



The Bronx Charter Schools for Better Learning Safety Plan

The Bronx Charter Schools for Better Learning (BBL) provides a safe, nurturing environment so that all students feel safe and are able to focus on learning activities. To continue to foster such an environment we remain clear that the safety of our students and staff is our top priority. Our policies and procedures reflect that priority. Moreover, we maintain an outstanding relationship with our collocated schools such that issues inside and outside the school building are effectively communicated between BBL and our NYCDOE schools to swiftly resolve them. We recognize that both the established policies and consistent communication with our collocated schools are key to protecting our children in the face of threats of violence and threats of natural disasters. As such, preventing any direct harm to our students by way of those threats starts with preparation for them and taking all steps necessary to prevent them. Furthermore, should an emergency occur, we seek to mitigate their effects, stabilize our environment afterwards and ultimately restore a safe, learning environment.

Effective Classroom Practices Training for all Staff:

Preventing acts of aggression or violence is of utmost importance in providing a positive school culture. In this prevention effort, during our annual Staff Orientation Week, prior to the start of the school year, staff are required to participate in emergency response training conducted by our administration. Furthermore, all BBL staff are required to participate in workshops and ongoing professional development on Effective Classroom Practices (page 9 of [Parent Handbook](#)) In building a caring community, we recognize the importance of continuous professional development to implement best practices and address individual situations as they arise. Our teaching staff holds daily morning meetings to make connections with students and to gauge the social/emotional state of each individual student. These meetings have a specific structure and system so that each student participates. If a student reveals information that indicates a problem or challenge, he/she is facing or is aware of, the teacher notifies our guidance staff who then meets with the student to discuss the issue presented.

If the Guidance Counselor determines that administration must be notified, he/she will notify the principal/designee to identify a current or potential violation of the BBL Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct:

A detailed Code of Conduct describes the expected behavior of student, staff and visitors to the school buildings and the disciplinary actions. Expectations will be communicated to all students, staff and parents. The BBL Code of Conduct can be found in our [Parent Handbook](#) (pages 25-36), located on our website:

<https://www.bronxbetterlearning.org/parent-resources/information-resources>

In either case, the parent is notified to inform him/her of any penalty and to partner with us to best support the student going forward.

As part of our community-building plans to prevent and correct, if necessary, any instances of bullying or other poor social behavior, we have a biweekly lesson by our guidance staff on varying topics of social/emotional learning. Moreover, we invite organizations to provide assemblies for our students on bullying. Any violation of our code of conduct is approached from a restorative justice lens to encourage students against further transgressions and to provide support for those students who may have been the target of said transgression.

Contacting Parents:

Parents are our first partners in our students' education and all efforts to keep our students feeling safe are done through our partnership with them. In the event of a school emergency, BBL has policies and procedures in place to inform parents/guardians (page 12 of the [Parent Handbook](#)). Parents/guardians will be notified, if necessary, via email, phone and text messaging in the event of an unscheduled early dismissal due to a school emergency. Additionally, BBL has policies and procedures (page 12 of the [Parent Handbook](#)) in place to contact parents in the event of an act of violence perpetrated by an individual within our school community.

Through our partnership with our NYCDOE collocated schools we actively participate in the Building Response Team. The Building Response Teams meet once a month to address current and ongoing issues. Any coordination of schedules or special activities are discussed and planned for at the meetings. More importantly, as it relates to school emergencies, the Building Response Teams discuss any emerging issues of safety to the team to address and curb.

School Safety Agents:

Each BBL school building has School Safety Agents to log in school visitors and, when necessary, respond to emergencies in the building and on school grounds. The School Safety Agents have an excellent working relationship with the local police precinct and will immediately call them to the school to secure any threats. School Safety Agents are well-trained by the NYPD and work closely with the BBL administrative team to ensure a safe environment for staff and students.

Training and Drills:

All principals are required to complete mandatory Emergency Readiness training, which is valid for two years. Training is offered online during July and August, and during the school year for new principals who begin their positions after September 1.

All drills are building wide and are scheduled by our Building Response Team to meet the necessary mandates of the NYCDOE. These drills are thus coordinated between the principals/designees and the School Safety Agents to ensure the safety of all staff and students. The PA system in the building is used to alert all collocated schools of the drill and in the event of an actual emergency. These emergencies include dangerous storms, hazardous material spillages, mass casualty accidents, active shooters, pandemics and other emergencies that threaten the safety and/or health of our staff and students.

Fire Drills: Fire drills are scheduled to train staff and students in emergency evacuation procedures to leave the building in the shortest time possible.

Teachers are trained to:

- Grab evacuation folder (with attendance sheet and Assembly Cards).
- Lead students to evacuation location as identified on Fire Drill Posters. ALWAYS LISTEN FOR ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS.
- Take attendance and account for students.
- Report injuries, problems, or missing students to school staff and first responders using Assembly Cards.

Soft Lockdown (Shelter-In) Drills: Soft lockdown drills train staff and students to be prepared to remain in classrooms, away from windows, in the event that a threat or some threatening activity comes from outside the school building.

Teachers are trained to:

- Increase situational awareness.
- Conduct business as usual. The Shelter-In directive will remain in effect until hearing the “All Clear” message: “The Shelter-In has been lifted,” followed by specific directions

Hard Lockdown: Hard lockdown drills train staff and students to remove themselves from visibility in the event that an intruder enters the building. Any students not already in a classroom or office will go to the closest one and remain there until the drill is complete. Doors are locked, lights are turned off and all staff and students remain out of sight from the hallway until the lockdown is lifted.

Bus Drills: BBL Staff conduct bus drills, in cooperation with the bus drivers, with students who take the bus.

As stated above, all emergency procedures are intended to prepare staff and students to remain calm and focused on the safety of self and others in the event of an actual emergency. BBL works with our staff and students to prevent threats by members of our community. Additionally, BBL works collaboratively with our collocated schools to ensure that all systems in place work together to secure the building and the people in it. The team conducts a debrief after every drill with school leaders, as well as a multi-agency debrief to assess effectiveness and identify any areas where corrective action may be required. Our communication is scheduled through the Building Response Team (BRT) and continues throughout the year as different situations present themselves.

Emergency Response Protocols:

Quick and accurate contact with appropriated law enforcement officials is essential in the event of an emergency. These relationships have been established by participation of members on the BRT. The means to contacting law enforcement officials and Department of Education safety officials is documented in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan

For Building-Level safety Response Plan and protocols, please contact your building administrator.

PERIOD FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: August 25, 2022 to September 23, 2022

PRESENTATION TO BBL BOARD FOR APPROVAL: August 25, 2022

BOARD ADOPTED: August 25, 2022