



## **Assisting Students Experiencing Instability**

Boys' Latin of Philadelphia ("Boys' Latin" or "the school") prepares boys for success in college and beyond. In compliance with *24 P.S. § 13-1331.1 Act 1 of 2022 Assisting Students Experiencing Instability* ("Act 1"), Boys' Latin promotes timely high school graduation and facilitates equal access to academics and extracurricular activities and the removal of systemic barriers for students who experience education instability.

### **Introduction:**

Act 1 was signed into law on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and was amended through Act 55 of 2022 ("Act 55"). Act 1 became effective beginning with the 2021-22 school year ("SY2022"). Boys' Latin is required to fulfill the mandates of Act 1 to ensure that, beginning with SY2022 and continuing in all subsequent years, eligible students are able to access a diploma at Boys' Latin, secure a diploma from their prior school entity, or obtain a Keystone Diploma. Accordingly, Boys' Latin identifies students who were eligible in SY2022 but did not receive the benefits of Act 1, as well as eligible students in subsequent years, and fulfills Act 1 obligations.

### **Eligibility and Identification:**

Boys' Latin identifies eligible students who experience education instability. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania ("Pennsylvania" or "the state") defines a student experiencing "education instability" as a student who has one or more changes in school entity enrollment during a single school year as a result of any of the following:

- Homelessness, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and as determined by the school entity.
- An adjudication of dependency under 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 (relating to child protective services) and 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 (relating to juvenile matters).
- An adjudication of delinquency under 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 and 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 as disclosed at the discretion of the parent or guardian of the student.
- An adjudication as part of court-ordered services under voluntary placement or custody agreement.

Boys' Latin provides support to all eligible students. The school is flexible in determining eligibility based on minimal documentation. Please note that shelter providers, outreach workers, case managers, juvenile probation officers, and others may confirm eligibility in a variety of ways including but not limited to by letter, email, verbal confirmation, or other documentation. Parents/guardians and students maintain the choice regarding what information to share with Boys' Latin. The school keeps eligibility information confidential, including ensuring that an assigned point of contact or other administrative staff does not disclose the basis of a student's eligibility to other school staff without permission from the student, while allowing the student to access all services, supports, and protections of the law.

**Policies and Procedures:**

Boys' Latin ensures equal access to educational activities, extracurricular activities, and school-sponsored events, even if deadlines have passed and a student arrives mid-year.

***Establish a Point of Contact:***

The school assigns a point of contact to all eligible students, and adds the point of contact's name and contact information to the student's education record and shares this information with the student's education decision makers. The point of contact ensures timely completion of all tasks required by Act 1, including:

- Facilitating a student's expedited consultation with the school counselor or mental health professionals, as appropriate.
- Facilitating the prompt placement of a student in the appropriate courses.
- Connecting the student with educational services that meet the student's specific needs.
- Immediately requesting that the prior school entity, county agency, and the student's educational decision maker provide the student's complete education record, including an Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") or 504 service agreement ("504 Plan"), if applicable.
- For students in grades nine through 12, developing and executing a graduation plan in collaboration with the student to support the student's on-time graduation.
- Adding the graduation plan to the student's education record.

***Ensure Equal Access:***

The school eliminates barriers to equal participation. Please note that if a Boys' Latin requirement precludes a student who is otherwise eligible from participating, the school lifts the requirement to allow participation. The school allows students to participate in any school-sponsored or extracurricular activities, including but not limited to clubs, athletics, performing arts, class trips, social events, career and technical education, internships, and specialized classes if they meet placement and qualification requirements. Please note that Boys' Latin allows students to participate in school events even if students could not meet the registration deadline due to attending a prior school. Please also note that the school supports students in obtaining school uniforms so as to avoid any delays.

***Eliminate Fees and Fines:***

The school waives fees that would otherwise be assessed against a student. Please note that some fees to be waived for students experiencing educational instability include, but are not limited to: School ID fees, uniform fees, participation fees for athletics, extracurricular activities, school-sponsored trips, or clubs, course fees, materials fees, fees assessed for lost or damaged materials, athletic physical exams fees, parking or driving fees, school lunch fees, library fees, locker or padlock rental or replacement fees, summer school and credit recovery fees, technology fees, and graduation regalia fees.

***Assess Graduation Progress:***

The school awards students full or partial credits for work satisfactorily completed at prior school entities, including those issued from a school associated with a residential placement. The school assesses a student's credits to investigate whether a student has, at a prior school, already completed a course that meets a requirement to ensure that these credits "count" toward graduation. Boys' Latin waives a course needed for graduation if the student has (1) completed similar course work at another school entity or (2) demonstrated competence in the content area. Please note that if a course cannot be waived, Boys' Latin provides an "alternative or modified course" that will assist a student with acquiring the required work or competency requirements by the student's anticipated graduation date.

**Create a Graduation Plan:**

Boys' Latin provides eligible students in grades nine through 12 with an individualized and student specific graduation plan, which specifies the courses necessary for a student to graduate and transition to postsecondary education and employment. After considering all full and partial credits and whether required courses have been waived or alternative or modified courses have been offered, Boys' Latin determines if a student has met graduation requirements. If so, the student shall graduate with their peers and participate in the graduation ceremony. Please note that the school treats students relying on Act 1 in the same manner as other students with regard to graduation and the weight accorded to their diploma.

**Explore Alternative Pathways to Graduation:**

If a student is unable to graduate from their current school after all credits are verified, all required courses are waived, and all alternative courses have been offered, then Boys' Latin solicits a diploma from the student's prior school, if the student meets the graduation requirements of the prior school entity. If a student is not able to graduate from Boys' Latin or a prior school entity, Boys' Latin facilitates and works with the Pennsylvania Department of Education ("PDE") to determine whether the student is eligible to receive a Keystone Diploma. A student shall be eligible for a Keystone Diploma if the student meets statewide graduation requirements set forth in 24 P.S. § 1-121. Please note that Act 55 allows Keystone Diplomas to be retroactively awarded to students who would have been eligible for graduation through this process in SY2022. Please also note that a Keystone Diploma has the full force of a school district issue diploma and shall be recognized as a valid diploma by institutions of higher education and vocational programs and for purposes of industry certificates. If issued, the school shall maintain the student's Keystone Diploma in the student's permanent record. Please note that students who are eligible for the protections of Act 1 are not penalized if they were unable to take the 2020 Keystone Exams due to COVID-19.

**Special Education:**

Please note that is the mandates of Act 1 conflict in any way with the rights a student has under an IEP or 504 Plan, Boys' Latin implements the requirements specific to the student with a disability under the applicable disability laws. Acts 1 does not abridge a student's right to special education or the right to graduate either through credit acquisition or through the completion of IEP goals. Please also note that students who have IEPs may still elect to remain in school until age 21, even if Act 1 offers an earlier pathway to graduation. Furthermore, these students also continue to have the right to participate in the graduation ceremony with their peers in the current graduating class, even if they are electing to stay in school until age 21.

**Point of Contact:**

School	Contact Name	Contact Email Address
Middle School	Rebecca Nicolas	<a href="mailto:rnicolas@boyslatin.org">rnicolas@boyslatin.org</a>
High School	na'Khia Washington	<a href="mailto:nwashington@boyslatin.org">nwashington@boyslatin.org</a>