



The Brooklyn Charter School Student Handbook 2018-2019

Building Bridges to Tomorrow!

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Table of Contents

BCS Vision, Mission Statements, BCS History, Cornerstones, Motto, and Excellence Statements	3
Academic Program Overview	4
Daily Schedule	4
Homework Policy	8
Promotion Policy	9
Student Support	12
Response to Intervention Plan	
Special Education Policy	
School Counseling Program	
English Language Learners	
Confidentiality	16
Discipline Policy/Reward System	17
Student Appearance Guidelines	25
Attendance Policy	26
Transportation To & From School	27
Bus Policy	27
Arrival and Dismissal	29
Breakfast and Lunch Program	29
Family & Visitor Policy	30
Wellness and Medication	31
Field Trips	32
Student Safety	33
Grievance Protocol	34
School Committees and Volunteers	35
School-to-Home Communication	36
Accepted Use Policy	38
Admissions Policy	39
Withdrawal From BCS	41

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: *Wit & Wisdom* and *Wilson Foundations* Literacy Programs, *EngageNY Math*, 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 Principal, Ms. Joanne Hunt, is providing the platform for success at Brooklyn Charter School. BCS's Assistant Principal, Mrs. Mary Kate Boesch, and Curriculum Coach, Mrs. Pamptata Sanders, assist the Principal 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 all assessment data to foster effective teaching and learning, incorporates 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 Harambee (community gathering) and school-wide assemblies. Here, students and faculty work together to create a positive, respectful and nurturing community.

Humanities (ELA and Social Studies)

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 that inspire a love of literature, valid and reliable assessment, the knowledge of experienced educators, and a partnership between home and school.

Effective literacy education involves guiding children through a variety of literary experiences. BCS has adopted Wit & Wisdom as the new basis for Literacy instruction. Wit & Wisdom is a comprehensive English curriculum that centers on the study of rich and engaging texts, curated to build student knowledge of important ideas in the liberal arts and the sciences. The approach is integrated and text-based with daily reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar, and vocabulary study, based on evidence from exceptional texts. The texts are wide-ranging and include a careful balance of literary, informational, and fine-arts. This curriculum helps teachers celebrate the joy of reading and writing with students, while also supporting all learners to tackle the rigor that the standards demand. By reading books they love and engaging meaningfully in their learning, students develop the knowledge and skills they need to be successful readers, critical thinkers, and effective communicators.

In each grade, every module, or unit of study, focuses on a topic essential for building background knowledge, vocabulary, and writing skills. For example, students learn about the seasons, the American Revolution, civil rights, immigration, and space exploration. Essential topics strategically reoccur, empowering students to deepen understanding of core knowledge across Grades K–5. Within these modules, students practice reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in an integrated way, with every strand of the standards woven throughout each module. This approach enables students to become more successful as they activate and build on their developing background and vocabulary knowledge of the module topic while learning skills in other areas.

In addition... Wilson Foundations is being utilized as the phonics program in Kindergarten, First and Second grades. Foundations thoroughly teaches the foundational skills, and significantly supports the reading, writing, and language standards. Foundations focuses on letter formation, phonological and phonemic awareness, sound mastery, phonics, word study, advanced word study, irregular (trick) word instruction, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension strategies, and written composition.

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, through independent reading and literature discussion.

Teachers provide direct instruction on the writing process, craft, genre and mechanics throughout the day through a writing process with the teacher. Students are given time and choice of what to write, and opportunities to share with audiences.

Mathematics

Brooklyn Charter School’s 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.

Brooklyn Charter School’s Math program 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.

BCS utilizes EngageNY Modules for mathematics instruction. *Engage NY* connects math to the real world in ways that take the fear out of math and build student confidence—helping students achieve true understanding lesson by lesson and year after year. This coherent approach allows teachers to know what incoming students already have learned and ensures that students are prepared for what comes next. When implemented faithfully, as it is at Brooklyn Charter School, EngageNY Math will dramatically reduce gaps in student learning, instill persistence in problem solving, and prepare students to understand

advanced math.

EngageNY Math supports 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, appropriate technology, and working in a variety of group settings - whole class, individually, in pairs, and in small groups.

Each module, for each grade, has critical instructional areas, as described in the Common Core State Standards. Each module has required fluencies along with major emphasis clusters which help students master their current grade level and gives them the necessary foundational skills for the next grade.

Brooklyn Charter School's mathematics curriculum inspires all students to develop and expand their mathematical ideas.

Social Studies

At BCS we know that in order to make a better world a world of respect and equality we must have a Social Studies curriculum that embraces democratic values, community, and cultural diversity. For this, BCS utilizes Wit & Wisdom for our Social Studies curriculum. Each grade has one module that focuses on an important, high-interest topic in Social Studies. Through carefully chosen literary, informational, and visual art texts, students examine each central topic from diverse angles. There are history topics such as Immigration, the American Revolution, Civil Rights, and the Western Expansion.

Science (FOSS Kits/Scholastic)

At BCS we believe that in today's world it is crucial for our students to be scientifically literate and be able to make thoughtful and informed decisions. We use Full Options Science Systems (FOSS), an inquiry-based, hands-on program that engages students in the study of the concepts and practices of science. FOSS engages students and teachers with meaningful experiences to develop enduring understandings of science and engineering concepts. It also provides students with opportunities to engage in scientific and engineering practices to meet the expectations of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). FOSS integrates reading and literacy strategies to support Common Core Standards and utilizes technology to deliver learning experiences and gives teachers options for classroom instruction and assessment. Students study various scientific topics through hands-on, experimental activities. (FOSS) Kits are used in all K-4 classrooms. All kits include tools and materials for activities. For example: the fourth 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 and explore the properties of electricity and magnetism. Our 5th grade classrooms use Scholastic Super Science, which has engaging, current nonfiction articles that bring science to life and keeps our students motivated to think like Scientists and Engineers while using the Next Generation Science Standards. Students not only read nonfiction articles, but they also

engage in experiments and games, watch engaging videos, and have STEM activities.

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 Technology Specialist utilizes 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. Classroom 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.

This year BCS has introduced Kodable, a complete K-5 curriculum that takes students from learning to think like a programmer in Kindergarten to writing real JavaScript by 5th grade. Kodable's curriculum is aligned to K-5 learning standards, which are a roadmap for developing the whole student through computer science.

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 play and appreciate music. Students will (1) be exposed to the basic elements of music, including rhythm, melody, harmony and form, (2) identify and study different types of drumming techniques from various countries around the world.

At the end of each school year, students at BCS showcase what they have learned throughout the school year in an annual show entitled "BCS Fest." Last year's BCS Fest was entitled "Rhythms of a Nation" which was held on Wednesday, May 16, 2018 at 4:30 p.m. for our families and the community. The showcase included dance and musical numbers from an array of countries such as Mali, Puerto Rico, Ghana, Brazil, Guinea, and the United States of America. The students worked extremely hard to put together this amazing showcase of their work

Interim Assessment Program

English Language Arts and Math interim assessments which are aligned to Common Core Standards are given at least twice per school year to ensure that students are progressing in order to be grade level competent. For each assessment, teachers and administrators grade the interim assessments that have been created by the educational leadership (administrative) team and select faculty. The educational leadership team prepares an analysis that is the impetus for data-driven planning meetings to occur with the principal, instructional administrators and teachers. During these meetings, all stakeholders work together to formulate a blueprint for the following quarter; re-teaching material to the entire group, small-group instruction and/or individual instruction as well as the after school test prep program. The main goal is that teachers leave these meetings with a crystal clear understanding of which students have mastered what standards along with a blueprint for addressing areas of student need.

Test Preparation Program

BCS hosts an after-school tutorial program for third, fourth and fifth grade students. All upper elementary students are invited to participate. During this tutorial/test preparation program which is held twice per week, BCS teachers provide explicit instruction based on the Common Core Learning Standards and test taking strategies.

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 Humanities/Mathematics/Science Music, Dance or Technology		Instruction in Humanities/Mathematics/Science Music, Dance or Technology
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch/Recess	12:00 – 1:00	Lunch/Recess
12:00 – 3:50	Instruction in Humanities/Mathematics/Science Music, Dance or Technology	1:00-3:50	Instruction in Humanities/Mathematics/Science Music, Dance or Technology

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

Homework Policy

BCS students are expected to receive, complete and submit homework assignments daily. 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.

Homework might consist of the following:

Literacy/Humanities- 15-45 minutes of independent 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 *EngageNY* or specialized problems; games for students to play with family members, in addition to test preparation practice

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

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	Homework Assignments	Independent Reading
Kindergarten	15 minutes	15-20 minutes
First Grade	20 minutes	15-20 minutes
Second Grade	25 minutes	20-25 minutes
Third Grade	30 minutes	20-25 minutes
Fourth Grade	40 minutes	30-45 minutes
Fifth Grade	45 minutes	30-45 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:

- Obtaining proficiency (Levels 3 and/or 4) in Common Core Learning Standards for Literacy and Mathematics through NYS English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science Assessments
- At least 95% annual average attendance
 - As per the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), students must attain a 95% attendance rate, based on a standardized formula factoring in the number of days a student is absent. Please be advised that this translates to a student not missing more than 10 days of school during the entire school year. While it is understood that students must be absent from time-to-time, a frequent pattern of unexcused absences could result in possible retention. Please provide the school with documentation when a child is absent due to medical reasons or family emergencies. Students who have accumulated 5 or more absences in the 1st quarter of school are identified as “promotion in doubt” based on attendance only.
- Teacher recommendation; which includes evidence through student work, anecdotes, comprehensive teacher assessments, teacher-made assessments, observations and school-wide assessments.

- Progress reports; and benchmark assessments (Interim Assessments, Fountas & Pinnell Assessments, Benchmark Assessments, Interim Assessments and NYS State Test scores)
- New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test (NYSESLAT) if applicable
- Goals & mandated criteria on Individualized Education Program (IEP) if applicable

Grade Level	Attendance	Teacher Recommendation	Benchmark Testing/NYS Testing
Kindergarten	95%	At grade level performance: Attainment of Level 3 or above in Core Subject areas	ELA and Math Benchmark scores; F & P Levels
Grade 1	95%	At grade level performance: Attainment of Level 3 or above in Core Subject areas	ELA and Math Benchmark scores; F & P Levels
Grade 2	95%	At grade level performance: Attainment of Level 3 or above in Core Subject areas	ELA and Math Benchmark scores; F & P Levels
Grade 3	95%	At grade level performance: Attainment of Level 3 or above in Core Subject areas	NYS ELA and Math Tests scores at Level 3 or above; F & P Levels
Grade 4	95%	At grade level performance: Attainment of Level 3 or above in Core Subject areas	NYS ELA, Math and Science Tests scores at Level 3 or above; F & P Levels
Grade 5	95%	At grade level performance: Attainment of Level 3 or above in Core Subject areas	NYS ELA and Math Tests scores at Level 3 or above; F & P Levels

Grade Conversions:

Level 4	90% - 100%
Level 3	76% - 89%
Level 2	66% - 75%
Level 1	55% - 65%

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 student work, 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 Principal.

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

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 Principal.

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 the Principal.

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 the Principal.

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

Promotion-in-Doubt/Retention Notification

Families are notified orally and in writing of possible retention through Parent-Teacher Conferences and Report Cards. The first indication of concern will be noted in the **Promotion in Doubt** section of the November or January Report Card 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 May of the current school year, they are identified for **Retention** for the following school year.

Referral to Summer School

Students in Grades 3-5, who do not meet the promotional criteria by June may be referred to attend NYC Department of Education summer school program. BCS does not conduct a summer school program of its own. Students may be retested in late August by BCS, in the identified areas of concern, and the Principal will review growth measures in order to make the final determination to be considered for promotion to the next grade.

Appealing the decision for Retention

A family that disagrees with a June promotion decision is required to submit a written appeal to the Principal by August prior to the beginning of the new school year. The Principal will consider all relevant criteria for promotion and make a final decision for the new school year. The Principal can involve members of the BCS Response to Intervention Team as well as members of the school administration 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 C, Accuracy Rate: 95-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory

		1	Reading: Level I , Accuracy Rate: 95-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory
		2	Reading: Level M , Accuracy Rate: 98-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory, Fluency Rate: 2/3
		3	Reading: Level P , Accuracy Rate: 98-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory, Reading Rate: 2/3
		4	Reading: Level T , Accuracy Rate: 98-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory, Reading Rate: 2/3
		5	Reading: Level W , Accuracy Rate: 98-100%, Comprehension: Satisfactory, Reading Rate: 2/3
ELA & Math Interim Assessments , Benchmark Assessments and Module Assessments	At least 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	80% overall mastery on the ELA and Math interim assessment 80% overall mastery on Benchmark Assessments 80% overall mastery on Module Assessments

Student Support - Response to Intervention (RTI)

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 should be referred to the RTI Team to discuss additional support, they will initially contact the parent regarding their concerns, after which point they will bring their concerns to the RTI team. RTI Team meetings, during which individual students of concern are discussed, take place every 6-8 weeks. After discussing each student in depth (e.g. strengths, difficulties, strategies that have already been implemented), an individualized intervention plan is created that outlines specific interventions, timelines, assessments, faculty responsible for the interventions, and a follow-up date for discussion. Every 6-8 weeks, the RTI Team meets to check in on planned interventions and progress that's been made, and to discuss follow-up plans. The interventions outlined by the RTI Team are used to designate a student's tier within 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
Tier 2	Small group instruction (3-5 students) that focuses on specific areas of need, 2-3x per week
Tier 3	Small group or individual instruction (1-3 students) that focuses on specific areas of need, 3-5x per week

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

Tier 2: A student in Tier 2 receives remedial and/or enrichment supports which are individualized (i.e. not provided to all students). The general education or special education teacher, with support from the RTI Team, will provide reading, writing, math, or behavior interventions on a consistent

schedule, as per the student's individualized intervention plan. The teacher(s) will collect data using the progress monitoring schedule outlined in the student's intervention plan. The student's family is made aware of the child's interventions.

Tier 3: Learning specialists will provide individual or small group support for a student in Tier 3. The specific/targeted intervention(s) will include a strategic 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). Students in this category would be considered "Promotion in Doubt" based on grade-level benchmarks. Students will participate in intervention services for 6-8 week cycles, as per their individualized intervention plans. If a student does not show adequate growth, 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. Ideally, the family will work with BCS to support the evaluation process with the Committee on Special Education (CSE).

Referral for Special Education Services: The CSE evaluation process will include: psychological and educational evaluations in the student's home language, any additional evaluations deemed appropriate, interviews and involvement of the student's family, and observations in the school setting. After the evaluation process is complete, the CSE will meet with the family and school to determine eligibility for special education services and, if eligible, will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that delineates a prescriptive program of mandated services to be provided for the student. The special education coordinator will ensure that a central file with all special education evaluation material (e.g. IEPs, evaluations, progress reports) 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 coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that all providers responsible for the implementation of the student's IEP 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 used at The Brooklyn Charter School to serve students who have a disability and 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 individualized 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, moved, etc.)

The Brooklyn Charter School will meet all the requirements mandated by the students’ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). 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 identify strategies to best meet the needs of students with disabilities in the general education classroom, and serves as a special education consultant to the BCS school community.

BCS provides several special education programs, including:

- **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 co-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-time support of the Special Education Teacher to assist in adapting and modifying instruction. This model ensures that all students have access to the specific skills and concepts of the general education curriculum, as well as focused instruction that addresses individualized IEP 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, physical therapy, and paraprofessional support. 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

For each student with an IEP, the Special Education Coordinator and any pertinent faculty members will meet with the CSE and student's family annually to determine appropriate programs and services, based on the student's progress and needs. The team will discuss any additional supports that are necessary 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 annual IEP 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 physically attend the review, the school will provide an opportunity for family participation via telephone conference. BCS 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 timely completion of annual and triennial reviews of special education students. Families will be informed of the student's progress toward annual goals three times per year. 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 report card. 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 that the student will achieve the annual goal prior to the next annual review
4. When necessary, the reason(s) why it is anticipated that the student will not meet the annual goal prior to the next annual review

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/culture 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 the student's family, a BCS administrator, or a Response to Intervention Team member. Any student referred to participate in counseling sessions, either 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 as a New Language (ENL)

BCS welcomes English Language Learners (ELL). The new BCS website has translation options and provides enrollment information (newspaper postings, brochures and applications) in Spanish, French and a variety of languages. 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 have the ability to support their needs. Additionally, ELL students receive pull out supports by an ESL/TESOL certified teacher. The process BCS takes to identify and support ELL students is outlined below:

- Administer the Home Language Identification Survey, available in a variety of languages, to all families as part of the enrollment process
- Administer the NYSITELL (New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners) to students identified through the Home Language Identification Survey, as well as student interviews, as speaking a language other than English at home. Based on levels determined by the NYSITELL assessment, students are classified as entering, emerging, transitioning, expanding, or commanding. These levels dictate a student's mandated number of minutes of ELL instruction per week.
- Provide an immersion program for ELL students with pull out supports by an ESL/TESOL certified teacher
- Administer the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) in the spring to determine continued eligibility for ELL services. Each student's parent will be notified of the child's ELL status each year.
- Provide ELL students with appropriate test accommodations while they are active ELLs, as well as up to two years after passing the NYSESLAT (if deemed necessary)

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 action may be necessary.

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.

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

Code of Conduct:

Students will be able to withdraw from Brooklyn Charter School at any point in time and return to their locally zoned public school or any other school to which they can gain admission.

Brooklyn Charter will adhere to all of the values and expectations outlined in this handbook as a guideline for in-class disciplinary action, suspension, or expulsion of students.

In-class disciplinary actions will include, but are not limited to:

- Additional assignments to be completed at home and/or at school;
- Removal of student from the classroom environment, as necessary;
- Loss of incentives, recreational school trips and recess
- Creative consequences such as character building activities, community service assignments, etc.

All disciplinary actions are designed to teach the student the importance of making informed and thoughtful choices, and controlling his or her own actions. All disciplinary actions are consequences aimed at getting the student to attain a greater sense of civic responsibility.

In addition, students may be subject to suspension or expulsion if it is determined that they committed any of the infractions listed below and/or listed in the New York City Department of Education Discipline Code. *Please note that although Brooklyn Charter refers to the New York City Department of Education Discipline Code as a resource, the guidelines outlined in our handbook supersede the recommendations contained in the New York City Department of Education Discipline Code.*

All suspensions and alternative instruction must be enacted so that they are substantively and procedurally in accordance with New York Education Code.

Discipline Systems

Kindergarten-2nd - “Traffic Light “

GREEN- 1st Verbal or Non-Verbal warning

YELLOW- (2nd Warning) Repeated infraction. Student needs to be redirected and reminded of classroom expectations.

RED- (FINAL warning) Stop immediately or change behavior immediately.

The next infraction will lead to a student removal.

3rd -5th – “4” Strike System

Students name is written on the board.

1st check- a check is placed next the student’s name. Verbal/ Non-Verbal warning given.

2nd check- a second check is placed next to the student’s name. Student needs to be redirected and reminded of classroom expectations.

3rd check- a third check is placed next to the student’s name. This is a final check that leads to class removal.

A removal form “pink slip” must be completely filled out by the teacher or staff. The “pink slip outlining the infraction, along with classwork will accompany the student to the Administrative Team or Dean.

If a teacher deems it necessary to remove a student from the classroom, it is the teacher’s responsibility to provide the class work that is assigned during the allotted period and contact the parent of the removed child before leaving school at the end of the day. The conversation explicitly states the reason(s) why it was necessary to remove their child from the class.

When a student is removed from the classroom, the teacher completes a “Student Removal Form” (often referred to as a “pink slip” due to the color of the form), and sends the child to either the Dean of Students, assigned faculty member in the main office or designee for that specific child, who ensures that the student writes down his/her account of the circumstances. Student’s removal will be documented into official school records. The student is expected to complete the assignment given to him/her by the teacher in the office with the Dean of Students or their designee.

Students who are removed from the classroom will be subject to the following consequences:

Grades K-5:

First, Second and Third removal: student is removed from the classroom and sent to the Dean or their designee to complete his/her assignment(s). The teacher contacts parent/guardian to inform the parent of their child’s removal from the classroom. The Teacher or Dean notates student removal in their records.

Fourth removal: Student is removed from the classroom and sent to the Dean or their designee to complete his/her assignment(s). The teacher contacts parent/guardian to inform the parent of their child’s removal from the classroom. The Teacher or Dean notates student removal in their records. Due to the accumulation of removal forms in addition to the consequences outlined in the first, second, and third infractions, the student will receive an official suspension for one (1) school day.

Any subsequent student removals from class after the Fourth Removal, suspensions become consecutive.

Non-negotiable Stipulations

As a student at the Brooklyn Charter School, there are certain behaviors and actions that impede one's ability to achieve at high levels, or serve as a detriment to our school's focus on high academic achievement and overall community wellbeing. Therefore in addition to the expectations for regular attendance, punctuality, and adhering to the school uniform policy, the following actions/behaviors will not be tolerated and will be dealt with quickly, effectively, and without hesitation, in order to maximize the success and welfare of all the members of our school community:

The following is a list of guidelines that outline Level I non-negotiable stipulations that are in effect for every student at the Brooklyn Charter School:

1. **Stipulation:** Chewing gum, eating candy and drinking soda while in the school building or on school grounds are not allowed.
Consequence: Any student observed chewing gum, eating candy, or drinking soda will be asked and expected to dispose of the chewing gum, candy, or soda in the nearest trash receptacle.
2. **Stipulation:** Eating food or drinking the allowed fluids of water, juice (or other special event related beverages), during non-designated times of the school day i.e. breakfast, snack and/or lunch times and only in the cafeteria or designated area, will not be allowed, unless direct and discretionary permission from either the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Dean to do so was given.
Consequence: Any student who is eating food or drinking a beverage outside of the cafeteria or designated area and/or at a time other than his/her designated breakfast or lunch times, will be confiscated for return after school.
3. **Stipulation:** The use of personal electronic devices not directly associated with the school's academic program at any time during school hours, will not be allowed, and such electronic devices should not be visible or audible during school hours, unless direct discretionary permission to do so was given by either the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Dean.
Consequence: Any student who uses, or is in obvious possession of an unapproved electronic device during school hours will be asked by and expected to present the device to that staff member or nearest staff member. The student will only be allowed to have the item returned to him/her following the confiscating staff member being able to have a direct conversation with his/her parent/guardian regarding the confiscation of the item.
4. **Stipulation:** Insubordination in response to following the direction of a staff member who is enforcing a Level I non-negotiable stipulation will not be allowed.
Consequence: The student(s) will receive a removal form for violating school rules and for insubordination.

The following is a list of guidelines that outline Level II non-negotiable stipulations that are in effect for every student at the Brooklyn Charter School:

1. **Stipulation:** Fighting with another student of the Brooklyn Charter School Charter School, or with a student from another school will not be tolerated, regardless of reason for, or time and location of the altercation, including off school grounds and not during school hours. Additionally, instigating/cyber-instigating, the relaying of information that

leads to (such as relaying messages to one and/or the other student involved, et. al.), and/or encouraging another student(s) to engage in a fight will not be tolerated.

Consequence: The student(s) will receive a suspension for fighting. The student(s) will receive a suspension for instigating.

2. **Stipulation:** Bullying (including cyber-bullying), intimidating, or making statements of a derogatory nature about or toward another student of the Brooklyn Charter School or a member of its staff will not be tolerated. Additionally, instigating, the relaying of information that leads to (such as relaying/forwarding messages to others, gossiping, et.al., face-to-face with others, over Facebook, SMS/text messaging, et.al.), and/or encouraging another student(s) to engage in such behavior will not be tolerated.

Consequence: The student(s) may receive a suspension for the designated infraction.

School Policy regarding Removal of a Student from the Classroom Environment

As a student at the Brooklyn Charter School, it is expected that while present in any classroom you behave in manner that demonstrates that your main focus is on learning and your academic work. It is also expected that you behave in manner that allows an equal and fair opportunity for others in the classroom to learn in a safe, friendly, respectful environment, free of unnecessary disruption. Therefore it is the school's policy that any student who does not demonstrate that their main focus is on learning and their work, or impedes the educational process in the classroom, may be removed from the learning environment by the classroom teacher.

A teacher may remove a student from the classroom for any of several reasons, including:

- Unauthorized traveling of students
- Cursing/ Cursing at one another or Faculty
- Stealing, theft, or instigating such
- Fighting, or instigating such
- Bullying / Cyber Bullying or instigating such
- Egregious disrespect to teacher
- Throwing objects /across the classroom/ in the cafeteria/ in the gym/ on a school trip etc.
- Cheating on a test
- Inappropriate touching; aggressive, sexual or playful

Suspensions and Expulsion:

A student who is determined to have violated any of the Brooklyn Charter policies outlined in this handbook or has committed any of the infractions listed below shall minimally be subject to a suspension, unless the Administrative Team determines that an exception should be made based on the individual circumstances of the incident and a student's disciplinary record. Depending upon the severity of the infraction, the student may be subject to a long-term suspension, expulsion, or referral to the appropriate city and/or state agencies.

Suspensions shall refer to the removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period of 1-4 days.

Long-term suspensions shall refer to the removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period of 5-10 days.

Expulsions shall refer to the permanent removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons.

Examples of disciplinary infractions that may result minimally in a suspension include, but are

not limited to, the following:

- Bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Attempting to assault any student or staff member.
- Vandalizing school property and causing minor or major damage.
- Endangering the physical safety of another by the use of force or threats of force, which reasonably places the victim in fear of imminent bodily injury.
- Fighting.
- Instigating a fight or other conflict.
- Engaging in conduct that disrupts school or classroom activities, or endangers or threatens to endanger the health, safety, welfare, or morals of themselves or others.
- Insubordination.
- Stealing, attempting to steal, or knowingly possessing stolen property.
- Trespassing on school property.
- Being on a floor, in a restroom, or other area of the building without the express consent of a Brooklyn Charter School staff member.
- Abusing school property or equipment.
- Using obscene or abusive language or gestures.
- Engaging in acts of verbal or physical sexual harassment.
- Making a false threat against the school (bomb threat, terrorist acts, etc.) or pulling an emergency alarm when there is no emergency.
- Possessing tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drug or substance.
- Wearing inappropriate, insufficient, or disruptive clothing or attire, including on Dress Down Fridays, or violating the Brooklyn Charter Uniform Policy.
- Refusing to follow the safety directions given by school safety officers or reacting in disrespectful ways towards these officials.
- Committing any other act which school officials reasonably conclude disrupts the learning environment of the school.
- Engaging in any speech or action that demeans another student or any individual inside or outside of the school building based on race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.
- Repeatedly committing minor behavioral infractions may, in aggregate, be considered an infraction subject to formal disciplinary action.

Procedures for Suspensions:

The Administrative Team or Dean may impose a suspension or long-term suspension. Before imposing a suspension of any kind, the Administrator or Dean shall verbally inform the student of the suspension and the reason for it. The student(s) shall be given an opportunity to deny or explain the allegations against them. BCS will contact the parental/guardian via telephone to notify the family of the suspension as long as the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent/guardian or an emergency contact. The Administrative Team or Dean will also give the student(s) a written letter notifying the parent/guardian that the student(s) has been suspended from school, along with a copy of the letter for the parent/guardian to sign and return to school by giving it to their child to bring back to the Administrative Team or Dean. The text of the letter shall provide a description of the incident or incidents which resulted in the suspension and shall offer the opportunity to confirm acknowledgement or for an immediate conference with the faculty involved with the suspension, requested staff members and/or Administrative Team and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Examples of disciplinary infractions that may result minimally in a long-term suspension include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assaulting any student or staff member.
- Intentionally causing physical injury to another person, except when the student's actions are reasonably necessary to protect himself or herself from injury.
- Vandalizing school property and causing minor or major damage.
- Committing any act which school officials reasonably conclude warrants a long-term suspension.
- Possessing, using, or attempting to use or transfer any firearm, replica of a firearm, knife, razor blade, explosive, mace, tear gas, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student or school.
- Committing or attempting to commit arson on school property.
- Possessing, selling, distributing or using any alcoholic beverage, controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana on school property or at schools sponsored events.
- In addition, a student who commits any of the acts previously described as cause for short term suspension may, instead or in addition to, be subject to a long-term suspension at the Assistant Principal's discretion.
- Violating any applicable state or federal laws that require a student to receive a long-term suspension.

A note about long-term suspensions:

A student who is determined to have committed any of the infractions listed above shall be subject minimally to a long-term suspension, unless the school principal determines that an exception should be made based on the circumstances of the incident and the student's disciplinary record. Such a student may also be subject to any of the disciplinary measures outlined elsewhere in this document, referral to city, state agencies and/or expulsion.

Procedures for long-term suspensions:

The members of the Administrative Team may impose a long term suspension for a period of 5-10 days, following the procedural protocol for suspensions previously outlined in this handbook. The Administrative Team will also contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) by phone to either schedule a hearing or confirm acknowledgement of suspension. Hearings or appeals to be held during regular school hours, unless another mutually agreed upon time can be arranged, with the Principal, the student, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), another member of the Brooklyn Charter Administrative Team, and the staff member(s) involved, if any. At this hearing or appeal, all versions and accounts of the incident that led to the suspension will be heard, and a decision will be rendered by the Principal regarding whether the suspension should be retracted or should a long term suspension should be upheld. If the Principal cannot reach a parent/guardian by phone, within two school days of the first attempt at contact, a certified letter will be sent to the home address on file at the school for the student informing the parent(s)/guardian(s) of

the hearing time and place. Failure to respond to the request for a hearing, or failure to show for the hearing will not be cause for the hearing to be delayed, and the hearing will occur without the presence of the parent(s)/guardians(s) and/or student(s), and the decision of the Principal made as a result of the hearing will be upheld.

Procedures for expulsions:

If a child is being considered for expulsion from Brooklyn Charter School, the Principal shall provide written notification to the student and his or her parent/guardian that the student is being considered for expulsion. The written notification shall also set a time and place for a formal appeal conference with the Principal, Assistant Principal and/or Dean of Students and shall inform the parent/guardian of their rights. Except for those items that, under state and federal law, require immediate expulsion, the Principal or her designee may not expel a student unless a prior written and verbal warning for expulsion has been issued to both the student and his or her parent/guardian that includes an explanation that clearly states the reason(s) warranting the expulsion. Following the formal appeal conference, if the Principal, or her designee, maintains that expulsion is still the necessary action, the Principal, or her designee, will issue a recommendation of expulsion to the School Board who will convene a designated Committee to hear the recommendation at or prior to the next scheduled Board Meeting. At this hearing, the recommendation for expulsion will be heard and shall include a description of the behavior and/or academic problems indicative of the need for expulsion, a description of the alternatives explored, and prior action taken to resolve the problem. The parent(s)/guardian(s), should they so choose, may also present materials to the Committee. After presenting the matter to the Committee of the Board, the Committee of the Board will render a formal decision within 30 days of the hearing, and will formally notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) by certified letter of their decision. The decision of the Committee of the Board will have immediate effect.

Supplementary instruction:

Students who are suspended will be provided with 2 hours of alternative instruction, in school, on days of their allotted suspension. Arrangements will be made between the school and each individual family for the delivery of services, pick up/delivery of work, and the making up of any missed assignments and classroom instructional support. All mandates associated with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will be followed for students with disabilities.

Due process procedures:

Students with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as other students, and may be disciplined for the same behavioral offenses listed above. If a student with disabilities has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that includes disciplinary guidelines, then that student will be disciplined according to those guidelines as required by IDEA. All mandates and appropriate procedures for SWDs or students undergoing an evaluation associated with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will be followed for said students. School procedures explaining this information is available in writing at the school. Such information includes but is not limited to; sending procedural safeguard notification to parents, sending immediate and contemporaneous written notice to the NYC DOE, ensuring staff with knowledge of student behavior's participate in MDR meetings scheduled by the NYC DOE, ensuring appropriate school faculty provide information in IEP meetings to determine alternate education and services for students as necessary and procedures to implement alternative education and special education services determined by the IEP team. There are procedures in place that address and determine patterns of behavior and behaviors that are determined not to be a pattern for student removals which may or may not result in disciplinary change of placement. There are rules and procedures for implementing an Interim Alternative Setting (IAES) for SWDs involving special circumstances such as weapons, illegal drugs, controlled substances, and or serious and/or bodily injury as well as required services for a SWD removed to an IAES for not more than 45 school days. Students for whom an IEP does not include specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with the standard school policy listed above.

In accordance with IDEA, a student that has an IEP or is in the process of undergoing an evaluation by the Committee on Special Education (CSE), may be removed from the classroom, suspended, and/or excluded from his/her current educational program for a term of up to ten (10) school days, and must be provided with alternative instruction to the same extent as students in general education. Prior to a student that has an IEP or is in the process of undergoing an evaluation by the CSE being excluded from the current educational program for an eleventh (11th) school day, school officials must conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and implement a behavior intervention plan (BIP), or reevaluate a previously implemented BIP if one is already in place, before excluding the student from their current educational program in excess of ten (10) days.

Appeals

The student's family may elect to appeal a decision by the administration of the Brooklyn Charter School Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion to the Board. If you wish to appeal a decision to the Board, you may do so by following the Procedure for Filing a Complaint outlined on page 34 of this handbook. The family may bring counsel with them if they desire.

Confiscation of Inappropriate Materials or Objects

Any BCS staff member can and will confiscate materials or objects that are considered disruptive or dangerous. These materials and/or objects will be held in the Dean's office until a parent retrieves the item. Items including, but not limited to electronic equipment, clothing or materials containing vulgar messages will be confiscated.

Cell Phones in school

Please be advised that cell phones are not permitted to be used in school between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and dismissal. If a student needs to communicate with a family member, all calls should be made from the main office. Cell phones will be confiscated and returned to an adult only. BCS assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen electronic items (cell phones, iPads, tablets, game systems, etc.)

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 school-wide rewards:

- 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

Surveillance cameras are on site in the main office (327), business office (312) and 3rd floor hallways for safety purposes. The surveillance cameras are located throughout school building and anyone on school property may be videotaped. The notification of said cameras are positioned throughout the school.

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; 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 Brooklyn Charter School, or 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. On Friday's the students do not have to wear the BCS uniform and may dress as they wish, as long as it is appropriate for a school setting. Students may also be out of uniform on School Spirit Days if they are participating.

GIRL'S *uniform consists of:*

Plaid jumper or skirt

Grey pants

White button down shirt

Plaid criss-cross tie

Red cardigan sweater or vest

White/Red Polo shirt with School logo

BOY'S *uniform consists of:*

Grey pants

White button down shirt

Plaid tie

Red cardigan sweater or vest

White/Red Polo shirt with School logo

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 contain 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. 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 to June. 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 9:00 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 absence(s). The note must be signed by the parent/guardian. **A student is allowed to miss 10 days of school before being considered for retention 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 two (2) 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 Principal;
- Medical and dental appointments
- Family emergencies requiring immediate attention, as approved by the Principal;
- Court appearances requiring the student's attendance;

All other absences will be considered unexcused. BCS will contact families daily when a child is not in attendance and the school has not been initially contacted by the family.

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. At no time will a child be allowed to leave without

being accompanied by an adult.

Late Pick-Up

On a daily basis, students are dismissed at 3:50 P.M. Monday-Thursday and 2:50 P.M. on Friday. Any students remaining at BCS (unless attending after-school programs) after 4:15 P.M. will have to be signed out in the main office. This provides families with a 25-minute grace period. In the event that the family is late, they will need to sign a late pick up log, and if reoccurrence is an issue the family may be called in for a meeting with Administration. In extenuating circumstances the Police Precinct will be notified of child abandonment and Administration of Child Services.

After-School Late Pick-Up

Most after-school programs end at 5:50-6:00 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, they will need to sign a late pick up log, and if reoccurrence is an issue the student may be dismissed from the after school program.

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 7:40 a.m. each day that school is in session. A team of school faculty members will greet each bus every morning to ensure a safe transition into the school building.

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.

Bus Attendants

BCS will provide certified Bus Attendants on as many buses as possible. While Attendants are not mandated on General Education buses in New York City, BCS wants to ensure the safety and comfort of all students who ride the school buses.

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 other 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 Principal 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 10 days.
- ✓ Third time incidents result in suspension of riding the bus for up to 30 days.
- ✓ A fourth incident will result in suspension of riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.
- ✓ Fighting/violence of any kind will result in immediate suspension from the bus. The length of time to be determined by the Principal/and or his/her designee.

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

- ✓ At 3:35 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.
- ✓ In the event that a family does not want their child to ride the bus, the school must be notified with the student's dismissal arrangements by 2:00pm.

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 a private van service. 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 8:20 am. and dismiss at 3:50 pm Mon –Thurs and at 2:50 pm 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 request signed by the family/legal guardian that is 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 7:35 a.m.** Neither BCS nor PS 23 will take responsibility for any student arriving before this time. **Students should not be left unattended at either the Vernon Street or Willoughby Avenue entrances.** Families arriving at 7:35 a.m. must drop students off to an adult at the Willoughby Avenue entrance. Students are then allowed to enter the auditorium once the first bus arrives. All students arriving prior to 8:00 a.m. must go to the auditorium. Once the bell rings at 8:00 a.m. students in the auditorium will be escorted to the cafeteria by school faculty. At 8:00 a.m. all families should be utilizing the Vernon Avenue entrance in order to enter the school. All students should then proceed to 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 at their appropriate grade level tables. 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 to the third floor classrooms by BCS staff members. Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. should go directly to the third floor. 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 at 2:50 p.m. on Friday. Families should enter the building through the Vernon Avenue entrance between 3:50 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. 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. At this time, all students are able to eat free of charge. 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.

Family & Visitor Policy

This 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 2 p.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.

Visits by 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. 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.

Maintenance of Public Order on School Property

In accordance with Chancellor's regulation A-410 Maintenance of Public Order on School Property, the Principal 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 Principal 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 Principal. 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.

Wellness and Medication

BCS Policy regarding illness is designed to insure the health and safety of all of 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 Principal 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 Principal.

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.

The School Nurse

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 Principal, 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 Principal approves all trips, local or otherwise.
- All trips require a minimum of one adult (including families) to every 10 students. Adults can be faculty/staff and family members above 18 years of age. 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 two weeks before the intended trip, or three weeks prior if there is a fee for the trip involved. 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 Principal.

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 Principal. The Principal 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 Principal 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 and at school events.

Vandalism

Any student vandalizing school property will be reported to the Principal 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/Complaint Protocol

In the event that a family member or staff member is dissatisfied or feels victimized, they are free to lodge a complaint, the following guidelines will be followed:

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

If the complaint is against the Principal, the complainant should try to rectify the situation with the Principal directly, 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, or the Vice-Chair, Michael Catlyn. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees in conjunction with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees will hear the complaint, notify the Principal, 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 Principal 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 an academic and financially viable institution. The Board meets once every month at the School, on a designated day that is publicly posted, from 5:45 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 Principal 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.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is the parent body of the Brooklyn Charter School. The PTA assembles to create strategies to support the school, as well as, to discuss and help solve school issues. Members may invite the Principal or members of the teaching staff to their meetings for support or to gain information or clarity around an issue. The PTA is facilitated by parents, and meets according to the schedule determined by members of the committee. The PTA President and the Principal work together to organize events. The PTA has a mailbox in the main office where letters, notes, suggestions and comments can be left for the PTA President and/or the steering committee.

Volunteers

The Brooklyn Charter School administration and teaching staff welcomes any family member who would like to volunteer and support the school. Interested parties should speak directly with the Principal or the Parent Liaison.

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.

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 Reports, the Discipline Policy, Applications and guidelines for enrollment and other pertinent information regarding BCS.

BCS Board of Trustees Contact

Anyone attempting to contact the BCS Board of Trustees can submit a request in writing to the Principal 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 month. 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 events. The current yearlong calendar can be found www.brooklyncharter.org. Calendars are also sent home on a monthly basis, highlighting major events for each month.

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 Principal 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 Principal, 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 communication log. Special announcements are also made through School Messenger, an automated telephone service.

Home Visits

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

The Principals' Mailbox

The Principal 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 will communicate with parents to offer updates on student progress in between report card periods. 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.

Report Cards

Four times each year (November, January, April and June) teachers prepare report cards that summarize students’ development and achievement in core academic and social/behavioral areas. These reports are discussed formally during 2 Parent-Teacher Conferences, which are scheduled in November and April (see yearlong calendar). At the end of the school year (June), families receive either in person or via mail, the completed annual Report Card.

Celebrations and Family Involvement Days

Twice each year, BCS hosts a festival for families and students to highlight student work. A BCS Fest is held in May and a School Picnic 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.

Accident/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*).

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 Principal 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 Principal. In the event of the pending emergency, the Principal will be notified first. The Principal 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 Principals’ office. The use of NOAA weather Radio will be used.

It is the duty of the Principal 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 Principal 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. BCS welcomes 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:

BCS Lottery Preferences:

Brooklyn Charter School offers lottery preferences for the following:

1. Siblings of students who are enrolled in the charter school during the charter school admission season will be admitted for the following school year;
2. Students who are residents of Community School District 14;
3. Students with current Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.'s);
4. Students who are deemed English Language Learners (ELL's);
5. Students who qualify for the Free/Reduced Lunch Program (FRLP)

The lottery preferences will apply to all Brooklyn Charter School kindergarten applications and other grades (1-5) with available seats.

Enrollment Process

Stage 1:

- BCS begins active recruitment in the first week of December. Interested families can submit an on-line application through the BCS website at www.brooklyncharter.org Applications can also be submitted in person, by mail or fax.
- Prospective students may 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 (January-March).

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, Charter School Common on-line Application, 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 basic information. 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 seats. 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
 - Preference for admission is given to the aforementioned preferences list on page 21.
 - 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 seats. If seats become available in Grades 1-5, the wait-list is called according to the date the application was received. Separate waiting lists will be maintained for each grade level in the event that vacancies occur.

Preference for admission is based on the aforementioned preferences listed on page 21:

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 wait-list. The school shall maintain documentation of attempts made to contact the parent/guardian of any student removed from the wait-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, local newspapers and postings with 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.