios, samples of student work, anecdotal notes, teacher assessments and observations
- Progress reports; and benchmark assessments (Fountas & Pinnell Assessment, Primary Assessment of Literacy Skills, Early Childhood Mathematics Assessment, Interim Assessments and State Test scores)
- New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test (NYSESLAT)
- Summer school work
- Goals & mandated criteria on Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Length of time spent in the United States School System

BCS reserves the right to make a decision for promotion or retention when standardized test scores do not match previous student achievement as seen through portfolio, anecdotal notes, or teacher assessments as defined by the promotional criteria. Promotional decisions for Grades 3-5 cannot and will not be solely based on State test scores!

The above criteria apply to the following groups of students in the following ways:

a) English proficient general education students

Grades K-2: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria. Promotion decision is made by the Head of School.

Grades 3-5: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria and State Test Scores. Promotion decision is made by the Head of School.

b) English Language Learners (ELLs)

Grades K-2: Consideration of language development; limited English proficiency alone is not the sole basis for retention; consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria. Promotion decision is made by the Head of School

Grades 3-5: Consideration of number of years enrolled in the United States School System; consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria, NYSESLAT and State Test Scores. Promotion decision is made by Head of School

c) Students with Disabilities receiving special education services

Grades K-2: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria, mastery of IEP goals. Promotion decision is made by Head of School

Grades 3-5: Consideration of Grade Level progress, mastery of IEP goals, IEP promotional criteria, State test scores. Promotional decision is made by Head of School

Announcement of Promotion-in-Doubt/Retention

Families are notified orally and in writing of possible retention through Family/Faculty Conferences and Developmental Profiles. The first indication of concern will be noted in the **Promotion in Doubt** section of the Winter Developmental Profile issued in March of each school year. Families will be required to meet with the teachers and administrators to set goals for the student in this situation. If the student does not demonstrate improvement by June of the school year, they are identified for **Retention** for the following school year. Retention meetings are scheduled for the families to meet with the BCS Administration in June.

Referral to Summer School

Students in Grades 3-5, who do not meet the promotional criteria by June are referred to summer school. The Head of School will review a promotional portfolio for each student in August and make a final determination based on whether the student is meeting the Common Core Learning Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Appealing the decision for Retention

A family that disagrees with a June promotion decision is required to submit a written appeal to the Head of School by August prior to the beginning of the new school year. The Head of School will consider all relevant criteria for promotion and make a final decision for the new school year. The Head of School can involve members of the BCS Board of Trustees to review the appeal.

Academic Promotion Benchmarks

The list below includes all BCS school-wide assessments used in determining promotion. The chart outlines the expected benchmarks for each assessment, at each grade level.

| Assessment Title | Testing Period | Grade Level | Goal |
|--|----------------|--------------|---|
| Fountas and Pinnell Assessment System | 3x per year | K-5 | All K-5 students who were enrolled at BCS will perform as follows on the end of year administration of the Fountas and Pinnell Assessment System: |
| | | K | Reading: Level D/E , Accuracy Rate: 95-100%,Comprehension: Satisfactory |
| | | 1 | Reading: Level J/K Accuracy Rate: 95-100%,Comprehension: Satisfactory |
| | | 2 | Reading: Level M/N , Accuracy Rate: 98-100%,Comprehension: Satisfactory, Fluency Rate: 2/3 |
| | | 3 | Reading: Level P/Q , Accuracy Rate: 98-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory, Reading Rate: 2/3 |
| | | 4 | Reading: Level S/T , Accuracy Rate: 98-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory, Reading Rate: 2/3 |
| | | 5 | Reading: Level V/W , Accuracy Rate: 98-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory, Reading Rate: 2/3 |
| ELA & Math Interim Assessments | 3x per year | K-5 | All K-5 students who were enrolled at BCS will perform as follows on the end of year administration of the ELA & Math Interim Assessments: |
| | | K-5 | 85% overall mastery on the ELA and Math interim assessment |
| Early Childhood Mathematics Assessment (ECMA) | 3x per year | K-2 everyone | All K-5 students who were enrolled at BCS will perform as follows on the end of year administration of the ECMA: |
| | | K | Counting: Level B/C , Numeration: Level B , Addition/Subtraction: Level B , Multiplication/Division: Level B |
| | | 1 | Counting: Level D , Numeration: Level C , Addition/Subtraction: Level C/D , Multiplication/Division: Level C |
| | | 2 | Counting: Level E/F , Numeration: Level D/E , Addition/Subtraction: Level E/F , Multiplication/Division: Level D/E |
| Primary Assessment of Literacy Skills (PALS) | 3x per year | K-2 | All K-2 students who were enrolled at BCS will perform as follows on the end of year administration of the Primary Assessment of Literacy Skills |
| | | K | Must reach mastery benchmarks for each subtest |
| | | 1 | Must reach mastery benchmarks for each subtest |
| | | 2 | Must reach mastery benchmarks for each subtest |

Attendance Promotion Criteria

The chart below outlines the attendance rate for every BCS student for grade level for promotion.

| Grade Level | Attendance Expectation for Entire School Year |
|--------------|--|
| Kindergarten | 90% Attendance Students who are absent 20 times within a school year are considered to be Promotion In Doubt and will face Retention if absence results in academic deficiencies such that the student does not meet the grade level benchmarks for promotion. |
| First Grade | |
| Second Grade | |
| Third Grade | |
| Fourth Grade | |
| Fifth Grade | |

Student Support

Academic Support

The Response to Intervention (RTI) Team is a group of teachers, specialists and administrators who meet regularly to discuss students who require interventions, academically and/or behaviorally. If the general education teacher(s) determine through formal and informal assessments, observations, and interactions that a student may need to be referred to the Response to Intervention (RTI) Team for additional support, they will contact the parent regarding their concerns. RTI Team meetings take place every three weeks to discuss individual students. At the end of the discussion, an individual intervention plan is outlined, that provides specific time-lines, assessments, personnel responsible for the interventions and a follow-up date for discussion. Every six weeks, the RTI Team meets to check in on planned interventions and to discuss follow-up plans. The interventions outlined by the RTI Team are used to designate the student's level on the school's Response to Intervention Plan.

Response to Intervention Plan

| | |
|--------|--|
| Tier 1 | Effective whole-class instruction that includes differentiation to meet the varied needs of learners (e.g. in-class strategy groups, |
| Tier 2 | Small group instruction (3-5 students) that focuses on areas of need, 2-3x per week |
| Tier 3 | Small group or individual instruction (1-3 students) that focuses on areas of need, 3-5x per week |

Level 1: All students participate in effective instruction in the general education classroom. Regular classroom differentiation strategies and interventions are used, such as small group, one-on-one conferencing, guided reading/writing, and the use of leveled texts. The teachers determine differentiation strategies and interventions through the use of ongoing assessments.

Level 2: At Level 2, a student receives remedial and/or enrichment supports which are individualized (not provided to all students). The teacher, with support from the RTI Team, may set up a strategy group or individual work on a consistent schedule (some additional sessions as compared to Level 1), develop intervention plans with a timeline & regular progress monitoring, collect and review data at specific time-lines and share with specialist, outline differentiation tasks for the student in lesson plans or schedules. The student's family is made aware of the child's interventions.

Level 3: At Level 3, specialists will provide individual or small group support for the student. The specific/targeted intervention would include a modification of environment (push in or pull out), group

size (no more than 3), or time frame of instruction (3x-5x per week, 20-30 minutes per session). The intervention plan would be specific for each student. Students in this category would be considered “promotion in doubt” based on grade level benchmarks. Students would participate in intervention services in six-week cycles (based on individualized plan). If a student does not show adequate growth during this cycle, he/she may be referred for Special Education Services. The student’s family will be made aware of the child’s interventions and will be informed of the next step to seek a referral for Special Education Services. The Family is expected work with BCS to support the process.

The Committee on Special Education (CSE) evaluation will include diagnoses in the student’s home language, interviews and involvement of the student’s family; educational assessments of the student’s performance on a range of tasks and in a variety of settings. After the evaluation, the CSE meets to determine eligibility for special education services and, if eligible, to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). An IEP documents the CSE findings and articulates a program of mandated services to be administered to the student. The special education teacher will ensure that a central file with all special education evaluation material and IEP is maintained and that this file is kept confidential, in accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) guidelines. The special education teacher will be responsible for ensuring that all providers, responsible for the implementation of the student’s IEP, will have access to a copy of the IEP and will be informed of their specific responsibilities in implementing the IEP.

Special Education Program

The following articulates the philosophy and procedures regarding special education at The Brooklyn Charter School:

Philosophy

All students at BCS deserve and receive, without discrimination of disability, the right to the highest quality education. An inclusive model is therefore used at The Brooklyn Charter School to serve students who have a disability or who are deemed to have a disability, and students who possess a valid Individualized Education Program (IEP), approved by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the New York City Department of Education. Special Education teachers, General Education teachers, specialists, students and their families, all work together to achieve the goals set forth in each student’s IEP. BCS faculty focuses on teaching strategies that will help students find academic success in the general education classroom.

Procedure

At BCS students are referred for Special Education services based on the findings of the RTI team. (Please see Student Support Section – RTI- Level 3 in the section above)

As per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) regulations, all students with disabilities will be fully integrated into school programs, with the necessary materials, mandated services, and equipment to support their learning. Our certified Special Education Teachers will ensure that students receive the appropriate and mandated services. The school will collect and maintain the following information on disabled students as required by IDEA 2004:

- (a) The count of all school-age students with disabilities provided special education services by age, grade, category or disability and the number of students with disabilities who are Limited English Proficient.
- (b) The number of students provided with test modifications and types and the

- number of students exempted from state assessments.
- (c) The settings in which students with disabilities receive their services, the portion of the school day they receive services with non-disabled peers, including time out of the general education classroom.
 - (d) The number of students with disabilities suspended “in-school” and out of school, organized by disability, and length of suspensions.
 - (e) The basis of exiting students with disabilities from the school (i.e. attainment of diploma and type, declassified, and moved, etc.)

The Brooklyn Charter School will meet all the requirements mandated within the students’ Individualized Education Program (IEP). The special education program will be coordinated by the Special Education Coordinator (*a certified special education teacher*) who will ensure that students receive the appropriate, mandated services. The Special Education Coordinator also helps classroom teachers to set appropriate goals for students who are extremely challenged in the classroom, identifies strategies to best meet the needs of students with disabilities in the general education classroom, works with students either individually or in small groups, and serves as a special education consultant to the BCS school community.

BCS provides several special education programs, including, but not limited to:

- **Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS):** In this push-in or pull-out program, a certified Special Education Teacher works with students, either in small groups or individually, to provide explicit instruction in order to help students reach their individualized IEP goals.
- **Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT):** BCS has adopted an inclusion model for students with disabilities wherein such students are educated within a general education setting and are taught by a certified General Education teacher and a certified Special Education teacher. ICT provides students with disabilities the opportunity to be educated alongside their general education peers with the full support of the Special Education Teacher to assist in adapting and modifying instruction. This model ensures that all students master the specific skills and concepts of the general education curriculum as well as ensures that their special education needs are being met, including alternate curriculum goals
- **Related Services:** The Brooklyn Charter School provides the following related services to students whose IEPs mandate their provision: counseling, speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. In the case of students whose IEPs require the provision of related services not available at the school, the school will contract with individual qualified providers or contact the local CSE to arrange for services to be provided by the Department of Education.

Annual Reviews

The Special Education Coordinator and at least one of the student’s primary general education teachers, SETSS or ICT Teachers will meet with the CSE during triennial reviews to determine appropriate interventions, supplementary aids and services, program modifications, and necessary additional supports to enable the student to participate to the fullest extent possible in the general education classroom.

Annual reviews occur at the school level with families, the classroom teacher(s), the special education

coordinator, and any relevant service providers. BCS will attempt to arrange for IEP annual reviews to be conducted by the CSE at the school during the most convenient time for the family and those involved with the student's case. If the family is unable to attend, the school will provide an opportunity for family participation via telephone conference. The school will also make provisions for faculty to attend mediation or impartial due-process hearings in the event that parents of students with disabilities appeal to these procedural safeguards.

The school will work with the CSE to ensure the completion of annual and triennial reviews of special education students. Families will be informed of the student's progress toward annual goals three times a year, which is the same frequency as progress is reported to all students and families in the school. A copy of each student's annual goals from his or her IEP, complete with updated progress notes, will be attached to his or her developmental profile. The progress notes on the annual goals will serve to document the following:

1. The method by which the student's progress toward achieving the annual goal is measured
2. The student's progress during the relevant period
3. The extent to which it is anticipated the student will achieve the annual goal prior to the next annual review
4. Where needed, the reasons why it is anticipated that the student will not meet the goal
5. Help to define the promotional criteria (see Promotion Policy)

School Counseling Program

The Brooklyn Charter School Counseling Program will serve various functions including; direct service to students and families in need, school-wide programs for areas of concern (conflict resolution, bullying,), and school climate initiatives (making the BCS learning environment more positive).

Referral Procedure

In order for a student to begin sessions with the school counselor, a referral must be made by a BCS administrator, an Response to Intervention Team member, or family member. Students incurring several discipline reports during a school year will be expected to participate in counseling sessions to assist the child in making better choices. Any student referred to participate in counseling sessions, individually, or in a group, must have verbal and written permission from a legal guardian.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality in counseling means that what the child discusses with the counselor is private and will not be shared with a third party without permission. A counselor is required by law to break confidentiality when a child indicates intention to do harm to self or someone else, or if they indicate they are in danger (through abuse or neglect).

Parents/guardians have the right to know the general course of the child's progress and any ongoing issues and successes. The counselor may discuss with the parents or guardians the general nature of the conversations that occur in counseling, as well as, what can be done to help the situation; however, the counselor cannot reveal what the child says specifically.

In a court of law, the right to confidentiality is legally protected. The only time this is broken is if the client waives their right to confidentiality, or if the records are subpoenaed.

English Language Learners

BCS welcomes English Language Learners (ELL). The new BCS website has translation options and provides enrollment information (newspaper postings, brochures and applications) in Spanish. BCS follows all mandates for ELL instruction as defined by the NYC Department of Education. The Brooklyn Charter School ELL process follows Part 154 of the Regulations of the New York State Commissioner of Education (CR Part 154), the ASPIRA Consent Decree, in addition to the No Child Left Behind Act. The BCS ELL program is an immersion program. Students are placed in an English speaking classroom with teachers who are fluent in their language or with teachers who had ESL training.. Additionally, ELL students receive pull out supports by an ELL certified teacher. The process BCS takes to identify and support ELL students is outlined below:

- Provide the Home Language Identification Survey to all families
- Administer the NYSITELL (New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners) to students identified through the Home Language Identification Survey as speaking a language other than English at home. Based on outcomes of the NYSITELL assessment students are either mandated for 180 or 360 minutes of ELL instruction per week.
- Provide an Immersion program for ELL students with pull out supports by an ELL/TESOL certified teacher
- Administer the NYSESLAT New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test in the Spring to determine continued eligibility in ELL services and inform parent of the child's status
- Provide ELL students with test accommodations for up to two years after passing the NYSESLAT

Confidentiality

Student Records

Student records are considered confidential and are located in a locked file cabinet. Only those staff members who have contact with the students and who are on a "need-to know" basis will review records. Each person that reviews the records must sign an Access Sheet located in each file. The student's official guardian may have access to their child's records and may request copies of any information in the file. Files may not be removed from the building except through the mail system when they are officially requested from another school. All special education records are kept in confidential student files.

Conversations

Conversations between teachers, administration and parents about educational concerns and records are confidential. Information is not shared with staff members or school community members not involved in the initial conversation.

Concerns

Should a parent, staff member, board member, or visitor notice a breach of confidentiality, it is the responsibility of that person to bring the concern to the Head of School. The Head of School will address the situation on a case-by-case basis. Disciplinary actions may be taken.

Discipline/Reward Policy Overview

The Brooklyn Charter School Cornerstones

Every BCS student is expected to follow and live by four “Cornerstones” of success. The “Cornerstones” are designed to help each student build self-respect and respect for others, and develop into responsible leaders and citizens. The BCS Cornerstones are:

- We care about each other;
- We listen to each other;
- We help each other; and
- We are responsible for what we say and do

The Brooklyn Charter School Mission Principles (CCLLAS)

BCS students will learn the school mission through key principles. The mission principles will be taught during Harambee and school assemblies. The principles are also linked to The Comer Process Developmental Pathways. These principles are:

- **Creativity**—demonstrating talents, teaching and learning from others, participating in or initiating new opportunities

Cognitive Pathway (academic learning, class performance, flexibility of thought, acquisition-application-and generalization of knowledge-ability to make meaning of the environment)

- **Citizenship**—Cornerstones (caring, helping, taking responsibility, listening), respect for others, family partnerships, community of learners (learning about differences), safety, nurturing environment (serving others, outside community), supporting and sharing ideas, building positive relationships, communicating effectively and positively

Ethical Pathway (respect for rights and integrity of self and others, making choices based on self-interest and the collective good, conduct that promotes fairness and justice, commitment to the well-being of the community)

Social (empathy, appropriate conduct, social competence in diverse settings, ability to interact well with people of all backgrounds, friendships, relationships)

- **Leadership**—responsibility, respect for self and others, leading by example (role-models), making good decisions (problem-solving, learning from mistakes), confidence, self-respect, creating legacies

Language Pathway (competency in expressive and receptive language, situational appropriate language, a bridge for relationship building, a tool for self-reflection and learning)

Ethical Pathway (respect for rights and integrity of self and others, making choices based on self-interest and the collective good, conduct that promotes fairness and justice, commitment to the well-being of the community)

- **Life-Long Learning**—using learning habits, dedicating effort towards a goal, acting productively, thinking critically, problem solving, preparing, growing independently/individually, learning from mistakes, seeking new paths of learning,

Cognitive Pathway (academic learning, class performance, flexibility of thought, acquisition-application-and generalization of knowledge-ability to make meaning of the environment)

- **Awareness of Self**—growing psychologically, emotionally, cognitively, ethically, physically and socially, discovering motivations, pursuing happiness, living healthy lives & self-actualization, well-being, preparing to enter new situations or experiences

Psychological Pathway (self-worth, self-awareness, emotional management, school adjustment, academic self-concept)

Physical Pathway (physical health, nutrition, energy, physical rest, alertness)

Language Pathway (competency in expressive and receptive language, situational appropriate language, a bridge for relationship building, a tool for self-reflection and learning)

Ethical Pathway (respect for rights and integrity of self and others, making choices based on self-

interest and the collective good, conduct that promotes fairness and justice, commitment to the well-being of the community)

Social (empathy, appropriate conduct, social competence in diverse settings, ability to interact well with people of all backgrounds, friendships, relationships)

- **Success**—achieving greatness, choosing a path, making beneficial choices, completing projects, & identifying with key individuals (role models past or present), being informed, performing appropriately academically and developmentally

Psychological Pathway (self-worth, self-awareness, emotional management, school adjustment, academic self-concept)

WhyTry Resilience Education

The WhyTry Resilience Education Program uses 10 visual metaphors that teach social, emotional and leadership principles. Based on a highly adaptable, multi-sensory approach, WhyTry is used in our classrooms to increase student success rates, reduce failures, decrease rule-breaking behaviors, improve self-concept and emotional health, and thereby improve academic success. Teachers use WhyTry to improve classroom management, build positive relationships and create relevance in their classrooms.

BCS Discipline Policy

The Discipline Policy of the Brooklyn Charter School is intended to intervene, respond and correct unwanted behaviors in an effort to maintain a safe school, to ensure the continuation of the teaching and learning process, and to allow children to understand the nature of their choices and subsequent consequences.

To that end, the Discipline Policy provides the faculty, students, and families with the stages of intervention and due process. All infractions of the discipline policy warrant the completion of a Discipline Report Form/Anecdotal Report (*see addendum*) or Incident Report.

This Policy has been revised to reflect compliance with existing:

Federal Law:

- Federal Case Law
- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)
- Gun-Free Schools Act

State Law:

- New York State Charter Schools Act

Charter Contract:

- Charter School Agreement

The Head of School or designee will oversee the following process: Please note that the sequence of Sections I, II, III denote a **Due Process for All Students** such that:

- a) The student is given oral or written notice of the charges against him/her
- b) If the charges are denied by the student, an explanation of the evidence is provided by the BCS Administration
- c) The student is given the opportunity to present their version

I. ***Interventions***

Interventions will be developed for any student who repeatedly does not follow in-class or school-wide discipline systems. This effort is intended to help the student understand the school's expectation for acceptable behavior. Examples of interventions are:

- Teacher created consequence for infraction of classroom rules and expectations
- School-wide consequences for infractions of school-wide discipline policy or repeated classroom infractions
- Behavioral Anecdote/Discipline reports sent to parent and placed in student's school file
- Response to Intervention Team (RTI) along with teacher, create behavior contracts, management plans, behavior chart, communication notebook/slips, parent/teacher journals, meeting with parents before school, parent positive calls, phone log, and/or tangible signals.
- Teacher and Head of School meet with family and document possible interventions
- Student and family meet with school counselor
- Family meets with the Head of School and RTI Team to set goals and make recommendations for other interventions, like change of classroom, if possible.
- Family expectations/interventions at home are outlined

II. ***Supportive Action***

The Head of School may determine that the student is in need of outside support in order to be an effective member of the school environment and may request outside supports such as the following:

- Recommendations for off-site counsel with support referrals
- Possible referral to the Committee on Special Education

III. a. ***Responsive Action***

In the event that a student does not respond to interventions or supportive actions, the Head of School may move toward more responsive actions, as described on the Levels of Severity and Consequences Chart (below). Actions taken by the Head of School can include:

- Suspension
- Request for Transfer

III. b. ***Responsive Action***

In the event that a student with a disability or deemed to have a disability does not respond to intervention or supportive actions and unwanted behaviors are repeated, the Head of School may move toward more responsive actions in accordance with applicable laws under the IDEA Act. Follow levels of Severity and Consequence Chart below for a Student with Disabilities

While the Brooklyn Charter School will act in the best interest of all its students and families, the school also recognizes its limitations to accommodate all children and some families and their children may be best served at other educational sites.

Discipline Policy Levels of Severity and Consequences Chart

| Level of Severity for Behavior | Consequences including, but limited to: |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students • Teacher/Child conference • Time-out in the classroom • Time-out of the classroom • Teacher notifies Family/phone call home |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students/Copy to Family & File • Administrator/student conference • Administrator notifies family/phone call home • Loss of school privileges (loss of a trip, loss of recess, non performance in a show) • Community service (assist in another classroom, cafeteria, office, etc.) • Intervention/mediation |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students/Copy to Family & File • Family/Teacher/Administrator Conference • Loss of school privileges (loss of a trip, loss of recess, non performance in a show) • Community service (assist in another classroom, cafeteria, office, etc.,) • Parent picks up child (student poses threat to self or others, excessive tantrum) • In-school suspension with instruction • Intervention/mediation |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students/Head of School/Copy to Family & File • Family/Administrator/ RTI conference • Loss of school privileges (Loss of a trip, loss of recess, non performance in a show) • Community service (assist in another classroom, cafeteria, office, etc.,) • Parent in Classroom • 1-3 day out-of-school suspension-packet of work home and student is allowed two hours of instruction each day of suspension |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention/mediation |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students/Head of School/copy to Family & File • Family/Administrator conference • Loss of school privileges (Loss of trip, Loss of recess, non performance in a show) • Community service (assist in another classroom, cafeteria, office, etc.,) • 3-10 day out-of-school suspension – packet of work home and student is allowed two hours of instruction each day of suspension • Hearing with Board of Trustees • Request for Transfer |

Discipline Policy Levels of Severity and Consequences Chart for a Student with Disabilities

| Level of Severity for Behavior | Consequences including, but limited to: |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students • Teacher/Child conference • Time-out in the classroom • Time-out of the classroom • Teacher notifies Family/phone call home |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students/Copy to Family & File • Administrator/student conference • Administrator notifies family/phone call home • Loss of school privileges (loss of a trip, loss of recess, non performance in a show) • Community service (assist in another classroom, cafeteria, office, etc.,) • Intervention/mediation |

| | |
|---|--|
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students/ Head of School/Copy to Family & File • Family/Administrator/RTI Conference • Loss of school privileges (loss of a trip, loss of recess, non performance in a show) • Community service (assist in another classroom, cafeteria, office, etc.,) • Parent picks up child (student poses threat to self or others, excessive tantrum) • In-school suspension with instruction • Intervention/mediation |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Head of School • Family/Administrator/RTI Team conference • Loss of school privileges (Loss of a trip, loss of recess, non performance in a show) • Community service (assist in another classroom, cafeteria, office, etc.,) • Parent in Classroom • 1-3 day out-of-school suspension – packet of work home and student is allowed two hours of instruction each day of suspension • Intervention/mediation <p>Procedural Guidelines for Students with Disabilities or deemed to have a Disability:</p> <p>A. If removal is (a) 10 or fewer consecutive school days and (b) 10 or fewer cumulative school days in a school year, BCS can remove the student and provide services similar to students without disabilities.</p> <p>B. If cumulative suspension exceeds 10 days in a school year but are not more than 10 consecutive school days, determine if a pattern of removal exists</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If no pattern exists, BCS may remove the student and provide special education services for Progress toward IEP goals ad participation in general education curriculum 2. If a pattern does exist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change of placement will occur and the CSE determines |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>the special education services for progress toward IEP goals and participation in general education curriculum. BCS will determine the alternative site that will implement service recommended by CSE</p> <p>OR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change of placement will occur and BCS will send notice of discipline and procedural safeguards notice (“ PSN”) to parents and notify the CSE (DOE). The CSE will send Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) notice and PSN to the parents. MDR will occur within 10 days of the removal or the decision to change placement • MDR team DOE, Parents , relevant IEP team Members from DOE & BCS will determine if the conduct was a manifestation of the student’s disability. <p>a. If determined it is NOT a manifestation of disability, BCS may remove the student and provide services recommended by the CSE</p> <p>b. If determined it IS a manifestation of disability....then....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE will conduct a Functional Behavior assessment and develop/modify the Behavioral Intervention Plan which BCS will implement <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE & BCS will remedy deficiencies in IEP and implementation of IEP, respectively. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will return to BCS unless: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The misconduct involved weapons, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or |
|--|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>serious bodily injury. BCS can remove the student for up to 45 days to an alternative site and BCS will implement services recommended by CSE</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2. The parent and CSE agree to a change of placement</p> <p>C. If removal is more than 10 consecutive school days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change of placement will occur and BCS will send notice of discipline and procedural safeguards notice (“PSN”) to parents and notify the CSE (DOE). The CSE will send MDR notice and PSN to parents. MDR will occur within 10 school days of removal or the decision to change placement • MDR team, DOE, Parents, relevant IEP team members from DOE and BCS will determine if the conduct was a manifestation of the student’s disability <p>a. If determined it is NOT a manifestation of disability, BCS may remove the student and provide services recommended by CSE</p> <p>b. If determined it is a manifestation of disability, CSE will conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment and develop/modify the Behavioral Intervention Plan which BCS will implement</p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE & BCS will remedy deficiencies in IEP and implementation of IEP, respectively <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will return to BCS unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The misconduct involved |
|--|--|

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>weapons, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or serious bodily injury. Then BCS can remove the student for up to 45 days in an alternative site and BCS will implement services recommended by the CSE</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2. The parent and CSE agree to a change of placement</p> |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline form to Dean of Students/ Head of School/Copy to Family and to File • Family/Principal conference • Loss of school privileges (loss of a trip, loss of recess, non performance in a show etc.,) • Community service (assist in another classroom, cafeteria, office, etc.,) • 3-10 day out-of-school suspension – packet of work home and student is allowed two hours of instruction each day of suspension • Hearing with Board of Trustees • Request for Transfer • Refer to Section 4 above: Procedural Guidelines for Students with Disabilities or Students Deemed to have a Disability. |

Discipline Policy Examples of Disruptive Behavior

| Behaviors/Infractions | Level of Severity <i>*Repeat behaviors may move students' acts to higher levels of severity.</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throwing an object • Defiance (intentionally not following or ignoring directions given by a staff member) • Tantrum • Leaving the classroom without permission | 1-2 |

| | |
|--|------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaving the classroom and hiding ▪ Name calling (student) teasing ▪ Using inappropriate or offensive comments, engaging in inappropriate physical contact | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hitting/kicking a child ▪ Fist fighting ▪ Spitting on a child or Teacher ▪ Engaging in behavior which creates a substantial risk of, or results in injury ▪ Ganging up on a child ▪ Leaving the school compound without permission ▪ Leaving the class at the park or on a field trip ▪ Using profane or obscene language or gestures ▪ Biting a child ▪ Choking ▪ Pushing a child ▪ Threatening and/or engaging in intimidation, coercion, or extortion ▪ Using any object to intentionally inflict injury upon a child ▪ Vandalizing school property or another's belongings ▪ Theft | 3-5 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using any weapon to attempt to inflict injury or harm to school personnel, students or others ▪ Possessing any weapon, other than firearms ▪ Possessing any weapon or using firearm ▪ Using any weapon, other than a firearm to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others ▪ Possession of or distribution of Illegal Drugs and /controlled substances ▪ Engaging in sexual harassment (<i>e.g., sexually suggestive comments, innuendoes, or propositions, inappropriate physical contact of a sexual nature such as touching, patting, pinching, etc.</i>) | 5, Police report |

Confiscation of Inappropriate Materials or Objects

Any BCS staff member can and will appropriate materials or objects that are considered disruptive or dangerous. These materials and/or objects will be held in the office Of the Head of School until a parent retrieves the item. Items including, but not limited to cellular telephones, electronic equipment, beepers, clothing or materials containing vulgar messages will be confiscated.

In-Class Reward System

Each classroom institutes a reward system of discipline to ensure a positive learning community. In order to maintain this environment, teachers will identify the areas of need for their classes and help students to

meet expectations in those areas through a reward system. For example, a class may need assistance in transitioning from the carpet to the desks, quietly. Given this goal, the students, as a class, work to earn points/checks. Each time the class follows the rule and accomplishes the goal; points/checks are added to the chart. Once the class earns a predetermined number of points/checks, the class will be rewarded. The rewards will mostly be non-material such as extra recess, free time, or a short celebration. When the original goals are met, the goals will be changed or accommodated to reach new levels of student achievement.

Some students may need the assistance of an individual intervention plan to help them achieve their personal goals in the classroom. The teacher may create a separate reward system with certain students. These students may not participate in rewards with the whole class, but will have individual rewards determined by the student and the teacher.

School-Wide Reward System

The Brooklyn Charter School has developed a program to help students strive for excellence in citizenry by setting an example for the entire student body school in demonstrating the BCS Cornerstones consistently. The following criteria must be met in order for a student to receive distinction and honor:

- Follows The Brooklyn Charter School Cornerstones.
- Assists classmates in earning rewards for positive behavior (does not receive any discipline reports)
- Completes homework and class work daily
- Wears BCS uniform daily
- Attends school daily, on-time
- Complies with all safety protocols on the Bus

Students who meet the criteria will be eligible for Awards and will earn special privileges and recognition.

Student Appearance & Dress Guidelines

The student appearance and dress code is intended to ensure that students develop a personal environment that is focused on academic achievement and success. Ancillary goals are to: create a more cohesive student body through school pride and unity; reduce materialistic competition; and guarantee that students are dressed appropriately for attending school.

Uniforms

Every student that enters BCS must wear the prescribed uniform each day that school is in session. The uniform can be purchased at Cookie's Uniform Store or IDEAL (plaid 2A for The Brooklyn Charter School). Failure to wear the proper uniform or meet the dress and grooming standards will be met with the following consequences; (1) a reminder notice will be sent home outlining proper uniform etiquette, (2) a telephone call requesting a change of clothing. In extenuating circumstances, students may be sent home for a change of clothing or be given a uniform to wear for the day.

GIRL'S uniform consists of:

Plaid jumper or skirt

Grey pants

White button down shirt

Plaid criss-cross tie

Red cardigan sweater or vest

BOY'S *uniform consists of:*

Grey pants

White button down shirt

Plaid tie

Red cardigan sweater or vest

DANCE *uniform consists of:*

Grey t-shirt with BCS logo

Grey sweatshirt with BCS logo

Grey sweatpants with BCS logo

Sneakers

Dress and Grooming Standards

Uniforms must fit properly (not baggy or over-sized).

Tops must be tucked into the bottoms.

Belts are required for those wearing pants.

Undergarments should not be visible at any time.

Hats and/or other inappropriate accessories shall not be worn in school, unless required for medical or religious reasons

Hats and/or other accessories shall not display lewd, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or symbols (

Closed toed shoes are required at all times for all students.

Attendance Policy

It is the goal of The Brooklyn Charter School (BCS) that every student attends school every day. For the 2014-2015 school year, every BCS student must be enrolled and in attendance beginning on September 4, 2014. The school building opens at 8:00 a.m. to receive students. Under School Attendance Laws of New York State, parents/guardians are responsible for their child's regular attendance and punctuality. As a reminder, BCS academic year spans 10 months from September 2014 - June 2015 and the school day is 8:00 a.m.-3:50 p.m. (Monday - Thursday) and 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. on Fridays, unless specified otherwise.

Absence

If a student is or will be absent, the parent/guardian is expected to phone the school no later than 8:30 a.m. on the first day and indicate the anticipated duration of absence.

Furthermore, a written excuse must accompany the child when returning to school. The written excuse must include the reason for the absence and the date(s) of the absences(s). The note must be signed by the parent/guardian. **A student is allowed to miss 20 days of school before being retained in his/her grade.** BCS is required by law to notify the Administration for Children Services if there is reason to believe that a parent is neglecting their child's education through excessive non-attendance of school.

Excused Absences

An excused absence or tardiness is one for which work can be made up, such as:

- Death or severe illness in the student's immediate family;

- Illness of the student after a total of three (3) cumulative full-day absences due to illness; students are required to present a written statement from a medical professional (doctor, dentist, psychologist, etc.) in order to be excused.
 - Religious holidays and practices approved in advance by the Head of School;
 - Medical and dental appointments
 - Family emergencies requiring immediate attention, as approved by the Head of School;
 - Court appearances requiring the student's attendance;
- All other absences will be considered unexcused and will carry the appropriate consequences.

Tardiness

For students to achieve, they must be in school at the beginning of the instructional day and must arrive on time. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to ensure their children are at school on time and ready to learn.

A student is considered tardy if he or she arrives after the designated start time of 8:30 a.m. Students must be checked in to school by parent/guardian or authorized adult through the main office (Room 327). Late arrivals will be counted as an absence or tardy according to the arrival time. **Three unexcused days of lateness in one-month will equal one absence.** The process for determining whether tardiness to school is excused is identical to that for excused or unexcused absences.

If a student arrives after 8:30 a.m., he or she and the parent/guardian must secure a late pass from the main office to enter the classroom. Teachers will not accept students who do not have the appropriate pass after 8:30 a.m.

Early Dismissal

In case of early dismissal, a note (giving time of dismissal, reason, naming person to pick up student, and signature) should be sent with a child prior to the start of classes. Parents should sign in at the security desk and then go to the main office (Room 327) to have the child dismissed from the class. Family members should not go to the classroom, as it interferes with instructional time. Early dismissal is discouraged because the student will miss important information.

Late Pick-Up

In the event that your child is picked up late, BCS reserves the right to charge a fee. On a daily basis, students are dismissed at 3:50 P.M. Monday-Thursday and 3:00 P.M. on Friday. Any students remaining at BCS (unless attending after-school programs) after 4:20 P.M. will accumulate a fee, providing families with a 20-minute grace period. Families will be charged \$1.00 each minute after 4:20 P.M. The fee will be collected on the same day as the late pick-up. Families will receive a receipt for payments.

After-School Late Pick-Up

Most after-school programs end at 5:00 P.M. Monday-Thursday. Families will be provided with a 15-minute grace period for pick-up. In the event that the family is late, a charge of \$1.00 per minute will be incurred. The family will be charged on the day of late pick-up and a receipt will be provided.

Transportation To & From School

The Brooklyn Charter School (BCS) Bus/Transportation Policy is intended to ensure proper arrival and dismissal procedures, as well as, ensure the safety and well being of children as they ride the school buses to and from school each day. The cooperation of all faculty, families, and providers is needed and appreciated!

Yellow Bus Provider

School buses are provided by the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) of the Department of Education through Allied Bus Corporation (718) 485-8002. The bus routes are generated at OPT and forwarded to BCS. BCS does not manage the operators or the time of pick up and drop off. This is the responsibility of the dispatcher at Allied Bus Corp. Complaints regarding drop off and pick up should be directed to the dispatcher at Allied Bus Corp.

Arrival of Bus Students

Children are picked up at their designated stops and brought to BCS via bus. Children are not to disembark or enter the school before 8:00 a.m. each day that school is in session. Bus operators must remain with the students until the building is opened at 8:00 a.m.

Bus Policy

Expectations of Bus Students

BCS recognizes that the bus is solely a means of transportation for the students. Students are required to board the bus, sit in their seat, with seat belts on, and ride the bus to their destination to and from school in a safe and orderly manner. Any deviation from this expectation is a choice that the student makes and the student will be held responsible and accountable for their actions.

Requirements for Riding the Bus

- ✓ When a student boards the bus, he/she is to immediately sit in his/her assigned seat and fasten the seat belt securely around their waist.
- ✓ BCS students are to remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion and until the bus driver stops and indicates that the child should get off of the bus
- ✓ BCS students are expected to use a low speaking voice while on the bus. Screaming and yelling at each another or to people on the street, or at the bus driver is unacceptable.
- ✓ All school rules apply while BCS students are on the bus and all steps of the Discipline Policy are enforced.
- ✓ Fighting/violence of any kind, obscene language is unacceptable.
- ✓ Disrespect and disregard for safety and the bus driver is unacceptable.
- ✓ Should any family member, faculty, student or community member witnesses unwanted behaviors, please call or write to inform the Head of School immediately.
- ✓ BCS students are expected to be polite, courteous, and non-confrontational.
- ✓ Family members are not allowed to ride or allowed inside the bus.
- ✓ Complaints about bus drivers or bus service must be filed with Allied Bus Corporation at 718 485-8002.

Consequences

- ✓ Families will be notified of all infractions and consequences in writing or by telephone.
- ✓ First time incidents result in a warning, loss of recess, community service and parent notification.
- ✓ Second time incidents result in a suspension of riding the bus for up to 20 days.

- ✓ Third time incidents result in suspension of riding the bus for the entire semester.
- ✓ Fighting/violence of any kind will result in immediate suspension from the bus. The length of time to be determined by the Head of School.

Please note that while a child is on suspension from riding the bus, families are responsible for getting the child to and from school in accordance with the attendance policy. A student metro-card will be provided to students with extended or permanent bus suspensions.

Dismissal of Bus Students

BCS will dismiss at 3:50 p.m. Monday – Thursday and 3:00 p.m. on Fridays unless specified otherwise. In the case of an Emergency Dismissal, all families will be contacted by telephone.

- ✓ At 3:40 P.M. Assistant Teachers and designated staff will gather all bus children and bring them to the cafeteria. Children will be sorted according to bus routes and escorted onto the appropriate bus.
- ✓ Children are not allowed outside the school gate unless accompanied by an adult or BCS staff member
- ✓ All families are expected and required to pick up all children on time at the bus stop.
- ✓ In the event that there is no family member at the bus stop, the child will be returned to the school via the bus and calls will be made from the school to the family.
- ✓ In the event that a child is left behind or is returned on the bus and all attempts to contact the family have failed, the child will be turned over to the proper authorities with a copy of their emergency contact information: 79th Precinct, 263 Tompkins Avenue, Brooklyn NY 11221; Tel: (718) 636-6611.
- ✓ Families who consistently neglect to pick up students at bus stops will be asked to make alternative arrangements.

Metro Cards

Students who do not receive yellow bus service through the Department of Education may be eligible for a student Metro-Card. Students may not receive both yellow bus service and a metro-card. If you believe your child is eligible for a metro-card, please inquire at the main office (Room 327). Lost or stolen metro-cards must be reported to the Manager of Student Services in the main office.

Private Transportation

Several students at BCS utilize private van services. If your child rides a private van service, it is imperative that a written letter is submitted to the main office, outlining the van transportation information including name of transporter and contact information. Private company transporters must arrive at 8:00 am. and dismiss at 3:50 pm Mon –Thurs and at 3:00pm on Fridays. Students (fourth and fifth grade only) who are requested by their families to walk home, or travel to another site other than home, must file a written request signed by the family/legal guardian to be placed in the child's school file.

Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival

All BCS students are expected to enter the building through the doors located on Vernon Avenue. **Students will not be permitted to enter the building prior to 8:00 a.m.** Neither BCS nor PS 23 will take responsibility for any student arriving before 8:00 a.m. **Students should not be left unattended at either the Vernon Street or Willoughby Avenue entrances.** Families arriving at 8:00 a.m. must drop students off in the foyer of the Vernon entrance. Students are then allowed to enter the cafeteria. Students who require breakfast may go directly to the food line and seat themselves at the table for their appropriate grade level. Students who are not eating will still enter through the cafeteria, but seat themselves in the gymnasium with BCS staff. Family members are not allowed to enter the cafeteria due to Department of Health regulations. Breakfast begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 8:20 a.m. for BCS

students. At 8:20 a.m. all BCS students are lined up by grade level and escorted from the cafeteria and gymnasium to the third floor classrooms by BCS staff members. Students arriving after 8:20 a.m. should go directly to their classrooms on the third floor. Students arriving at or after 8:30 a.m. must enter the building at the Willoughby Avenue entrance. A family member must escort the child to the Main Office in Room 327 for a late pass.

Dismissal

BCS dismisses its students at 3:50 p.m. Monday – Thursday and 3:00 p.m. on Friday. Families should enter the building through the Vernon Avenue entrance between 3:50 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. Students will only be sent down to the first floor if the person responsible for pick-up has a medical condition impairing their ability to walk to the third floor. If a family member must speak with the teacher, please wait until the majority of the students have been dismissed. Students (fourth & fifth grade only) who have written permission by their parent/guardian to leave the premises alone will be dismissed at this time. All students share a handshake with their teacher to signal that a family member has arrived to pick them up and to say good-bye.

Breakfast and Lunch Program

BCS participates in the National School Food Program, which provides students with two meals per day. Free and reduced-price meals are provided for those families who qualify. Applications will be available at the time of registration for new students and sent home to existing families. Families that qualify will be notified once the application form has been verified. All families are required to complete the appropriate form.

Families that do not qualify for the National School Food Program (NSFP) have the option to purchase a school lunch. Payment arrangements will be made at the beginning of the school year. Breakfast is free for all students during the 2014-2015 school year.

Family & Visitor Policy

The policy documents procedures and guidelines for all visitors to The Brooklyn Charter School (BCS).

Sign In

All visitors receive a warm welcome at BCS and all procedures should ensure a pleasant, comfortable, and informed visit. Visitors must sign in at the security desk located at the main entrance of the building show a picture ID, and receive a visitor's pass, which should be visibly displayed for the duration of the visit. After signing in at the main entrance, all visitors must check in at the BCS Main Office in Room 327. **Visitors are not allowed to go directly to the classroom for any reason.**

Visitation Schedule

BCS welcomes its visitors between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., Monday through Friday of each week, as long as school is in session. Exceptions are Mondays, after a holiday or vacation, when the school is closed to visitors. All visits to school should be scheduled in advance of the intended visit. Visits should take place with minimal disruption to the teaching and learning process, and visitors are asked to be respectful of children and adults in the building, as well as, mindful of the physical environment. Adult visitors are required to use adult bathrooms only.

BCS Families

Family visits are encouraged and welcomed at BCS. Families are expected to follow sign in procedures as stated above. Family visits are important as they support the relationship between home and school and help to provide a sense of comfort for the children and the school community. Additionally, family visits will be logged as school service hours as defined by the BCS School/Family Compact. Family visits, like all other visits, should have minimal disruption to the teaching and learning process. Families are therefore asked to schedule all visits with classroom teachers, in advance of the intended visit. Families must check-in at the main office (Room 327) before going to the classroom.

BCS School/Family Compact

BCS families are an essential part of a student's educational life at school. BCS asks that families participate in the school in a myriad of ways. As described in the BCS School/Family Compact (see addendum), families are asked to take responsibility for helping their children to:

- **Strive for Academic Excellence** –assisting with homework, making school a priority, communicating with teachers regularly
- **Demonstrating Active Learning Habits**—monitoring student play, encouraging active learning
- **Be a Good Citizen in the BCS Community**—teaching students to be responsible, assisting school with 20 hours of service, setting an example for student behavior
- **Come to School Ready to Learn**—ensuring students wear school uniform; ensuring students arrive to school on time and come to school every day

Maintenance of Public Order on School Property

In accordance with Chancellor's regulation A-410 Maintenance of Public Order on School Property, the Head of School has the overall responsibility and authority to regulate the admission of visitors and oversee their conduct while in the school or on school property. The Head of School also has the authority to grant or deny a visitor's request to enter the school. Such decisions should be reasonable and consistent with both the needs of the school, its safety and the right of the public to visit the school.

Visitors who violate established procedures regarding visits to the school, whose conduct and behavior in the school jeopardizes the safety of students, faculty, or staff, or who endanger school property or interfere with the programs or activities of the school are subject to immediate removal from school property by order of the Head of School. Such visitors are also subject to arrest and prosecution where the law has been violated. Safety procedures require that all visitors, including families enter and exit the building through stairway #7, unless specified otherwise

Sickness and Medication

BCS Policy regarding illness is designed to insure the health and safety of all our children, faculty and staff. Faculty members are responsible for observing signs of illness in each child each school day, however, it is the responsibility of the families to ensure that sick children are not sent to school. Sick children should remain at home and receive the proper medical attention. In cases of medical emergencies, the Head of School or designee will place a call to 911 and the family. A student can be removed to a medical facility in the company of a school staff member or parent when cleared for release by the Head of School.

Illness

Upon the recommendation of the Committees of Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics children cannot be permitted to leave home and attend school with any of the following:

- Fever or temperature over 100.5 degrees during the past 24 hours
- Vomiting during the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea during the past 24 hours
- Red/pink eye with discharge
- Sore throat
- Sneezing, cold and flu symptoms from--through one week
- Draining mucus
- Yellow eyes/jaundiced chin
- Severe coughing
- Blood in urine
- Difficult/rapid breathing/elevated asthmatic condition
- Unexplained rashes
- Bleeding or draining skin lesions
- Skin Infections--boils, ringworm, impetigo
- Any childhood/communicable disease; scarlet fever, measles, mumps, lice, scabies, chicken pox, whooping cough

Children who are not well enough to go outside for recess/playtime are not well enough to be in school. The office will notify families, and families are responsible for arranging to pick up the child after notification.

All sick children are removed from classrooms and brought to the main office where a pass is issued to see the school nurse. The school nurse is located in Room 118. The school nurse may recommend that a child be sent home or see a doctor in which case the family is notified immediately by the nurse or BCS. Children may return to school when:

- Vomiting and diarrhea have subsided for 24 hours
- There are no discharges of mucus, or discharges from eyes and rashes are no longer
- Symptoms have disappeared
- They can tolerate a full day's schedule
- A doctor's note permits their return

Medication

- All medication (prescription and non-prescription) to be administered at BCS must be accompanied by a current medication consent form (504 Form) signed by a pediatrician/doctor and parent.
- Only the School Nurse and the Head of School can administer medication. In the absence of the Head of School, faculty and staff are not allowed to administer any medication.
- All medication to be administered at BCS must be brought in its original container with current date, child's first and last name, expiration date and instructions and turned in to the school nurse.
-

Immunizations & Medical Records

- The New York Public Health Law 2164, New York State Education Law 914, New York City Department of Health Code Regulation 49.06 mandate that all students attending New York City Public Schools meet health requirements for Immunizations (DTaP, IPV, MMR, Varicella) and Mantoux (PPD) Tuberculosis Testing.
- Students may be admitted provisionally or with and incomplete immunization for a period of fourteen (14) days only. Failure to comply can lead to exclusion from school.
- Students may be granted exceptions from immunizations for medical and religious reasons in accordance with Chancellors Regulations A-710 section A2-2, A2-3, and B2-1 and B2-2 Notarized and legal documentation is required.
- Students should have a complete physical exam once a year. Forms are available in the main office.

Field Trip Policy

The Brooklyn Charter School encourages participation in all field trips to neighborhood and local agencies, as well as, Community-Based Organization (CBO), Institutions for Higher Learning and places of interest.

This policy articulates the process, planning and expectations for safe and successful field trips. BCS links all field trips to its curriculum, unless specified otherwise.

Permission Slips

- All families must complete a Universal Permission Slip that is to remain in the students' files. This permission slip will be used when necessary (local walks, library visits, etc.)
- All other trips must have separate permission slips signed by families. Children without signed slips will not be allowed to go on the trip. Note: Every family has the right to determine whether their child should go on the trip or not.

Planning for a Trip

- The Head of School must approve all trips, local or otherwise.
- All trips require a minimum of one adult (including families) to every 12 students. Adults can be faculty/staff and families. In the case of children with special needs, the adult to child ratio follows the same specifications as mandated on the IEP.
- Field trip announcements should go home to the families at least three weeks before the intended trip. The notice should:
 - a) Describe the trip/visit (purpose, curriculum connection, and place).
 - b) Provide meeting place (school, etc.), time of departure, time of return, and mode of transportation.
 - c) State who is the person in charge (Faculty).
 - d) Request parent volunteers.
- Arrangements are to be made with the main office to provide meals (bag lunches etc.) at least one week prior to the trip.

Mode of Transportation

For trips in the local neighborhood, classes may walk or take the public bus or train. Bus and train passes are available from the main office and must be signed by the Head of School.

Trips that require school buses must be booked 3 weeks in advance of the intended date of the trip. A special request form (available in the main office) is filled out and sent to the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT). OPT sends a confirmation and dispatches the required buses for pick up at 9:00 a.m. and return 1:00 p.m.

Note: Under no circumstance should faculty or staff transport children in private vehicles.

In the Field

- All BCS students will wear nametags and be assigned a buddy for the trip.
- Negative behaviors are reported to the Head of School and the BCS Discipline Policy is strictly enforced.
- Faculty/Staff are not to leave children unattended or in the care of a stranger.
- In case of an emergency the school must immediately be notified.
- All students must be accounted for prior to leaving the school and before returning. In the case of a missing student, the site authorities and the school should be immediately notified and all attempts to locate the missing child should be made without jeopardizing the safety of other children.
- Students are required to wear their school uniform on all field trips, unless specified otherwise.

Student Safety

Ideation of Suicide

Any student who expresses the desire to do bodily harm to self or take his/her own life must be accompanied immediately to the Head of School. The Head of School will immediately notify Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the family of this intention and follow the appropriate protocols to stabilize the student. In the event that the student has to be taken to the hospital, the family will accompany the student or a BCS Faculty member will accompany the student until the family arrives at the hospital.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the Brooklyn Charter School to maintain a safe, supportive, nurturing educational environment that is free from sexual harassment committed by any employee against a student. Such harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. Violation of this policy shall constitute grounds for immediate dismissal.

Definition of Sexual Harassment:

According to Chancellor's Regulations A-830 and for the purpose of this policy, sexual harassment of a student by an employee consists of sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment may take many different forms including:

- Explicit sexual propositions
- Sexual threats
- Sexual innuendos
- Sexually suggestive comments
- Sexually oriented jokes
- Obscene gestures
- Displays of pornographic, obscene visual or printed materials
- Inappropriate physical contact such as touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another's body

It also includes situations where sexual harassment is used as:

- A condition of the student's advancement or obtaining an education
- Submission or rejection of such conduct by a student used as a basis for evaluating or grading a student or as a factor in decisions affecting the student's education
- When such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's education or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment

All of the above behaviors can constitute sexual harassment whether they are directed at persons of the same or opposite sex and may also constitute criminal behavior.

Reporting Allegations of Sexual Harassment of a Student by an Employee

All allegations of sexual harassment of a student by an employee must immediately be reported to the Head of School/Director who will take the following steps:

- Take written statements individually separately from the victim and any witnesses
- Meet with the subject of investigation to discuss allegations and obtain a written statement from the subject
- Notify the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees to evaluate the evidence to substantiate or un-substantiate the complaint.
- Reach and state the conclusion in writing and notify all parties of a further investigation. During the

course of the investigation the employee (subject of investigation) may be removed from school premises with an official notice pending investigation.

- The employee will be notified of the status of the investigation in writing, within five days of their removal.
- If allegations are determined to be true, a report will be filed with the Office of Charter Schools and Office of Special Investigations of the Department of Education

Confidentiality

It is the Brooklyn Charter School's policy to respect the privacy of all parties and witnesses to complaints in such situations. However the need to include authorities for such investigations, to provide due process to the accused and/or to take necessary action to investigate and resolve the complaint, may require outside assistance. Therefore, information regarding the complaint may be disclosed in appropriate circumstances.

Drug Free School Zone

Every building owned and operated by the Department of Education of New York City is considered a Drug Free School Zone. BCS has ZERO tolerance for use, solicitation and distribution of any illegal or controlled substance within its premises.

Vandalism

Any student vandalizing school property will be reported to the Head of School and the Discipline Policy will be reinforced. The student's family must make a monetary replacement of items destroyed by individual students. Costs will be assessed by original order price.

Grievance Protocol

In the event that a family member or staff member lodges a complaint, the following guidelines will be followed:

- All complaints must be logged with the Head of School or a member of the BCS Board of Trustees.
- The Head of School will summarize all complaints in writing.
- The Head of School will then investigate the complaint involving all parties and request written summaries.
- The Head of School will meet with the parties involved and gather pertinent information and seek a resolution.
- The Head of School will document and file summaries, submissions and the resolution.
- The Head of School has the option to engage the Board of Trustees depending on the nature of the complaint.

If the complaint is against the Head of School, the complainant would be invited to have meeting with the Head of School to attempt to resolve the issue, but would also be informed that they can contact BCS Board of Trustees and file that complaint with Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Henry Lambert, the Vice-Chair, Michael Catlyn or the Family Action Committee Representative on the Board of Trustees. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees in conjunction with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees will hear the complaint, notify the Head of School, conduct an investigation and work towards resolution. A copy of the complaint will be kept in the school files.

Corporal Punishment and Verbal Abuse

The Brooklyn Charter School maintains zero tolerance for any form of corporal punishment. No corporal punishment shall be inflicted on any student of The Brooklyn Charter School, or any punishment of any kind tending to cause excessive fear, physical or mental distress. Violation of this policy shall constitute grounds for immediate suspension and possible dismissal.

The Brooklyn Charter School maintains a zero tolerance policy for any form of verbal abuse. No supervising adult (faculty or staff) shall use any language to a student that will tend to cause fear, physical or mental distress. Violation of this policy shall constitute grounds for immediate investigation and possible dismissal.

In disciplining a student all faculty and staff are required to refer to the school's discipline policy. It is understood that in the exercise of duty that BCS and faculty will hold students to high expectations. All allegations of corporal punishment or verbal abuse must be reported immediately to the Head of School who will take the following steps:

- Take written statements from the victim and all witnesses
- Take individual witness statements separately
- Meet with the subject of investigation to review victim's statements
- Evaluate evidence to substantiate or unsubstantiated the complaint
- Reach and state conclusion on Form A-420/A-421 (Chancellor's Regulations A-420). During the course of investigation, employee will be placed on suspension.
- The employee will be notified of the status of the investigation, in writing, within five days of their removal.
- The report will be filed with the Office of Charter Schools of the Department of Education, and the Office of Special Investigations of the Department of Education.

Committees and Volunteers

The Brooklyn Charter School Board of Trustees

BCS is governed by a Board of Trustees made up of members of varied backgrounds and from diverse communities who share a common interest in the success of the school. The Board ensures that the school is living its mission, meeting its goals and that the school remains a viable institution. The Board meets once every month at the School, on a designated day that is publicly posted, from 5:30 pm - 7:00pm. These meetings are open to the public and families are invited to attend.

Anyone attempting to contact the BCS Board of Trustees can submit a request in writing to the Head of School or send a letter to the Chairman of the BCS Board of Trustees c/o BCS to 545 Willoughby Avenue, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11206.

Family Action Committee

The Family Action Committee (FAC) is the parent body of the Brooklyn Charter School. It is organized into committees (i.e. the fundraising committee, education committee, volunteerisms committee, etc.) and assembles to create strategies to support the school, as well as, to discuss and help solve school issues. Members of these committees may invite the Head of School or members of the teaching staff to their meetings for support or to gain information or clarity around an issue. The committees are facilitated by parents and meet according to the schedule determined by members of the committee. Additionally, a steering or executive committee made up of one liaison from each family action committee exists. Liaisons present updates of their committees to the steering committee. One parent who is elected by the parent body chairs the steering committee. The FAC Chair and the Head of School meet twice each month. The FAC has a mailbox in the main office where letters, notes, suggestions and comments can be left for the FAC Chairperson and/or the steering committee.

Volunteers

The Brooklyn Charter School administration and teaching staff welcomes any family member who would like to volunteer at the school. Interested parties should speak directly with the Head of School, teaching

staff or the Family Action Committee. It is expected that families provide 20 hours of volunteer service.

School-to-Home Communication

School Contacts

The Brooklyn Charter School is located at 545 Willoughby Avenue, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11206. All mail correspondence should be sent to this address. The main office telephone number is (718) 302-2085, emergency cellular telephone number is (718) 877-1840 and fax number is (718) 302-2426. The current Faculty and Staff list can be found at the back of the handbook.

BCS Website and Family Portal

The BCS website can be accessed on-line at www.brooklyncharter.org. BCS has updated its website and the site is fully translatable. The site is user friendly and the community can access BCS Annual Report, the Discipline Policy, Applications and guidelines for enrollment and other pertinent information regarding BCS. The site includes a Family Portal through which families can access student data and progress notes. Access to the portal requires individual secure login.

BCS Board of Trustees Contact

Anyone attempting to contact the BCS Board of Trustees can submit a request in writing to the Head of School or send a letter to the Chairman of the BCS Board of Trustees c/o BCS to 545 Willoughby Avenue, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11206.

News Flash

News Flash Notices are sent home to parents every week. The notices inform families of changes in the schedule, offer reminders of upcoming events and bring new information to the forefront.

Calendars

A yearlong calendar is sent home at the beginning of each school year, highlighting days off for students, holidays, proposed test dates and special event. The current yearlong calendar can be found at the back of the handbook. Calendars are also sent home on a monthly basis, pinpointing major events.

Teacher Newsletters and Notes

Teachers communicate with parents formally at the beginning of each month to offer an explanation of the upcoming curricular highlights and give a brief summary of the previous month's instruction. Teachers forward a copy of the monthly newsletter to the Head of School.

Posting of Daily Schedule

Teachers post their daily schedule and agendas inside of the classrooms for parents and students to know the activities the day.

Open Door Policy

The Head of School maintains an "open door policy" which encourages families to visit the office during the school day. Appointments should be made to visit classrooms during instructional time.

Telephone Calls

Families will receive telephone calls from the Head of School, administrative staff, or teachers in the event that a student falls ill or has an emergency. Teachers will also contact families concerning

academic progress, behavioral concerns and praise when necessary. All telephone calls to families by teachers will be noted in a telephone log.

Home Visits

In the event that the school is unable to contact a family member, the school may make a home visit.

The Head of School's Mailbox

The Head of School has a mailbox in the main office. Members of the school community may leave comments or notes in the box. Additionally, every staff member is assigned a mailbox.

Progress Reports

Teachers communicate with parents informally every six weeks to offer a written update on student progress. This time is seen as critical "check in", which allows teachers to maintain an ongoing rapport with families and keep families informed of student progress.

Developmental Profiles and Family/Faculty Conferences

Three times each year (December, March and June) teachers prepare Developmental Profiles that summarize students' development and achievement in core academic and social/behavioral areas. These reports are discussed formally during Family/Faculty Conferences, which are scheduled in December and March (see yearlong calendar). At the end of the school year (June), families receive either in person or via mail, the completed annual Developmental Profile.

Celebrations and Family Involvement Days

Twice each year, BCS hosts a festival for families and students to highlight student work. A Winterfest is held in February and a Summerfest in June. Dates are determined each school year and are posted on the school calendar.

Evaluation Program

At least once each year, surveys are administered to students, families, teachers and administrators. The survey assesses the level of satisfaction of each constituency at The Brooklyn Charter School. Surveys are administered and reviewed by school administration and The Board of Trustees with the intention of identifying and remedying areas of weakness and ensuring that BCS is holding true to its mission.

Incident Log

An incident log is kept in the office where teachers report daily, any student information of particular significance (*i.e. any student accident or injury*).

Discipline Reports

Discipline reports are completed when students act against the school's rules and expectations. An outline of the incident and the assigned consequences are noted. Reports are sent home and a copy is kept with the student's file.

Emergency Communication

Protocols for every emergency can be found in the Emergency Response Plan Booklet located in the school's main office. In an emergency, the Head of School or a designee will contact the highest-ranking local government official. Additionally, the school will contact the appropriate agencies (*i.e. police departments, fire departments, the Red Cross, mental health providers, religious organizations, etc.*) to obtain advice and assistance.

In accordance with Section 155.1(e)(1)(vi), in the event of emergencies such as fire, choking, heart attack,

a display of weapons, a shooting or stabbing, or a traffic accident, anyone with access to an outside telephone line will contact 911 first, and then notify the Head of School. In the event of the pending emergency, the Head of School will be notified first. The Head of School will then contact emergency services or local law enforcement. Local law enforcement agencies include the New York City Police Department at the 79th Precinct at (718) 636-6626.

Information of severe weather such as, but not limited to, tornadoes, storms, and blizzards, as well as national emergencies and other emergencies which can be foretold, will be received in the Head of School's office. The use of NOAA weather Radio will be used.

It is the duty of the Head of School or a designee to notify faculty, students, staff, parents, and guardians, when it is necessary, to respond to either internal or external situations.

BCS Evacuation Site

Due to the nature of some events, students and staff may be required to evacuate the school building. Students and staff will walk to the following sites unless rerouted by emergency services:

Primary Off-Site Evacuation Location: **P.S. 59, 211 Throop Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11206.**

Secondary Off-Site Evacuation Location: **P.S. 54, 195 Sanford Street, Brooklyn, NY 11205.**

Out of Area Off-Site Evacuation Location: **P.S. 256, 114 Kosciusko Street, Brooklyn, NY 11216.**

The Head of School will then notify the media and post the information on the Internet to inform parents of the evacuation and the site location for student pick up.

Emergency School Closing and Snow Days

The Brooklyn Charter School follows the New York City Department of Education procedures for snow emergency and forced early dismissals (*i.e. due to snow, inclement weather or national emergency*). Families should listen to local AM radio stations (1010 WINS) or watch local television news programs to stay informed of school closings.

Accepted Use Policy of School Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks

Students utilizing school-provided Internet access must first have the permission of and be supervised by the school's professional staff. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access are responsible for appropriate behavior on-line, as in any other area of the school. To remain eligible as users, students' use must be consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Access is a privilege, not a right.

Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers should always be private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers. Administrators and faculty may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are acting responsibly.

The following uses of school-provided Internet access are not permitted:

- Access, upload, download or distribution of pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit materials
- Transmission of obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, or threatening language;
- Violation of any local, state, or federal statutes
- Vandalism, damages, or disabling of the property of another individual or organization
- Accessing another individual's materials, information, or files without permission

- Violation of copyright laws or use of the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission.

Any violation of the school policy and rules may result in loss of school provided access to the Internet. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language or behavior. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

The Brooklyn Charter School makes no warranties of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, for the Internet access it is providing. The school will not be responsible for any damage users suffer, including – but not limited to – loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in services. The school will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information stored on school diskettes, hard drives, or servers; nor for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information gathered through school-provided Internet access. The school will not be responsible for personal property used to access school computers or network or for school-provided Internet access. The school will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from school-provided access to the Internet.

Admissions Policy

The Brooklyn Charter School shall be open to any child who is eligible under laws of New York State for admission to a public school, and the Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Law 2854(2) and all other applicable laws.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

BCS upholds a non-discriminatory policy and welcomes applications from all families regardless of race, gender, religion or culture. We welcome students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

All children who are eligible for enrollment in a public school in New York City will be eligible to enroll in the Brooklyn Charter School. The Charter School will admit each eligible student in grades K-5 who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the student's requested grade level or of the school building. In such case, the process set forth below will be used to determine which student applicant(s) will be admitted:

Enrollment Process

Stage 1:

- BCS begins active recruitment for school year 2015-2016 in the first week of December in 2014. Interested families can submit an application on the BCS website at www.brooklyncharter.org, in person, by mail or fax in an application
- Prospective students attend a comprehensive presentation about the school. The Open Houses will be held in the Winter and Spring
- Families that did not attend the Open House will be provided with a packet of information addressing school programs.
- School staff will ensure students and parents/guardians understand the values of the school and its social and academic expectations through question and answer sessions and school tours (December-April).

Stage 2:

- Interested applicants are required to submit an application via the BCS website at www.brooklyncharter.org, in person, by mail or fax.

Applications are available on the school's website, at Open House sessions, in the school's main office, and accessible locations throughout the community. Applications request information on basic biographical information, contact information and other important facts. In addition, applications will be asked to provide any information necessary for the school to make a determination of the student's special needs.

Stage 3:

Kindergarten Lottery

- A random lottery will be held for all Kindergarten positions. Lotteries are open to the public and are audited by a representative of an unbiased outside organization. The admissions lottery will have the following features:
 - The Lottery is accessible to all applicants and to the general public
 - First preference for admission is given to siblings of students already enrolled at BCS.
 - As Kindergarten is the area of highest intake with the greatest number of applications, the lottery process will define the random selection of candidates for the number of seats available. Students not selected by this process are placed on a waiting list according to the date of their application
 - Selected participants receive a telephone call the following business day to announce their acceptance.
- Should a selected applicant refuse the offer of enrollment, then calls are made to wait-listed applicants until the space(s) are filled.

Grades 1-5

BCS accepts applications for Grades 1-5. A wait list is developed for all applicants according to the date of the application. Applicants for these grades are not subject to lottery and enrollment is based on the number of available vacant seats. If vacant seats become available in Grades 1-5, the wait list is called w according to the date the application was received. Separate waiting lists will be maintained for each grade level in the event that vacancies occur.

The level of preference for admission is determined by the following order:

- First preference is given to students who attended BCS in the previous year and are returning
- Second preference will be given to siblings of students attending BCS
- Third preference is given to students within District 14

Whenever vacancies occur, either prior to the start of the school year or during the course of that school year, the school will contact the parent/guardian of the student who is first on the appropriate waiting list. Reasonable and multiple attempts will be made to contact the family of the student to determine whether the student is still interested in enrolling at the school before proceeding to the next name on the list. If reasonable and multiple attempts to contact the student's parents/guardians are unsuccessful, BCS may remove that student from the waiting list. The school shall maintain documentation of attempts made to contact the parent/guardian of any student removed from the waiting list.

Recruitment Outreach

Prior to the winter and spring school tours and "open houses," invitations and announcements of the new year's enrollment time-line will be widely distributed to parents and students throughout the local school

district and city-wide through flyers in local newspapers, bus stop ads, and postings in various community organizations. BCS will also participate in the common on-line application process through the New York Charter Center

Voluntary Withdrawal from the Charter School

The Brooklyn Charter School is a school of choice. As such, circumstances may arise in which a parent or guardian wishes to transfer their child to a different school. In these instances, school personnel will offer to meet with the family and discuss the reasons for the desired withdrawal and seek solutions to any problems within the school community. If the parent/guardian still wishes to transfer their child to another school, BCS will make every reasonable effort to help the student find a school that better serves the family's needs. BCS will ensure the timely transfer of any necessary school records to the student's new school.