

# Berkshire School

## Student and Family Handbook

### 2025-2026



*Berkshire School ("Berkshire" or the "School") has published and distributed to members of its community this Student and Family Handbook (the "Handbook") for the purpose of providing information on aspects of student and campus life to help students gain as much as possible from their experience at the School. Students, their families, faculty, administration, and staff should all read and be familiar with the contents of the Handbook so that each member of the community knows and understands our expectations. While policies in this Handbook will generally apply, the School may take actions that it determines to be in the best interests of the School, its faculty, and its students. This Handbook does not limit the authority of the School to alter, interpret, and implement its rules, policies, and procedures before, during, and after the school year. In addition, any duties that are assigned to specific administrators in this Handbook may be delegated, as the School determines appropriate. This Handbook is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to create, nor does it create, a contract or part of a contract in any way, including, but not limited to, between Berkshire and any parent, guardian, or student affiliated with or attending the School. Berkshire may add, revise, and/or delete School policies before, during, and after the school year.*

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## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

<b>Main Number</b>		<b>413-229-8511</b>
<b>Main Fax</b>		<b>413-229-1028</b>
<b>Duty Administrator</b>		<b>413-429-6132</b>
Head of School, Pieter Mulder		413-229-1213
Associate Head of School, Allison Letourneau		413-229-1221
Academics:	Dean of Academics, Heidi Woodworth	413-229-1262
	Dean of Faculty, John West	413-229-1251
Admission:	Main Office	413-229-1003
	Admission Office Fax	413-229-1016
Athletics:	Main Office	413-229-1291
	Director, Dan Driscoll	413-229-1292
	Head Athletic Trainer, Marc Wysocki	413-229-1296
Business:	Student Accounts	413-229-1267
	Bookstore and Student Bank	413-229-1217
	Business Office Fax	413-229-1229
College Counseling:	Main Office	413-229-1257
	Director, Andrea Bowler	413-229-1252
Counseling:	Director, Steph Holmes	413-229-1226
	Counseling Fax	413-229-1144
Inclusion & Belonging:	Dean of Inclusion & Belonging, Kelvin Martinez	413-229-1243
Kenefick Center for Learning:	Director, Dory Driscoll	413-229-1295
	Kenefick Center for Learning Fax	413-229-1120
Student Health:	Main Office	413-229-1275
	Student Health Services Fax	413-229-1014
Student Life:	Main Office	413-229-1219
	Dean of Students, Michael Bjurlin	413-229-1241
Technology:	Help Desk	413-229-1803
	Director, Jason Epstein	413-229-1270
<b>Form Deans</b>		
Form III:	Chris Perkins	413-229-1266
Form IV:	Amber West	413-229-1246
Form V:	Kathryn Barnhardt	413-229-1264
Form VI:	Mike McCabe	413-229-1255
<b>House Heads</b>		
Allen:	Alex Barnosky	413-717-8655
Buck:	Elizabeth Perkins	413-717-8654
Crispin/Gordon/Rose:	Sheri Mahoney	413-717-8646
de Windt:	John Palmer	413-717-8650
Eipper:	Chris Rokous	413-717-8642
Godman:	Becky McCabe	413-717-8587
MacMillan:	Lizzy Spalding	413-717-8648
Senior House:	April Burch	413-717-8636
Spurr:	Taylor Rathbun	413-717-8647
Stanley:	Lissa McGovern	413-717-8649

**Advisor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **WELCOME TO BERKSHIRE**

For students new to the School, much may seem unfamiliar at first. It's entirely normal to feel confused during your first few days—don't worry. All members of our community will do their best to help you feel at home, and before long, you'll find yourself a part of Berkshire. From day one, our student leaders are here to answer your questions, explain our customs, and support your transition. As a new student, you'll participate in orientation activities led by these student leaders to help you better understand life at the School.

New students are assigned an advisor at the start of the school year. While this person will help you get settled, you'll have the opportunity to change advisors after a set period to ensure consistent communication and a good match for you and your family. That said, many students stay with their originally assigned advisor for all four years.

Your advisor will be closely involved in all aspects of your Berkshire experience and is always available to offer guidance or support. If you ever wish to change advisors, the Student Life Office is here to help. Additionally, each class has a designated form dean who works closely with advisors to support your academic and personal growth. Your form dean will get to know you and will be available during the opening days to answer any questions you may have about the School.

At Berkshire, we believe that the purpose of a secondary education is not only to prepare students for college, but also to help them become caring, productive members of society. Here, under the Mountain, we strive to be a cohesive and supportive community. Like any community, we rely on shared rules to promote safety, respect, and fairness. These expectations are outlined in this Handbook. They may seem detailed at first, but most are grounded in common sense and courtesy. If you act with thoughtfulness and integrity, you'll have no trouble navigating them. If something is unclear, don't hesitate to speak with the Dean of Students.

## INTRODUCTION TO BERKSHIRE

### Mission

Rooted in an inspiring natural setting, Berkshire School instills the highest standards of character, citizenship, and a commitment to academic, artistic, and athletic excellence. Our community fosters diversity, a dedication to environmental stewardship, and an enduring love for learning. *(The School's mission statement is currently undergoing revision to better reflect its evolving goals and values. This section will be updated once it is finalized.)*

### Motto

*Pro Vita Non Pro Schola Discimus:* "Learning—not just for school but for life."

### Berkshire Hymn

By Horace Irving Johnson, Class of 1913

All hail to Berkshire  
Set among the hills  
Bright and good and fair, thy  
Spirit in us thrills;  
In later lessons  
And in larger strife,  
May thy fair standards  
Be ours through life.

Backward we're turning  
As the end draws near  
To the years of gladness  
And the friendships dear;  
To work and play, to  
Conflicts lost and won,  
With fond regret for  
School days now done.

Glory to Berkshire,  
Let her praises ring,  
Far across the world her  
Students tribute bring;  
Still true to Berkshire,  
Parted though we be,  
We fight life's battles  
With strength from thee.

### Core Values

Berkshire School was founded in 1907 beneath the "dome" of Mt. Everett by Seaver Burton Buck, a Harvard graduate who taught at Hackley School. During the thirty-five years that Mr. Buck was Headmaster, Berkshire evolved into a substantial and vibrant institution. Today, Berkshire is committed to creating and supporting a just, nurturing community based on the following core values:

- *Curiosity:* To question, to explore, to discover, to learn about oneself and others, and to embrace new experiences, not just for school but for life.
- *Integrity:* To be honest and accountable to oneself and to others, to trust and be trusted, to be disciplined and responsible, in all academic pursuits and in all relationships.
- *Respect:* To respect oneself and others, one's place and surroundings, to consider intent and impact, and to act in ways that show consideration and understanding.
- *Inclusion:* To understand and learn from differences, to welcome the open exchange of ideas, and to create safe and affirming communities that value every person.
- *Perseverance:* To be steadfast and persistent in the face of challenge or obstacle, to rise above mistakes and failures, and to see things through to completion.
- *Resilience:* To set a new direction in response to changing circumstances, to manage and adapt to adversity, and to bounce back and regain one's footing with confidence and purpose.

These core values include every aspect of life at Berkshire, e.g., our admission process, our standards of academic integrity in our classrooms, social climate of our dorms, sportsmanship in athletic programs, leadership and community service opportunities, and our standards of discipline.

Berkshire offers academic programs designed to challenge and motivate a diverse population of students to engage in creative, critical, and reflective thinking and questioning. Our faculty and staff value hard work and authenticity in experience, perspective, and opinion. We are committed to engaging students from a variety of academic backgrounds in a rigorous college preparatory curriculum.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The School admits qualified students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or any other status protected by applicable law, and extends to them all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. The School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or any other status protected by applicable law in the administration of its admissions, financial aid, and loans, and its educational, athletic, and other programs.

### **Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

Berkshire strives to create a global community that reflects the world around us and the backgrounds, experiences, identities, genders, perspectives, races, religions and talents that each member brings to our School. We believe that a diverse and inclusive community supports and respects all cultures, ethnicities, languages, philosophies, political views, and sexual orientations that exist within and beyond our School.

### **Accreditation**

Berkshire School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Accreditation by NEASC signifies that a school meets rigorous standards of educational quality, institutional integrity, and continuous improvement. It reflects a school's commitment to student learning, strong governance, and alignment with best practices in education.

### **Governance**

The School is governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees. It is the responsibility of this body to plan, develop, and establish policy, and to assess the performance of the School consistent with the School's mission and philosophy. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the selection of the Head of School and works in close collaboration with the Head of School, though the Head of School is responsible for the implementation of policy and the day-to-day operations of the School. For a list of the School's current Trustees, please visit the School's website.



## HONOR CODE

Honor and integrity sit at the heart of the Berkshire community and are the basis of student life at Berkshire. Students understand that they are at all times to act honestly in all aspects of life at Berkshire, and the Honor Code places in their hands the responsibility for honorable conduct as a way of life. Founded on the basic principles that a student's word is their bond, that a student respects the integrity of personal property, that a student models academic honesty, and that a student's conduct is based on courtesy and concern for others, the Berkshire School Honor Code highlights the School's commitment to these values and provides a process for ensuring that they are promoted and perpetuated. As affirmation of these principles, students are required to review and sign the academic integrity statement at the start of each academic year.

### **Honor Code Preamble**

The cornerstone values of Berkshire School are honesty and integrity. The Honor Code codifies and symbolizes our collective commitment to these values. We believe that it is every community member's personal responsibility to uphold them by adhering to the spirit and the letter of Berkshire School's Honor Code.

### **Honor Code Constitution**

#### *Article 1: Violations*

- Academic violations may include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, and lying with respect to academic matters.
- Social violations may include, but are not limited to, theft, vandalism, and lying with respect to non-academic matters.
- It is a violation of the Honor Code to lie, mislead, or evade questions during an appearance before the Honor or Discipline Committee.

#### *Article 2: Process*

Any student who has violated the Honor Code may be required to appear before the Honor Committee or the Discipline Committee. In general, Academic Violations of the Honor Code are heard by the Honor Committee while Social Violations are heard by the Discipline Committee (whose composition and procedures are detailed under Disciplinary Response).

The Honor Committee is a standing committee of student leaders, faculty members, and a non-voting Chair. When the Honor Committee convenes to hear a case, it typically consists of three student members, three faculty members, and the Chair. The student appearing before an Honor Committee is supported by their advisor and form dean. The Honor Committee hears the case and makes a recommendation to the Head of School. If a rule violation is referred to the Honor Committee around a school break, the Chair of the Honor Committee reserves the right to convene the committee with only the faculty members of the committee present either in person or remotely. In these instances, the Honor Committee process will follow all of the same procedures and guidelines.

#### *Article 3: Consequences*

The Honor Committee may recommend consequences such as Warning with Respect to all Future Violations of the Honor Code; Warning and Suspension; or Dismissal to the Head of School. Upon receiving the recommendation from the Honor Committee, the Head of School will impose a sanction on the student, as appropriate, taking both the recommendation of the Committee plus any other pertinent information or circumstances into account. Ultimately, the Head of School will decide upon an appropriate sanction for the student in violation of the Honor Code.

#### *Article 4: The Honor Pledge*

The phrase "I pledge my honor" is short for "I pledge my honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid" and should be written on work handed in for credit and followed by a signature. On work submitted electronically, it should be typed out and followed by the student's name. Requiring and writing The Honor Pledge provides a

constant reminder to all members of the community that honor and integrity inform our daily lives at Berkshire. On exams and large papers, the phrase should be written out in full.

#### *Article 5: Promotion and Perpetuation*

The Honor Code Preamble and Constitution are explained to all students at the beginning of every academic year. All members of the community are expected to uphold and perpetuate Berkshire School's Honor Code.

### **Plagiarism and Cheating**

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, presenting an idea or product taken from another source as one's own work, or using another person's ideas, concepts, or language without proper documentation. Plagiarism may also include the use of AI technology without authorization and/or proper citation. To avoid plagiarism, students must cite everything that is not the direct result of their own thinking. Paraphrases (the translation of facts and ideas into one's own words) must also be cited. Single words or phrases that are particularly appropriate or illuminating, the organization of ideas, and the ordering of examples given in a source must all be documented.

The School defines cheating as availing oneself of the means to cheat and facilitating the capacity of another to cheat. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- taking notes or unauthorized aids (including wireless communication devices) into a test, examination, or quiz;
- copying from, or being influenced by, another's work while doing homework or during an assessment of any type;
- use of help on homework, tests, or written work that is beyond the limits specified by the classroom teacher; this includes the use of artificial intelligence;
- giving unauthorized aid to another student, allowing another student to copy work, or allowing another student to present "borrowed" work as original. In cases where one student aids another in this fashion, both are subject to disciplinary action.

Please remember that it is the responsibility of each member of this learning community to maintain and model the highest standards of personal and academic honor, honesty, and integrity. Those with questions about academic honesty/integrity should consult with their teachers, advisor, form dean, and/or the Dean of Academics.

### **Lying with Respect to Academic Matters**

Students are expected to be entirely forthright in their discussions about academic matters. Students who have lied, plagiarized, or cheated will generally be awarded no credit for the work in question and may be required to go before the Honor Committee.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### Academic Guidance

Teachers, advisors, form deans, and the Dean of Academics oversee students' academic progress at Berkshire. The advisor and form dean serve as the primary link between family and School. Families receive communication from the appropriate form dean at the beginning of the year outlining guidance and counseling procedures. Families may always contact the Dean of Academics, appropriate form dean, or advisor for additional information.

### Basic Expectations of Students

Students are expected to approach their studies with the seriousness that they deserve. Such an approach impacts their own success and the success of other students. Students are expected to meet the following basic expectations:

- abide by the Honor Code at all times;
- attend class;
- arrive to class on time, within dress guidelines, and with appropriate materials;
- complete homework and assessments on time;
- engage productively and respectfully during class;
- engage in timely and appropriate communication with teachers;
- work up to demonstrated potential; and
- adhere to the School's policies on the appropriate use of technology.

Students may receive a notice of *Not Meeting Expectations* on any grade report if the student:

- has multiple tardies or absences for a single class during the reporting period;
- consistently arrives to class unprepared, or does not turn in work consistently when it is due;
- exhibits disruptive behavior during class that distracts from the learning taking place; or
- has an Honor Code violation.

Any student who is *Not Meeting Expectations* is ineligible for academic honors.

### Credit Requirements

To graduate, students must earn 18 credits and fulfill the School's distribution requirements. Students earn one credit upon successful completion of a yearlong course, one-half credit upon successful completion of a semester course, and one-third credit upon completion of a trimester course.

The distribution requirements are as follows:

- *Arts*: one credit of visual and/or performing arts (all Third Formers take a full year of art)
- *English*: four years of form-level English and required every year while enrolled
- *History*: two years, including US History; plus World History in Form III and Modern World History in Form IV
- *Languages*: three years of the same language through level III
- *Mathematics*: three years, including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II (four years strongly encouraged)
- *Science*: two years of core laboratory science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- *Health and Wellness*: required for Fourth Formers

In keeping with our School motto, *Pro vita non pro schola discimus* ("Learning—not just for school, but for life"), Berkshire expects its graduates to achieve a level of social and behavioral maturity in addition to acceptable academic performance. Students who are unable or unwilling to meet the School's behavioral expectations will not be eligible for a Berkshire diploma.

## **Curriculum**

Academic offerings are listed in the *Curriculum Guide* on Berkshire School's website. Courses of study for the upcoming year are formed through consultation among students, advisors, form deans, and department chairs in the spring of each year. For new students, the Dean of Academics and department chairs propose a program that suits each individual's academic background and interests, and is sent to parents/guardians for their review. Advanced Level/Advancement Placement course(s) are determined by the appropriate department chair in consultation with department faculty. Questions about particular courses should be addressed to the Dean of Academics, appropriate form dean, or Department Chair.

## **Homework**

Homework is an essential dimension of any college preparatory program with high expectations for its students. Students may expect a homework assignment in every subject area in preparation for the next class meeting.

## **Late Work Policy**

Any student who misses work or instruction as a result of absence from class because of illness or other excused reasons is responsible for seeing that the work is made up. Students who expect to be out of school for more than one day, or boarding students who are sent home to recover from illness, are responsible for communicating with individual teachers via email and/or keeping up with daily assignments as posted on the School's LMS (Learning Management System) as their condition permits. Work missed during an excused leave must be completed within seven (7) calendar days upon a student's return to school. Extensions beyond the seven-day period must be approved by the student's form dean, who will communicate any approved extensions to the student's teacher(s).

Work submitted more than two weeks beyond the initial deadline will not earn credit. Without explicit permission from the Dean of Academics, teachers cannot grant an extension for credit beyond two weeks of the original due date. In the case of a Leave of Absence, the student's form dean will work with the student and their teachers to create a list of essential work that must be completed. Cases will be handled individually.

## **Assessments/Test/Examinations**

Teachers announce tests and other major assessments at least one week in advance. Students who have three or more tests scheduled for the same day may arrange at least 24 hours **in advance** to have one test rescheduled. The test that is rescheduled is typically the last test that was scheduled.

Any student whose absence is unexcused during an in-class assessment may make up the assessment with a 10% deduction. Students who willfully skip assessments could find themselves subject to a steeper penalty up to and including failing the assessment. Some smaller assessments may not be made up for credit and will receive a zero.

## **Grade Reports**

The academic year consists of three trimesters. Grades are available to families online in the Veracross Parent Portal at the end of each trimester; progress reports are available at each midpoint. Comments from teachers are written at the close of each trimester. For students who receive a grade of C- or lower and/or students who receive a *Not Meeting Expectations*, teachers also write comments at the midpoint of each trimester. Advisor comments are included with the fall and winter mid-term progress reports and at the end of the year. Families are encouraged to stay informed of their child's progress through communications with the advisor and appropriate form dean.

## **Grading System**

At the beginning of each course, teachers will share their grading scheme. To pass a yearlong course, the average of the three trimesters must be a passing grade. Additionally, Sixth Formers are required to pass all course work undertaken in the spring trimester in order to graduate.

Berkshire uses a grading system of A through F, with the following values assigned for computation of the grade-point average (GPA):

<b>A+</b> = 4.3 (97-100)	<b>B+</b> = 3.3 (87-89)	<b>C+</b> = 2.3 (77-79)	<b>D+</b> = 1.3 (67-69)	<b>F</b> = 0.0 (0-59)
<b>A</b> = 4.0 (93-96)	<b>B</b> = 3.0 (83-86)	<b>C</b> = 2.0 (73-76)	<b>D</b> = 1.0 (63-66)	
<b>A-</b> = 3.7 (90-92)	<b>B-</b> = 2.7 (80-82)	<b>C-</b> = 1.7 (70-72)	<b>D-</b> = 0.7 (60-62)	

### **Academic Recognition/Honor Roll**

Exceptional scholastic achievement is recognized through the Honor Roll at the end of each trimester. Students who have a grade-point average (GPA) of 3.3 or higher, no grades below C+, no incompletes, and no reports of *Not Meeting Expectations* are placed on the Honor Roll. Students who have a GPA of 3.7 or higher, no grades below B, no incompletes, and no reports of *Not Meeting Expectations* are placed on the High Honor Roll.

### **Academic Standing**

At the close of each trimester, the faculty reviews the academic and social progress of all students who have had academic or disciplinary difficulties and may recommend appropriate support and action. Students are placed on Academic Warning if they have failed one course, or have a grade point average below 2.3, or receive two *Not Meeting Expectations* in a given trimester. Students are placed on Academic Probation if they have been on Academic Warning for two consecutive trimesters; additionally, students are placed on Academic Probation if they have failed two courses, or have a grade point average below 2.0, or receive three or more *Not Meeting Expectations* in a given trimester. Any student on Academic Probation who falls below the threshold for Academic Warning during the probationary period (two trimesters) will be subject to dismissal. Any student who fails two or more courses for the year will also be subject to dismissal.

### **Advanced Placement Courses**

Honors and Advanced Placement sections are offered in some subjects. Course placements are based upon factors including the following: prior performance, standardized testing, placement tests, and department approval. Students who take an AP course are required to take the AP exam for that course. Please note that colleges will not award credit for an AP course without successful completion of the AP exam to the specific standards of the admitting school. The fee for the 2025-26 AP exam is \$99 per subject. Please refer to the *Curriculum Guide* for additional AP exam policies and information on exam availability.

### **Changing Courses**

Students may request course changes during the first two weeks of each trimester. In order to make changes in an approved schedule, students must initiate with their form dean a formal course-change request. If at any point it becomes apparent that a student's placement within a given discipline is inappropriate, the School may make appropriate changes to the student's schedule. If a student drops a course after the first trimester, the drop will be reflected on the transcript.

### **Auditing Courses**

Students wishing to audit a course (attend it without receiving credit) may request written permission from the Dean of Academics.

### **Independent Study**

Motivated students who demonstrate the commitment and aptitude to work independently at an advanced level may develop a project in partnership with a faculty advisor. An independent study is taken as a sixth course, either for a trimester or yearlong, and requires department and committee approval. Students must complete a final project or paper, as well as present their conclusions at A.R.I.S.E. (Advanced Research and Independent Study Exhibition) in the spring. Contact the Independent Study Coordinator for more information.

The purpose of Independent Study is to afford students the opportunity to pursue a course of study on a topic that has significant importance in the development of their overall academic program. Independent Study courses are meant to enhance, not substitute for, regularly-scheduled academic courses. We do not offer independent study in a course that is offered in the curriculum.

### **Outside Courses**

Credit earned at previous secondary schools may be applied toward a student's graduation requirements if the courses taken elsewhere are equivalent to those taught at Berkshire and have been approved in advance by the Dean of Academics. Some elective courses may be credit-bearing but do not count toward fulfillment of distribution requirements. Questions concerning credit should be directed to the Dean of Academics.

### **Promotion Standards**

Faculty, along with the Head of School and the administration, make the decision regarding a student's placement and readiness to move from one form to the next. The School must determine that a student must be deemed ready physically, emotionally, socially, psychologically, and academically to move to the next level.

### **Academic Accommodations**

The School does not discriminate against qualified applicants or students on the basis of disabilities that may be reasonably accommodated. The School will discuss with families of applicants with known disabilities whether the School will be able to offer their children the appropriate accommodations to help them be successful at the School.

The School is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities are provided with equal access to the School's programs and services, in accordance with applicable laws. The School requires documentation indicating that the student's disability substantially limits a major life activity and the requested accommodations with an explanation of why they may be needed. Students who present the School with appropriate documentation of a disability may be granted those requested academic accommodations that are supported by the documentation and considered reasonable in this educational setting. A student may be excused from the world languages requirement due to documented learning disabilities. To request an academic testing accommodation, the Accommodation Request Form, along with supporting documentation, should be submitted to the Director of the Kenefick Center for Learning.

The School's academic program is rigorous, and students are expected to meet high academic and community standards. As a primarily residential program, the School also expects students to demonstrate a good deal of independence and accountability. These pedagogical components are intended to help students develop for life at the School and beyond and, therefore, are fundamental to the School's program and environment. The School necessarily considers the foundational expectations for students and the services and support it can provide when considering requests for accommodations.

Even after supportive services and accommodations have been put in place, a student may still not be able to satisfactorily fulfill the School's academic requirements. In such instances, the form dean, Head of School, and other support personnel may decide that the accommodations put into place may not suffice to ensure the student's success at the School. This includes when a student presents requiring specific mental health, physical, or medical services inconsistent with, or beyond the scope of, services the School is able to reasonably provide. At that time, the Head of School or the Head's designee will decide whether it is appropriate for the student to remain at the School.

### **Academic Resources**

The teacher is always the first resource for academic support. Teachers have regularly scheduled office hours and may make other arrangements upon request. During evening study hall hours, the Math Resource Center (MRC) and the Writing Center are available for students to drop in. In addition, the Kenefick Center for Learning (KCL) offers one-to-one support in executive function, study skills, and learning strategies. KCL sessions occur during the student's free period(s) of the academic day. There are also KCL math tutoring sessions available during evening study hall hours. Questions about enrolling in KCL should be directed to the Director of KCL and appropriate form

dean.

### **Geier Library**

Geier Library is a warm, welcoming place for the entire Berkshire community. The open concept space is designed to accommodate classroom instruction, academic study space, and a place to relax. Small groups are welcome to use the library, and there is a designated area for quiet study at individual carrels. Librarians partner with teachers to provide skill-based information literacy instruction. In addition, students are encouraged to schedule follow-up one-on-one research consultation appointments with a librarian for additional help with projects and assignments. The library web page serves as a starting point to access our print and digital resources.

Resources may be borrowed from the library. We do not charge fines for overdue materials, but there are fines for lost or damaged items.

#### *Academic Collections*

The library houses a wide range of materials that meet both the academic and recreational needs of the Berkshire community. The collection consists of academic resources including a print collection that aligns with the curriculum and digital subscriptions to numerous college level academic databases that provide access to journal articles, magazines, ebooks, and streaming video content. Students and faculty/staff are encouraged to make requests and recommendations for resources to enhance the collection.

#### *Reading and Leisure*

The library maintains a collection of young adult fiction titles and graphic novels that reflect the diverse voices, experiences, and backgrounds of the Berkshire community that are available in print, eBook, and audiobook formats. The library provides access to digital news magazines through Flipster and offers faculty access to feature films through a streaming video service for classroom use.

#### *Guidelines and Hours*

The Geier Library staff are available for any questions about our resources and can assist in helping locate information and provide citation help for research needs. Students are expected to make use of all resources appropriately and respect the needs of others. Students may have drinks in covered containers and light snacks; no greasy, messy, or strong-smelling food is permitted.

The library is typically open the following hours:

- Monday – Friday: 7:45 AM-10:00 PM
- Saturday (Week 1): 7:45 AM-12:00 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 PM-10:00 PM

### **Standardized Testing**

In mid-October, fourth and fifth-form students are registered for, and expected to take, the PSAT administered by the School on campus. The School recommends that fifth-form students take the SAT and ACT in the winter/spring, and either or both tests an additional one to two times in the fall of their sixth-form year. Many students also choose to take the SAT subject tests to meet college application requirements, in addition to the SAT.

For the ACT and SAT results, students must contact those testing companies directly. Please keep in mind that the School only registers students for the PSAT; students must register for the SAT and ACT through the respective websites: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) and [www.sat.collegeboard.org](http://www.sat.collegeboard.org).

### **College Counseling**

The individualized College Counseling Program typically begins in November of the junior year with one on one counseling sessions and a variety of supportive programs. Please note, however, that the resources of the College Counseling Office are available to students and families at all grade levels. The College Counseling Office uses

platforms such as Naviance Student and College Kickstart as additional resources for students and families. The College Counseling page of Berkshire's website is also an excellent resource.

The core of the College Counseling Program is a sequence of individualized counseling meetings between Berkshire and families, with the goal of finding the best college match for each student. This mission is supported by a variety of programs such as essay writing workshops, financial aid workshops, college night programs with nationally known admissions officers, and panels with previous graduates. The College Counseling personnel work intensively with each student to build an appropriate college list and to complete strong and effective college applications and essays while also writing a letter of recommendation for each student and advocating for them at the colleges to which they apply.

### **College Days**

Students are allowed to miss up to four class days during their Berkshire career for the purpose of visiting colleges. College Visit Request leave forms are located in the College Counseling Office and must be turned in to the Student Life Office three days prior to the departure date. Students must first obtain a signature from their advisor, followed by their college counselor, form dean, teachers, and coach. A three-point penalty will be assigned to students handing in late forms. Failure to submit a form prior to departure may result in a student being placed on restriction or be found in violation of a Major School Rule violation concerning Permissions.

Students are encouraged to use School vacations for college visits to allow them to use their College Days for visits in late April after college acceptances have been received. Please refer to the Attendance Policy section under the Academic Program for additional information regarding missed commitments.

Sixth Formers should understand that College Days are to be used only for the purpose of meaningful college visits and should not be viewed as "free days" they are entitled to take for any purpose.

### **Commencement**

Commencement is a special, formal occasion and provides an opportunity to celebrate the unique gifts of the graduating students. The Commencement date is published in the School calendar. Rarely is the date of Commencement changed. Should this happen, the new date would be announced before Spring Recess.



## DAILY LIFE

### School Day Schedule

The daily academic schedule can be found in the Student and Parent Portals in Veracross.

### Advisors

While students are encouraged to look to all faculty members as potential mentors, a key person in each student's support network is the advisor. Acting in turn as advocate, surrogate parent and friend, advisors are charged with developing a supportive relationship with each advisee and maintaining frequent, informal, and formal contact with parents/guardians. Advisors are the first points of contact for parents/guardians with any concerns about their child.

### Attendance Policy

Berkshire is, first and foremost, a school, and, as such, we ask our students to meet high standards in and out of the classroom. Regular class attendance increases a student's probability for successful performance and fosters the development of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. When a member of our community is not present, we are diminished—and each commitment missed detracts from the student's learning and experience. Thus, it is imperative that students attend and be on time for every class, school event, extracurricular and co-curricular commitments, and *Pro Vita* programming and events. Put simply, we believe that the full Berkshire experience requires consistent presence and it is the responsibility of each student to meet required appointments.

Given these expectations, a student's absence, or the decision to take time away from school, is a serious one with particular expectations. **Students should not miss more than 20% of any given course. Long-term or accrued chronic absence from class jeopardizes a student's ability to earn credit and may necessitate that a student engages in summer or credit-recovery work or an alteration to the student's current and/or future courses.**

Any absences without approval from the School will be considered unexcused. The School monitors student attendance and takes appropriate steps to address any concerning attendance patterns. Anticipated absences should be reported to the Student Life Office and the student's form dean in advance of the absence to be considered "excused." While absences will be tracked by form deans and the Student Life Office, it is important and expected that families also keep track of absences. Please note that major school dates are published a year in advance and early departures during exam weeks, *Pro Vita*, or at the end of a marking period are not permitted.

An excessive number of unexcused absences may result in no credit for missed work and/or disciplinary action as determined appropriate by the School. Any sixth-form student who accumulates six (6) or more unexcused absences across School commitments in the spring trimester may be suspended and/or may be excluded from attending graduation and may have their diploma delayed or withheld.

### Tardiness

It is the responsibility of each student to be on time for required appointments. Alarm clock problems will never be accepted as an excuse for missing class or any other obligation.

Students will be marked tardy if they arrive late to class or other commitments **within the first ten (10) minutes**. Students arriving to class **after ten (10) minutes** should stay for the duration of class but will be marked *absent*.

Faculty are expected to begin all classes on time. Students are expected to wait for their teacher in the classroom for the duration of the academic period unless they are formally dismissed by an authorized administrator, such as the Dean of Academics, Dean of Faculty, or Department Chair.

### Religious and Cultural Observances

If a family celebrates a holiday for which a student will miss school for religious observance and worship, the student is asked to contact the Student Life Office and their teachers at least one week in advance to coordinate appropriate

support for the student. As a general practice, teachers try to avoid scheduling major activities, assignments, or assessments on religious holidays. Long-term assignments (assignments scheduled before the day immediately preceding a holiday and due on a day other than the day immediately following a holiday) may be assigned.

### **School Meetings**

School Meetings are held Monday and Thursday mornings in Allen Theater. As programs for School Meetings are normally of a serious nature, students are expected to enter the theater quietly and take their assigned seats. Cell phones are not permitted in School Meetings unless approved of in advance. Students should not stand in the aisles or in the front and rear of the auditorium before School Meetings begin. When the speaker takes their place on the stage, students are expected to immediately stop talking. At the conclusion of School Meetings, students should exit in a quiet, orderly fashion after allowing the Sixth Form and faculty to leave first. Students not in their assigned seats may be reported as absent.

### **Dress Guidelines and Appearance**

Berkshire's guidelines for dress are used to help students present themselves in a way that aligns both with the School's community standards and values and allows for individual expression and comfort. Clothing choices must adhere to the values of the School and must allow for normal daily movement. Cleanliness, neatness, simplicity, and modesty are expected. Footwear must be worn at all times. Students should expect to engage with adults in conversations about dress guidelines. If a student is asked by a faculty or staff member to change their attire because they are not in accordance with the dress guidelines, they should do so immediately. Students are responsible for any commitments missed while changing, including being marked late or absent from class. ***The dress guidelines are subject to change at any time.***

Classroom Dress: required in academic and community spaces (including Allen Theater, Campus Center) during the academic day (8:30 AM-3:00 PM) and during community dinner:

- tops and bottoms without tears or rips
- clothing and footwear that is appropriate for an active classroom environment in any given season (fingertip length for skirts, dresses and shorts; navel covered)
- Berkshire quarter zips, sweatshirts (without hood), and team-issued tops (no t-shirts or jerseys) are allowed
- clothing must cover undergarments; shirts and dresses must have fabric in the front and on the sides (under the arms)
- no t-shirts, hooded sweatshirts, sweatpants, joggers, yoga pants, loungewear, athletic wear (unless a Berkshire top), cut-off jean shorts, mesh shorts, team jerseys, slippers, shower shoes, or other notably casual apparel
- no hats in the classroom during the academic day, Campus Center during meals, Berkshire Hall, Morgan-Bellas-Dixon, and Allen Theater

Formal Dress: required at Senior Dinner, Prize Night, Commencement, other formal presentations, and events as determined by the School:

- tops may include: collared shirts with blazers and ties or bowties, blouses, dress shirts
- bottoms may include: dress pants, khakis, skirts, dresses, formal jumpsuits

Dress Down: permitted on certain days such as an extended break and other days communicated in advance

- clothing worn on these special days must not be ripped or torn, and it must adhere to our community standards
- sweatpants, hooded sweatshirts, t-shirts, and other athletic wear are permitted

**Athletic Dress:** Berkshire School's indoor and outdoor athletics facilities allow students to enjoy physical exercise options and competitions. In this environment, students should adhere to the following:

- shirts, jerseys, or other team-issued tops covering the midsection
- sleeveless shirts are permitted but may not reveal the torso
- being shirtless is strictly prohibited in any communal space on campus
- bathing suits, swimsuits, and tank tops revealing the torso are only permitted on the softball field, and while other School teams and programs are not using the field

Students are asked to use common sense in choosing their attire and may be asked to change clothes if they are inappropriately dressed or their garments do not promote community standards. Insensitive, disrespectful, and offensive attire is inappropriate at all times. Clothing that advertises banned substances or hateful speech or ideology is not permitted at any time and could result in disciplinary action. If you have any questions about the guidelines for dress, please call the Student Life Office at 413-229-1219.

### **Meals**

Because the dining hall is a very public place where families, students, faculty, staff, and guests gather daily, we expect everyone to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner considering the environment and the large number of people gathered. Students should be ambassadors of gracious living and must therefore clean up after themselves and deposit trash in the proper receptacles. Most meals in the dining hall are served buffet style, and students are free to sit where they wish. Once a week during the fall and spring, the community gathers in the dining hall for a shared meal; seating at community dinners is assigned. Students are expected to act appropriately and use good manners at both sit-down and buffet-style meals.

- Breakfast is served Monday through Saturday from 7:00-8:30 AM. On Sunday, continental breakfast is served from 8:00-9:00 AM, and brunch is served from 10:30 AM-12:30 PM. (Students are required to check-in at brunch.)
- Lunch is served Monday through Saturday from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM. (Advisory lunch begins at 11:35 AM on Wednesdays.)
- Dinner is served from 5:00-7:00 PM. On nights with special meals, dinner times may vary.
- Community Dinner occurs once a week during the fall and spring seasons. Attendance is required for all boarding students. Day students who are on campus during community dinners are required to attend. Students are required to sit at the tables to which they have been assigned. Students who do not sit at their assigned tables will receive dinner cuts. Also, if a table is not set, the students assigned to that table are required to find a free seat at another table. In other words, students whose tables are "closed" are not excused from dinner.

### **Shawn's Place**

Shawn's Place, the student snack bar, is located on the lower level of the Campus Center. Hours are:

- Monday-Friday: 9:00-11:00 AM, 1:00-5:00 PM, 7:00-8:00 PM (10:00 PM on Week 2 Fridays)
- Saturday: 9:00 AM-10:00 PM
- Sunday: 1:00-5:00 PM

### **Bookstore and Student Bank**

The McLanahan Bookstore and student bank are located on the lower level of the Campus Center. The bookstore is also the on-campus location for "lost and found." Hours are:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 8:30 AM-3:30 PM
- Wednesday: 8:30 AM-1:00 PM
- Saturday: 10:30 AM-12:30 PM

Students wishing to make withdrawals in excess of \$100 must give the bank a three-day notice. Students with cash

in excess of \$20 are urged to deposit such funds in their accounts for safekeeping.

### **Post Office**

The Post Office is located on the lower level of the Campus Center. Hours are:

- Monday-Friday: 8:00 AM-4:00 PM
- Saturday: 8:00 AM-12:00 PM

All students are assigned lockable mailboxes at the beginning of the year. Students are expected to check their mailboxes weekly. Students may post outgoing mail including packages at the Post Office. Letters mailed by 11:30 AM will go out the same day.

*Sending/Receiving Packages:* Package arrival notifications are sent to recipients via text and/or email. The School may inspect any and all packages and have them opened by the addressee in front of a staff or faculty member. The School may also open any packages that are addressed to Berkshire School, and not an individual. The following methods of shipping are available: USPS mail, FedEx, and UPS Third-Party Billing. For students to use UPS Third Party Billing, parents/guardians must have an established account with UPS, so that their child can use the account number. Berkshire's Post Office can send packages during regular hours and bill the account directly with FedEx, UPS, and USPS. Amazon Direct (no pickup), FedEx, and UPS offer pickup and delivery Monday through Friday, no Saturday delivery. USPS offers pickup and delivery Monday through Saturday.

Stamps may be purchased by cash only. Students sending letters outside the United States should consult a member of the Post Office staff about postage.

### **Sustainability**

Berkshire is a leader among independent schools in advancing the principles of sustainability, with a culture of conservation and environmental responsibility ingrained across campus and throughout all programs.

Berkshire uses a conceptual model to present sustainability as the pursuit toward three interrelated objectives: (1) environmental integrity, (2) economic justice, and (3) social equity. A detailed description of all sustainability policies and guidelines can be found on the sustainability link of the School's website.

All members of the Berkshire community are encouraged to:

- Recycle paper/cardboard, beverage containers, electronics, batteries, coat hangers, clothing, and universal wastes such as batteries and printer cartridges; reduce waste by eating everything taken in the dining hall; and reuse whenever possible.
- conserve energy by turning off lights and electronics when not in use; use CFL bulbs; keep windows closed; set thermostats to 68°F in the winter and 76°F in the summer; and take shorter showers.
- consider the environmental impact of items purchased, i.e., buy Energy Star rated electronics, paper with high recycled content, and no bottled water.

### **Spiritual Life**

Berkshire takes advantage of its nondenominational status to encourage students to develop spiritual awareness through a variety of activities. Whether through social service within the local community, participation in the voluntary campus religious services, or appreciation of the unique natural surroundings of the School, students will find ample opportunities for spiritual exploration. Students can sign up for transportation to local church services in the Student Life Office.

## **DAY STUDENT INFORMATION**

### **Vehicles on Campus**

Day students who have a license and wish to drive to school are required to register their vehicle with the Day Student Coordinator and will receive a Parking Permit that must be displayed in the vehicle at all times while on campus. Day student vehicles are to be parked in the lot adjacent to the Soffer Athletic Center. Day student drivers may not travel along the main driveway and should instead use the access road that passes in front of the Jackman Stewart Athletic Center to travel to and from the parking lot. Day student vehicles are only allowed to be used for traveling to school in the morning and leaving at the end of the day, except with special permission from the Dean of Students. (Boarding students are not allowed to have vehicles on campus or within 30 miles of the School.)

### **Illness or Lateness**

In order to maintain a safe and healthy environment for students and staff, families should refrain from sending students to school with any of the following: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, persistent cough, profuse discolored discharge from nose or eyes. Students who develop a fever of 100.0 degrees F or greater, vomiting, or diarrhea will be asked to go home. Students must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Parents are expected to notify the School if their child contracts a contagious illness such as strep throat, chicken pox, or head lice.

Parents/guardians of day students are asked to report by phone to Student Health Services (413-229-1275) before 8:00 AM each day if their child is not attending classes due to illness or a medical appointment. When their child cannot get to school for other reasons or may be coming in late, please call the Student Life Office (413-229-1219).

### **Inclement Weather and Overnight Stays**

Day students are to make every reasonable effort to attend classes. As Berkshire holds classes regardless of weather, parents/guardians and day student drivers are to use their discretion and not take any unnecessary risks due to inclement weather. Also, if weather is a concern during the day, the School may excuse day students from subsequent requirements. Day students who leave early are required to sign out at the Student Life Office. Permission to remain on campus overnight because of inclement weather may be granted. In all such cases, day students must obtain permission from the Student Life Office. Day students are invited to stay on campus on Saturday night on most open weekends. All requests to stay and permission from parents/guardians must be received in the Student Life Office by Thursday at 8:00 AM. The name of the student with whom they will stay, as well as the dorm must be provided.

### **Attendance for Special Programming**

Day students are required to attend special programming, such as guest speakers, held several times during the year as part of their school experience. Exceptions or conflicts must be cleared by the Dean of Students.

### **Locker Assignments and Showers**

Locker assignments will be issued at registration. Day student academic lockers are located in the Campus Center. Showers and locker room space are available for day students in the Soffer Athletic Center.

### **Evening Study Hall on Campus**

Day students who are on campus on school nights after 7:45 PM will follow the evening study hall expectations for their Form. All day students, with the exception of third-form students assigned to evening structured study hall, may be in the library at night without a pass. Students should contact their form dean with any questions.

## RESIDENTIAL LIFE

While many of the policies in this section apply to boarding students, day students are fully integrated members of the School community, which includes meals and spending time in the dormitories. Therefore, all students should be familiar with and adhere to residential life policies and expectations .

### Essential Skills for Student Success at Berkshire

As Berkshire is a residential program, students are expected to demonstrate a range of essential functional skills crucial for their growth and development. Fostering these skills supports success within our community and lays a strong foundation for a student's future endeavors. Students are expected to demonstrate a significant degree of independence and accountability in relation to their responsibilities and the expectations for the residential program.

Students are expected to maintain health and hygiene by regulating their sleep, practicing appropriate grooming, obtaining proper nutrition and maintaining a healthy environment. Students are encouraged to practice self-care, manage impulses and develop organizational skills in order to meet deadlines and fulfill obligations. Students must be able to responsibly adhere to medication compliance and seek help when needed. Appropriate use of our student health and support services is also essential for promoting overall well-being and academic success.

Additionally, students are expected to share living spaces respectfully. This includes effectively living with a roommate, respecting shared spaces, embracing diversity, establishing healthy boundaries, communicating effectively, using campus resources responsibly and engaging in interactions characterized by honesty, respect, and kindness. These skills are fundamental for students to thrive and excel in their academic and personal journeys at Berkshire.

### Dormitory Living

Dormitory living brings joys and sacrifices. Respect for the needs and preferences of others (both students and adults) is fundamental. House Heads and dorm parents are charged with promoting a safe, healthy, and orderly environment in the dorms. While each dorm may develop its own distinct culture, the expectations regarding student conduct in the dorms are the same. These expectations will be enforced consistently through the application of the Conduct System. Students are expected to respect each other's property, privacy, and quality of living. Residents are responsible for the cleanliness of their own rooms, as well as common areas inside and outside their dorms. The audio volume of music, gaming, personal entertainment, etc., should be low enough so that it is inaudible outside of the room; it is recommended that students bring headphones so as not to disturb roommates who may be studying.

### Room Assignments

Room assignments are made prior to the school year. Living with others is an important life lesson that involves learning to compromise, to appreciate others' perspectives, and to share conversation with others. The School assigns returning and new boarding students housing. Every effort is made to keep rooming assignments for the year, and students should seek the counsel of dorm heads, dorm parents, and the deans when there is disagreement or discontent.

### What to Bring

#### Important Items

- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| ● sheets (twin-XL size)   | ● wristwatch                 |
| ● pillow and pillow cases | ● laundry supplies           |
| ● bedspread/comforter     | ● personal health care items |
| ● blanket                 | ● clothes hangers            |
| ● towels and washcloths   | ● rain and cold weather gear |
| ● computer                | ● hair care necessities      |
| ● desk lamp               | ● shower caddy               |
| ● alarm clock             |                              |

### Optional Items

- throw rugs/carpet (no larger than 7'x9')
- mini booklight
- posters, pictures, etc.
- athletic equipment (other than required)
- flashlight
- lockable storage (no larger than 20"x30"x15")
- storage bins for food, snacks, seasonal clothing
- footwear for fun on the Mountain
- bicycles, non-motorized skateboards/scooters, rollerblades, or other such equipment; must also bring a bicycle helmet and/or protective gear for safety; a bicycle/scooter lock is recommended
- cell phone case/sleeve to hold dorm key card
- travel mug and reusable water bottle
- umbrella
- refrigerator (may not exceed 3.2 cubic feet)

The School recommends that all belongings be labeled with the student's name.

The following items are **not permitted** in student dorm rooms:

- Additional furniture (ex. bedside tables, couches, chairs, ottomans, etc.) must be approved by the Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life and cannot be wider/longer than 60 inches
- Cloth decor (including flags) hanging from ceilings, around beds, and over windows
- Extension cords (beyond approved surge protectors)
- Televisions or computer monitors larger than 32 inches, video projectors, LCD/Plasma monitors or any other type of video projecting device are not allowed in rooms
- Gaming consoles are not allowed in rooms of Third Formers
- Heat-emitting cooking appliances, personal space heaters, sun lamps, air conditioners (electrical or other), and halogen lights
- incense, candles, matches, lighters
- Pictures, posters, and decor depicting drugs, alcohol, nicotine, or nudity
- Pets (this includes fish and anything else that would live in an aquarium)

Students are advised not to bring valuables; if they choose to do so, students may want to consider a small lock box. Parents should consider covering their child's belongings under their homeowner's policy. **Berkshire is not responsible for the loss of personal property.**

### **Dormitory Furniture and Furnishings**

*Mattresses:* The School provides approved fire-retardant mattresses. Students who wish to provide their own mattress must submit proof to the Student Life Office that it meets Massachusetts standards. Mattresses and bedsprings are not to be used on the floor.

*Furnishings:* The following basic room furnishings are provided by the School: bed frame, twin mattress (XL), dresser, desk, desk chair, window shades, and trash and recycling bins. Only one piece of personal furniture, such as a sofa or an upholstered chair (maximum length/depth of 60"), may be allowed per room. To meet fire and safety codes, such furniture must be situated under a lofted bed. All personal furniture must be pre-approved by the Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life prior to move-in day.

*Appliances:* Only the following electrical appliances are permitted in dormitory rooms: clocks, radios, CD and iPod players, personal computers, hair dryers, razors, hair straighteners, and fans. Cell phones, used in accordance with School and dorm rules, are permitted.

*Television:* Large televisions are installed in common rooms for students' viewing; however, televisions may not be used during the academic day, study hall, or after lights-out. Common room and student center televisions may not

be used before 5:30 PM on weekday afternoons and only after 12:30 PM on class Saturdays. On weekends, TVs should be turned off at midnight.

### **Gaming Consoles and Streaming Devices**

Students are allowed a maximum of four devices on Berkshire's wifi network; this includes their computer and phone (allowing for two additional devices).

### **Smart Home and Personal Surveillance Devices**

Smart home devices, such as Amazon Alexa, Google Home, or similar systems, are not permitted on Berkshire's network. The School does not allow students to use surveillance cameras and other devices (including motion sensors, entry sensors, keypads, doorbells, etc.) on campus, including in the dormitories. Students with concerns about other students accessing their dorm room should speak to a dorm parent. Students may use Bluetooth-enabled speakers.

### **Directions for Care of Rooms**

Students are responsible for the condition of their room. Rooms should be kept generally clean and appropriate, reflecting the School's values. Dorm faculty and Prefects may inspect rooms during the week to ensure that students are meeting dormitory standards.

- Students should make their beds, keep floors clean, and empty wastebaskets daily. Those who struggle to maintain a clean room and effective study space will be assigned an earlier dorm check-in time after dinner in which to clean their room.
- School furniture may not be moved within the room, from the room, and should not be modified in any way. Some rooms have furniture which allows the bed to be bunked or lofted. Any changes must be approved by the House Head and the Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life.
- Students are expected to use painters tape or *Command Hooks* to hang items on their walls. Tacks, nails, regular tape, glue, etc. may not be used on the walls. LED light strips are permitted only if hung with *Command Hooks*. Repair fees for wall damage or residue left from LED light strips will be billed to families.
- Good taste should be used in decorating rooms. For instance, Berkshire does not permit advertisements for tobacco, drugs, or alcohol, or any items displaying nudity to be used as decorations. Empty alcoholic beverage containers and items with any drug or alcohol insignia are not allowed.
- Wall hangings must be widely spaced, meeting all fire code regulations and none should extend across the ceiling or outside of the room.
- Perishable food must be stored in sealed plastic containers.

Dorm rooms are the School's property and therefore may be inspected at any time. At the end of the year, students should leave their rooms in the same condition as when they arrived. Students are assessed the cost of any required damage repair, general cleaning, and/or trash removal.

### **Fire and Safety Standards**

In the interest of safety and to comply with the Fire Marshal's regulations and safety codes, students must strictly adhere to the following:

- Nothing may hang from or near the ceiling light fixtures or across the ceiling itself. Only one wall may be covered by a wall hanging, which must be fire-resistant and must be free and clear of any electrical outlet or fixture.
- Rooms may not be subdivided by furniture, sheets, blankets, or hangings to prevent clear access or view to and from the door. Beds may not be placed in the middle of the room—they must be arranged with one long side against a wall. Bed legs must be on the floor. Bureaus must have their backs against a wall, and desks are to have one side against the wall. Waterbeds are not permitted.
- Cloth coverings may not be used on any tables, chairs, or pieces of furniture.



- Halls must be kept clear at all times. Bicycles should not be stored in rooms.
- Students may have additional furniture in their rooms (see permissions and size limitations above) unless it prevents an easy exit from the room.
- Each student may have one desk lamp and one other lamp, which is not to exceed 100 watts. No light may be attached to a wall near a blanket. Due to state fire regulations, halogen lamps are not permitted.
- The use of electrical appliances such as toasters, popcorn machines, grilles, hot plates, hot pots, percolators, heating coils, space heaters, and heat lamps is prohibited. Such items found in dorm rooms will be confiscated. Students found using heat-producing appliances will be in violation of the Fire Hazards Rule.
- No lighting fixtures or electrical appliances may be wired into the closets of student rooms. Extension cords are not permitted.
- Tampering with lighting fixtures, outlets, switches, and panels is forbidden.
- Open flames of any kind are prohibited.
- Students may not tamper with fire hoses and extinguishers.
- Fire doors should be kept closed at all times.

Tampering with fire extinguishers, hoses, smoke alarms, and fuse boxes can endanger lives and is considered a Major School Rule violation. Possession of fireworks constitutes a similar hazard. Smoking in the dorms is considered a Major School Rule violation. Students may not have appliances that draw more than 300 watts in their rooms without approval of the House Head. Fans may be used during heat waves with the approval of the House Head. No window fans are permitted at any time.

### **Room Damages**

The facilities staff inspects all rooms a few times each year. Any damages over and above normal wear and tear may be charged equally to room occupants. Furniture, furnishings, and closet doors may not be removed from rooms assigned, or there will be charges for their restoration. Room doors should be kept free of stickers and markings. Students should lock doors when they leave and keep doors unlocked when they are in their rooms.

### **Fire Drills and Emergencies**

Detailed instructions regarding procedures to follow in case of fire are presented in dorm meetings at the beginning of the year, but students should remember the following: if at any time students suspect a fire, they should report it to the nearest faculty or staff member immediately. If students are certain a fire exists, they should first break the glass on the nearest firebox. When fire alarms sound, students must leave the building immediately and report to their assigned check-in areas to wait for instructions.

Students should not attempt to put out any substantial fire unless instructed to do so by a faculty or staff member. If students are in their rooms when fire alarms sound, they should:

- awaken roommates;
- turn on lights so faculty can make quick room checks;
- close all windows and open shades/curtains;
- dress as warmly as necessary;
- check door handles, but do not open the doors if handles are hot (instead go to windows and wait for assistance); close but do not lock doors when leaving;
- alert neighbors;
- leave buildings by assigned escape routes and proceed to check-in points;
- remain quiet and wait for instructions after leaving the building.

### **Hours**

Quiet hours are in effect in the dorms from 7:45 PM until the end of classes the next day. Noise should not be audible outside students' rooms. Study Hall is held from 8:00-10:00 PM (8:00-9:30 PM for Form III) Sunday through Friday nights. All students are required to check in for study hall at 7:45 PM and be accounted for by the dorm parent on

duty at 10:00 PM.

All students must be in their rooms during Study Hall (restricted study) unless they have a School pass to sign out to another destination. Students who do not follow the appropriate sign-out protocol or who alter passes written by teachers will be found in violation of the Major School Rule regarding permissions. Students may not visit other rooms during evening study periods or after lights-out unless they receive permission from a faculty member. Students may visit faculty apartments in their own dorms after 10:00 PM if a specific invitation has been extended.

Form Deans may place any student who is experiencing academic difficulties on restricted study. Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Formers, except those identified by the form deans, are allowed to sign out of the dorm to designated areas during evening study hall. Students who are restricted for class absences or for reaching Disciplinary Warning may lose study hall privileges for the period of the restriction. Students who reach Disciplinary Probation may lose the study hall privilege for the remainder of the trimester.

### **Lights-Out**

Lights-out for Third Formers is 10:30 PM; Fourth and Fifth Formers is 11:00 PM. Sixth Formers have unlimited lights but may lose the privilege if they do not act appropriately and respectfully after 11:00 PM. Sixth Formers who host Underformers in their room after 11:00 PM will lose the privilege. Third and Fourth Formers may request late lights for studying purposes two nights a week, but they must be in bed by 11:30 PM unless they have special permission from the dorm parent on duty. Fifth Formers can request late lights at any time, but they must be studying in their rooms after 10:00 PM unless they have received specific permission from the faculty member on duty. Late lights are not allowed on Sunday nights. The penalty for being out of a room after lights-out is three points for a first violation. Stricter penalties will be given to repeat offenders.

Saturday night check-in is 7:00-8:30 PM and 11:00 PM for all Third, Fourth, and Fifth Formers and 8:30 PM and 11:30 PM for Sixth Formers. All students are expected to be in their own room by 12:30 AM. For check-in on Saturday nights, students are required to report to the common room and have a face-to-face check-in with the faculty member on duty and sign-in personally. Students may not sign-in in groups but rather must see the faculty member individually.

### **Visitations**

Students are not permitted to have individuals of the opposite sex in dorm hallways, student rooms, or behind any closed door, except as specified by the Interdorm Visitation policy. Parents/guardians are permitted in their child's rooms at any time, and other close relatives may visit student rooms with prior permission from a dorm parent. Students may secure special permission to visit faculty in any dorm for extra help and dorm functions. Intimate sexual contact during visitation periods or at any other time or place on campus is unacceptable at Berkshire and a violation of the Visitations Rule.

### **Interdorm Visitation**

Interdorm Visitation offers students the chance to visit friends in other dorms by invitation during set hours and with clear guidelines. The goal is to support meaningful connections while maintaining a respectful and safe environment for everyone in our residential community.

#### *General Expectations:*

- By invitation only—all guests must receive an invitation from a resident student prior to entering a dorm of which they do not have residential status. Invitations must be explicit and consensual.
- All non-resident guests must enter dorms through main entrances and scan IN and OUT using REACH.
- Guest(s) may only visit their host's room and remain with the host during their visit.
- When non-residents are present, doors must be propped, and rooms should be well-lit.
- Relationships and connections are a meaningful part of student life at Berkshire. When participating in Visitation, students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that reflects our core values—especially

Respect, Inclusion, and Integrity. While a dorm room may feel more private than common areas, it remains a shared space where physical intimacy is not permitted at any time.

*Daytime Visitation Hours/Policies:*

Monday through Friday (Week 1): 12:00-7:40 PM | Friday (Week 2): 12:00-9:45 PM

Saturday: 12:00-10:30 PM | Sunday: 12:00-7:40 PM

- Residents/affiliates of female-identifying dorms are welcome to host and/or visit students who reside in, or affiliate with, other female-identifying dorms
- Residents and affiliates of male-identifying dorms are welcome to host and/or visit students who reside in, or affiliate with, other male-identifying dorms
- Residents and day student affiliates of CGR's All Gender Housing (AGH) are welcome to visit students who reside in or affiliate with either female- or male-identifying dorms; and/or host boarding students who have received AGH affiliation status (see next bullet)
- Any student who wishes to affiliate with All Gender Housing may do so by initiating a conversation with the Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life or the CGR House Head.

*Evening Visitation Hours/Policies (Open to IV, V, and VI Forms):*

Sunday through Friday (Week 1): 7:00-7:40 PM | Friday (Week 2): 7:00-9:45 PM

Saturday: 7:00-10:30 PM

- Residents and affiliates of all dorms are welcome to host and/or visit students who reside in, or affiliate with, any other dorms.

*Common Room Visitation Hours (Open to ALL Forms in ALL dorms):*

Monday through Friday (Week 1): 5:00-7:40 PM | Friday (Week 2): 5:00 -9:45 PM

Saturday: 5:00-10:30 PM | Sunday 12:00-7:40 PM

Failure to comply with the expectations, hours, and/or policies above will be considered a Visitation violation and will result in formal documentation and loss of the privilege for one week. Multiple violations of the above expectations, hours, and/or policies may be considered a violation of the Major School Rule regarding Visitations. Any student who is on Disciplinary Warning or Probation will lose their Visitation privileges.

Alumni and/or students not enrolled at Berkshire are not permitted in dormitories without the permission of the Dean of Students, the Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life, or the Duty Administrator.

**Overnight Guests**

In certain situations, the School may permit guests for overnight visits, including day students. Day students must make prior arrangements with the School at least one day in advance. Any person who was a student in prior years or the current year and is no longer enrolled in Berkshire is not permitted to stay overnight in a dormitory.

**Accommodations During School Breaks**

All students must leave the School during Thanksgiving Recess, Winter Recess, and Spring Recess. The School does not provide housing or meals, nor assume responsibility for students during vacation periods. During a long weekend, dorms will remain open and students will be permitted to remain in their own rooms. A student must not return before the published arrival dates on the calendar unless special arrangements have been made through the School. Dormitories are locked and supervision is not available during vacations. Students needing to travel the day after a vacation begins may stay the first night of the break if permission is obtained in advance from the School.

**Transportation During School Breaks**

Berkshire arranges charter bus transportation with faculty chaperones for school vacations. Fares are charged to the student's account. Chartered buses to and from Bradley International Airport, Framingham (MA), JFK Airport (only offered during major recesses), and to a Metro-North Train station are available at vacation times.

Students in need of ground transportation to or from airports or bus stations should make arrangements through the Student Life Office. Local taxi companies provide travel services for a fee and accept cash or credit cards; students are not permitted to charge taxi fares to the School. Students may not call taxis or car services for local day leave permissions without the permission of the Dean of Students or Duty Administrator. The School provides weekly van service to nearby Great Barrington while School is in session.

If a student misses a connection or has a change of plans, transportation must be canceled through the Student Life Office during regular school business hours to avoid the charge for any ground transportation that has been ordered. After school hours, parents/guardians are asked to report changes in plans to the Duty Administrator at 413-429-6132.

### **Other Transportation Resources**

For transportation needs at times other than vacations, the following livery service contacts are provided for families convenience in arranging travel needs:

Abbotts Limousine Service	Lee, MA	413-243-1645	<a href="http://www.abbottslimo.com">www.abbottslimo.com</a>
Executive Livery	Salisbury, CT	860-435-8000	
Morning Star Car Service	Amenia, NY	845-493-0211	<a href="http://www.morningstarcarservice.com/">www.morningstarcarservice.com/</a>

The transportation companies listed above are provided for general informational purposes only. Use of any of these companies is at the user's own risk. Berkshire does not arrange private transportation.

### **Summer Storage**

There is no on-campus storage. Summer storage of personal items is handled by Dorm Room Movers, a private company. Information on how items can be stored during the summer will be available in the spring. The School will discard any articles left in students' rooms in June, if not stored with movers.

### **Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Service**

Laundry and dry-cleaning service is available through E&R Laundry ([www.eandrcleaners.com](http://www.eandrcleaners.com)). Laundry drop off and pickup is located in designated areas within each dorm, and delivery times are posted in the dorms. Washers and dryers for student use are available in the basement of MacMillan dorm.

## **BOUNDS, PERMISSIONS TO LEAVE CAMPUS, AND STUDENT PRIVILEGES**

### **REACH Boarding Application**

At Berkshire School, the REACH Boarding Application is an essential tool used to streamline and manage various aspects of student life. It plays a crucial role in handling student leave requests, tracking attendance, and ensuring the overall safety and accountability of our boarding community. Additionally, REACH Boarding enhances communication between students and faculty, allowing for seamless coordination and support. By integrating these functions, the platform helps maintain an organized and secure school environment.

### **Bounds**

Students may not leave the bounds of the School campus unless they have permission to do so. The non-wooded areas of campus mark the daytime bounds of the School. Nighttime bounds are defined by those areas of campus with lantern lighting. In the evenings, students are expected to remain in areas where academic and social activities are scheduled. The football field may be used during evening free time for recreational activities. Students who sign out to the Mountain must follow the procedures listed under Local Day Permissions. The Mountain, which includes all wooded areas around campus, is closed at 7:00 PM or dark, whichever comes first. The Mountain is also closed during hunting season and may be closed if safety or weather conditions warrant it. The ropes course is out of bounds for all students unless a faculty member accompanies them. All fire escapes, rooftops, basements, and boiler rooms are considered out of bounds. Violation of bounds is considered a permissions violation.

### **Permissions to Leave Campus**

Students are required to follow the proper sign out procedures regardless of whether they have discussed their plans with the Student Life Office or had their parents/guardians call in. It is assumed that when students take an overnight or a day trip, they are going to the place that was approved by their parents/guardians and the School. They may not take an overnight or day trip to any other place without parental and School permission. All permissions to be away from the School for medical appointments must be first cleared through Student Health Services. Such appointments should be limited to the middle of the week, not on Saturday mornings when classes/programming are in session since the School does not sanction the combining of medical and social permissions. All non-medical sign-out and sign-in procedures are handled by the Student Life Office.

Boarding students are not allowed to leave School property after 7:45 PM without permission and are not allowed outside the School buildings after lights out until after 6:00 AM the next morning.

Day students who are on campus on school nights after 7:45 PM must follow the evening study hall expectations for their Form. All day students, with the exception of third-form students assigned to evening structured study hall, may be in the library at night without a pass. Day students are required to be off campus by the check-in time for their Form on Saturday nights. Boarding students may not go out of Sheffield without permission. Filling out a weekend permission form with the intent to deceive or going to an unapproved destination is a violation of the Permissions Rule. (See Sign-Out Procedures for more information.)

### **Day Leave Permissions**

Day leave permissions are submitted by students in the REACH Boarding application (REACH). For all day leave permissions, students are expected to properly “SISO” (Sign In and Sign Out) when they leave and scan back into their dorm when they return, using the online REACH Boarding application. Whenever a student leaves campus—whether on foot for a hike, by bicycle to visit town, by vehicle, or using any other mode of transportation—they must complete the appropriate REACH form. Students are not allowed to walk to the center of Sheffield or arrange car service/taxis for local travel. All weekday day leave permissions end at 7:45 PM.

Saturday permissions start after a student's last commitment (class or athletic) and end at 10:00 PM. No students may be excused from class to get an early start. Sunday permissions run from 8:00 AM to 7:45 PM. Students leaving early Sunday morning are advised to submit their day leave permission the day before. Students may not sign out for

dinner on nights when Community Dinners are served.

### **Sign-Out Procedures for Overnights and Special Requests (Boarding Students)**

Students must complete and submit permission forms through the REACH Boarding application prior to leaving campus overnight.

- Weekend overnights start after a student's last commitment (class or athletic) on Saturday and end at 7:45 PM Sunday. No student may be excused from class for an early departure. Friday departures after commitments are permitted when there is a free Saturday and no programming or athletic/afternoon commitments.
- Students on Disciplinary Warning and Probation lose weekend and day leave privileges.
- Students may not take a weekend overnight on closed weekends. During 2025-2026, closed weekends fall on the following dates: September 6, October 18, November 15, January 10, January 31, May 16 (Sixth Form), and May 23 (Underformers).
- The Weekend Overnight leave request must be submitted by the student on the REACH Boarding app by 12:00 PM on Thursday. The online leave request is available from Monday morning until 12:00 PM on Thursday. For vacations, travel requests are to be submitted on the REACH Boarding app. Students should check their email and listen to meeting announcements for deadlines.
- A Special Request leave form needs to be completed when missing any School obligation(s) outside of athletic events or college visits, both of which have separate forms. Special Request leave forms are located in the Student Life Office and must be turned in, completed, to the Student Life Office three days prior to the departure date. Students must first obtain a signature from their advisor, followed by their form dean, Dean of Students, teachers, and coach.
- A three-point penalty will be assigned to students handing in late leave requests and leave forms. Failure to submit a leave request prior to departure may result in a student being placed on restriction or be found in violation of a Major School Rule violation concerning Permissions.
- When students go to their homes, the School expects that a parent/guardian or an adult approved by a parent/guardian will be present. Additionally, students may not sign out to a hotel or any other location unless their parent/guardian, the parent/guardian of another student, or an adult approved by their parent/guardian is present for the entire weekend.
- Students must have an invitation and approval from their host for the weekend whenever they leave School to visit any place other than their own homes. The host name, email, and contact information should be submitted in the leave request on the REACH Boarding app.
- When attending a concert or other function before going to their home or to the home of their host family, students must be picked up from School by their own parent/guardian or their host parent/guardian.
- Students departing campus on a leave must sign out (SISO) through the REACH Boarding app prior to departing campus. Failure to sign out will result in a three-point penalty.
- Students returning from a leave must sign in (SISO) by scanning in with the REACH Boarding app at their dorm no later than 7:45 PM. Failure to sign in by 7:45 PM will result in a three-point penalty.
- If a student is delayed returning from a weekend for any reason, they should immediately call the Duty Administrator at 413-429-6132 before 7:45 PM. Berkshire School expects all students to make every effort to avoid late returns to campus.

### **Driving Privileges and Motor Vehicles Rule**

Students may only ride in or drive motor vehicles operated by, or under the direction of, a person approved by their parent or guardian in an approved leave request or listed in the privileges permission and release form on file. This rule applies to travel to and from destinations on weekends and day leave permissions, and arrival from and departure for vacations. Boarding students are forbidden to have automobiles or other motor vehicles on campus or within 30 miles of school bounds and are not allowed to arrange car service or taxis for local day leave permissions unless permission is obtained from the Dean of Students or Duty Administrator.

Day students may drive to school and may drive other day students (in accordance with Massachusetts law) providing that written permission from both the driver's and the rider's parents/guardians is received by the Student Life Office. Day students may not drive boarding students unless given express permission by the Student Life Office.

Any exceptions to the Motor Vehicles Rule must be approved by the Dean of Students well in advance of the requested date. Exceptions to the rule may require written parent permission for the student and the driver. Driving permissions are not accepted over the telephone.

All students must comply with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations while using and riding in motor vehicles.

**Rideshare Services**

Families should be aware that many rideshare companies have policies that prohibit transporting unaccompanied minors. The School prohibits the use of these services by students traveling to or from campus and will not take responsibility for calling car services for students.

**Deliveries**

To prioritize campus safety and minimize disruptions, all same-day time-sensitive deliveries—including takeout orders, Instacart, DoorDash, and other similar services—must be directed to the Jackman L Stewart Athletic Center, lower level (daytime) or Soffer Athletic Center (evening). No exceptions will be made. Deliveries to other locations or outside designated hours will be sent to the Student Life Office for disposal, and repeated violations may result in disciplinary action.

## **COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND MAJOR SCHOOL RULES**

### **Foundational Expectations for Community Conduct**

In coming to Berkshire, students enter a diverse community made up of people from all over the world and from all racial, ethnic, and spiritual backgrounds. For such a community to work, each of its members must share a commitment to the School's core values. This expectation applies to every aspect of life at Berkshire: our admission process, standards of academic integrity in our classrooms, social climate of our dorms, sportsmanship in athletic programs, leadership and community service opportunities, and our standards of discipline. More specifically, at Berkshire School, we believe the following:

- Individuals must treat others with dignity, sensitivity, and acceptance
- The respect of property, whether the School's or an individual's, is vital to the well-being of the School
- Good citizenship in the community entails a respect for the rules
- Each member of the community has the opportunity to serve others
- Without personal integrity, our community cannot function

Students are expected to act honestly and with consideration for others. A student's standing at Berkshire is determined on the basis of scholarship, engagement, and conduct. Students are expected to meet their daily commitments at the School and uphold the standards of the community.

### **Major School Rules**

The School considers certain rules particularly important for the well-being of the individual and the community. Violations of these Major School Rules may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from school. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### **General Conduct**

Students shall always act honestly and with consideration for others. Conduct that violates the law or reflects badly upon the School, whether committed in School or elsewhere and whether committed while School is in session or not, may be cause for discipline, including dismissal.

A student's standing at Berkshire is determined on the basis of scholarship, engagement, and conduct. Failure to maintain a good standing in any one of these areas may result in dismissal and/or the denial of a diploma. Certain rules, which the School considers particularly important for the well-being of the individual and the community, are grouped together as the Major School Rules. Violation of any of them may be considered as grounds for dismissal.

It shall be a condition of a student's enrollment and continued attendance at Berkshire School that a parent or guardian, and the student upon reaching the age of majority, shall agree in writing that the student shall abide by the Major School Rules and such other disciplinary rules as appear in the Student/Family Handbook. Students who reach the age of 18 will be required to sign an addendum to the enrollment agreement which provides permission for the School to release information and records to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). Sixth Formers who violate Major School Rules after spring recess, in all likelihood, will not be permitted to participate in the commencement ceremony.

Both parents/guardians and students should understand that while students are away on weekends, their conduct and welfare is the primary responsibility of their hosts, not of the School; however, students who take weekends to nearby homes must not be in violation of Berkshire rules if they return to the School or to the Sheffield area during the weekend. In addition, students who take weekends to homes in the immediate Sheffield area must not be in violation of Berkshire rules when leaving the homes of their hosts.

When students leave Berkshire to participate in off-campus programs, whether it be short trips, or trimester/semester/year-long programs, they do so with the School's recommendation and thus serve as representatives of Berkshire. These students are expected to act in a manner consistent with the guiding principles



and expectations of the Berkshire community. If a student does not act accordingly, the School will respond appropriately to the situation.

The School reserves the right to search student rooms and vehicles for evidence of violation of Major School Rules.

### **Computer Use**

Students are expected to use technology in ways that reflect the School's values and support a safe, respectful learning environment. Inappropriate use—including harassment, accessing explicit content, academic dishonesty, or breaching privacy—will result in disciplinary action. Students who do not comply with the School's Responsible Use Policy (RUP) as defined in this Handbook are in violation of a Major School Rule. Devices may be monitored by the School, and students must adhere to digital citizenship guidelines. (See Digital Citizenship and Technology Responsible Use Policy for more information.)

### **Firearms and Weapons**

The possession or use of firearms, ammunition, explosives, or other weapons—real or replica—is strictly prohibited. This includes knives (except for reasonable use tools such as pocket knives with administrative permission), paintball guns, pellet guns, or any object that could reasonably be considered dangerous or threatening.

### **Fire Hazards**

Creating a fire hazard is a violation of a Major School Rule violation. Examples of such actions are irresponsible or unauthorized use of fire extinguishers, matches, lighters, candles, cooking appliances, incense, or other combustibles in or around a building, use or possession of fireworks, and tampering with alarms or fire equipment. Using a common room microwave and consequently causing something to burn will be considered a violation of the Fire Hazards Rule. Personal belongings left in hallways and stairwells as well as hanging items from exposed fire sprinkler lines is a major fire safety hazard for emergency exit. Phoning in a false alarm is also prohibited. Smoking anything within, or adjacent to, any of the School buildings is a violation of the Fire Hazards Rule.

### **Gambling**

Gambling is strictly prohibited on School premises and during all School-related activities. This prohibition includes poker or other card games involving betting, regardless of whether money or other valuables are at stake. It also encompasses sports betting including, but not limited to, online platforms such as DraftKings, ESPN, or other sports betting websites or apps.

### **Harassment**

All members of the community have the basic right not to be harassed. Harassment entails behavior that is inappropriate and that should not take place through ignorance or thoughtlessness. The School recognizes and respects individual differences in background with regard to culture, race, ethnic origin, religion, gender and sexual orientation. Inappropriate behavior in any form (verbal, physical, written, drawn, etc.) that demeans or offends others is unacceptable. It includes unwelcome physical advances, unwarranted verbal remarks, derogatory statements, or discriminatory comments and can occur between two individuals or groups of individuals. Technology and/or electronic devices may not be used to harass others. Violations of this rule will most likely result in dismissal for a first offense.

### **Hazing and Bullying**

Berkshire School adheres to the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269 and Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, that regard hazing and bullying as crimes, which makes it unacceptable at Berkshire. Please reference Appendix A: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and Appendix B: Hazing Policy.

### **Interpersonal Student Misconduct**

Berkshire expects all students to engage in healthy, respectful relationships. Sexual harassment, non-consensual behavior, emotional abuse, or other forms of interpersonal misconduct violate School values and community

expectations. Any form of coercion, intimidation, or repeated unwanted attention may result in disciplinary action, regardless of intent.

### **Keys and Unauthorized Areas**

Students may not possess, use, or distribute keys (physical or digital) that were not legally issued to them. Entry into restricted or unauthorized areas—including construction zones, faculty housing, or mechanical rooms—is prohibited and in violation of this rule.

### **Motor Vehicles**

Students may ride in or drive motor vehicles only when operated by, or under the direction of, a person approved by their parent or guardian on the Travel Waiver, which must be on file in the Student Life Office. This rule applies to all travel to and from destinations on weekends and day leave permissions, and arrival from and departure for vacations. Boarding students are forbidden to have automobiles or other motor vehicles on campus or within 30 miles of School and are not allowed to arrange car service or taxis for local day leave permissions unless permission is obtained from the Dean of Students or Duty Administrator.

Day students who have a legitimate driver's license may drive to School and may drive other day students (in accordance with Massachusetts state law age limits) providing that written permission from both the driver's and the rider's parents/guardians is received by the Student Life Office. Other unlicensed day students are not permitted to ride in a motor vehicle to and from School or to and from School functions held either at Berkshire or some other school unless accompanied by a parent/guardian, faculty member, or an adult approved by name. Day students are never to give boarding students rides unless given permission by the Student Life Office.

Boarding students on weekends may not drive motor vehicles to Sheffield, other nearby towns, or the general neighborhood of the School at any time during the weekend or at the conclusion of the weekend. Any exceptions to the Motor Vehicles Rule must be approved by the Dean of Students well in advance of the requested date. Some exceptions to the rule will require written permission from the parents/guardians of the student and the parents/guardians of the driver, and proof of the driver's liability coverage. Driving permissions can never be accepted over the telephone.

### **Permissions**

Boarding students are not allowed to leave School property after 7:45 PM without permission and are not allowed outside the School buildings after lights out until after 6:00 AM the next morning. Students found out of their dorms at unacceptable times will be considered in violation of the Permissions Rule. Day students who are on campus on school nights after 7:45 PM must follow the evening study hall expectations for their Form. All day students, with the exception of third-form students assigned to evening structured study hall, may be in the library at night without a pass. Day students must be off campus by the check-in time for their Form on Saturday nights. Boarding students may not go out of Sheffield without permission. Filling out a weekend permission form with the intent to deceive or going to an unapproved destination is a violation of the Permissions Rule. (See Sign-Out Procedures for more information.)

### **Reckless Endangerment**

Any behavior that poses a threat to the safety of oneself or others—such as climbing on roofs, tampering with safety equipment, engaging in physical stunts, or misusing vehicles or machinery—is considered reckless endangerment and is treated as a serious offense.

### **Substance Use and Possession**

No student may use, possess, or attempt to acquire dangerous or illegal substances, drugs, hallucinogens, alcohol, or drug-related paraphernalia while under the jurisdiction of the School. This prohibition applies at all times, including on campus, during School-sponsored activities, and in the broader local community.

Vaporizers—including all vape pens, e-cigarette systems, and associated components—are considered drug paraphernalia. These items are prohibited in all forms. Their primary function is to deliver either THC or nicotine and other substances, and they can be easily adapted for illegal drug use. Students found in possession of any vaporizer or e-cigarette device will be subject to immediate drug testing. A positive result constitutes a violation of the School's Substance Use and Possession Rule.

The School reserves the right to conduct drug and alcohol testing at its discretion, including but not limited to circumstances in which a student's behavior or appearance reasonably suggests the use of substances. The School does not distinguish between on-campus and off-campus substance use. Arriving at School with any indication of recent drug or alcohol use—whether returning from a day leave, weekend, vacation, or otherwise—is a violation of this policy. Use of alcohol during leave permissions, even under parental supervision, is strictly prohibited.

Boarding students—and day students in the company of boarding students—are also prohibited from violating this policy in the surrounding communities, including Sheffield and nearby towns. Additionally, day students are expected to abide by all laws and uphold the values of the School at all times; drug or alcohol use off-campus that reflects poorly on the School may result in disciplinary action.

All students who are aware that a violation of the Substance Use and Possession Rule is occurring in their presence and who do not make an immediate and demonstrable effort to remove themselves from the situation will be considered in violation of this rule. Determinations regarding a student's awareness or response will be made by a committee composed of the Head of School, Dean of Students, and the student's form dean and advisor. Students may not consume nonalcoholic beer or similar products at School. Possession of a fake I.D. is strictly forbidden and may constitute a violation of a Major School Rule, resulting in a formal disciplinary response.

### **Theft**

Taking or using another's property—physical, digital, or intellectual—without permission is prohibited. This includes physical theft, identity theft, or unauthorized use of another's account, password, or materials.

### **Visitations**

Students are not permitted to have individuals of the opposite sex in dorm hallways, student rooms or behind any closed door, except as specified by the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth-Form Visitation Privileges. Parents/guardians are permitted in their child's rooms at any time, and other close relatives may visit student rooms with prior permission from a dorm parent. Students may secure special permission to visit faculty in any dorm for extra help and dorm functions. Intimate sexual contact during visitation periods or at any other time or place on campus is unacceptable at Berkshire and is a violation of the Visitations Rule.

### **Wellness-Related Policies**

At Berkshire, we believe that student wellness is essential to a meaningful, balanced, and successful educational experience. Our wellness-related policies are rooted in a deep commitment to supporting the physical, emotional, and social health of every student. Whether through healthy routines, access to support systems, or expectations around behavior and balance, these policies are designed to help students thrive. Living and learning in a residential community requires intention and care, and our shared commitment to wellness helps sustain a culture of respect, resilience, and responsibility.

#### *Cell Phone Policy and Wireless Communication Devices*

To support a more focused, respectful, and connected learning environment, Berkshire School has adopted a time-based cell phone and earphone policy grounded in community values and student well-being. This policy is in effect beginning the first day of classes.

Policy Overview: Restricted hours are 8:00 AM-3:00 PM on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and 8:00 AM-12:00 PM on Wednesdays and Week 1 Saturdays. During these times:

- Students are not permitted to use or display cell phones or earphones in any public or common areas on campus. This includes classrooms, hallways, academic buildings, athletic facilities, common areas, and while walking between locations.
- Phones should be kept in bags or on one's person, but not accessed reflexively.

Always Cell Phone-Free Spaces: Regardless of time of day, cell phones may not be used or displayed in the following locations unless explicitly permitted by a speaker or adult:

- Dining Hall
- Allen Theater

Dormitory Use: Students may use cell phones in their dormitories and dorm rooms outside of restricted hours or as instructed. Enforcement and expectations:

- Students are expected to surrender their phones immediately and without argument if asked to do so by a faculty or staff member during restricted hours.
- Students found using earphones or headphones while walking should be asked to remove them.
- No warnings will be given. This policy is founded on mutual respect, clarity, and accountability, rather than punishment.
- Confiscated phones should be delivered to the Student Life Office, where students may retrieve them after 3:00 PM.

Purpose: This policy is part of a broader educational initiative to help students:

- Build healthier relationships with technology
- Improve attention and reduce distraction
- Strengthen face-to-face community connection
- Practice intentionality and self-regulation

For clarification or discussion about the policy, please contact the Student Life Office or your form dean.

### *Electronic and Non-Electric Personal Wheeled Vehicles*

The use of electronic personal wheeled vehicles is strictly prohibited on the School's campus and when students are participating in School-related activities, including off-campus privileges. Electric electronic personal wheeled vehicles include, but are not limited to, electric bicycles (e-bikes), electric scooters (e-scooters), electric skateboards, rollerblades, one-wheels, segways, hoverboards, and similar devices.

Berkshire does allow students to use non-electric personal wheeled vehicles, including bicycles, scooters, skateboards, and rollerblades. Berkshire also seeks to promote the safe and responsible use of non-electric personal wheeled vehicles, and therefore has the following expectations for students. However, students and their families should understand that even with safety equipment and standards, use of these items comes with risks, such as potential accidents, personal injuries, and property damage.

- Helmets: Massachusetts law requires the use of a helmet on bikes and skateboards. Students engaging in wheeled activities should wear a properly fitted and secured helmet. Helmets worn on school premises must comply with recognized safety standards, such as those established by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), or other applicable regulatory bodies. It is the responsibility of the individual and their parents or legal guardians, if the individual is a minor, to ensure compliance with the mandatory helmet use requirement.
- Construction Safety Considerations: [Increased Awareness] Given the ongoing construction efforts on the campus, heightened awareness and caution are necessary to promote the safety of all individuals on

campus. Students are expected to exercise additional vigilance and adhere to any specific safety instructions.

- **Restricted Areas:** All buildings on campus are wheels-free. In addition, certain areas may be restricted due to ongoing construction. These areas will be marked with signage and barriers. It is imperative that students respect these restricted areas and avoid unauthorized entry.

#### *Tobacco and Nicotine Products*

For reasons of student health and in compliance with state regulations, students are prohibited from using or possessing tobacco products and other nicotine delivery products on campus or in the local towns, regardless of age. In response to a first offense, the student will be required to meet with the Dean of Students, call their parents/guardians, meet with the school physician, and the student will be invited to meet with the school counselor. The student will be placed on Disciplinary Warning, and the student's room may be searched. A letter will be sent home to document the incident and response. In response to a second offense, the student will be required to meet again with the Dean of Students and school physician, and the student will be required to meet with the school counselor to discuss the need for ongoing treatment. The student will be placed on Disciplinary Probation, the student's room will be searched, and a letter will be sent home outlining a school suspension in the case of a third offense. Subsequent occurrences may lead to a longer or permanent separation from the School. Smoking anything within, or adjacent to, any of the School buildings will be referred to the Dean of Students as a violation of the Major School Rule with regard to creating a fire hazard.

#### *Alcohol and Drug Testing*

If there is reasonable suspicion of a student's use of alcohol or drugs, the School may test the student for alcohol and other drugs with an immediate urine or breathalyzer test at Student Health Services or the Student Life Office. A student may also be tested if the student is present in a room/group where illegal substances are present, or the School reasonably believes that another student in the room/group has violated the Substance Use and Possession Rule.

The test will be administered by the nurse on duty, Dean of Students, or Duty Administrator. When a student admits to using prior to the test, a drug and alcohol test may be administered to help determine appropriate health treatment and gain an understanding of usage by the student. Berkshire does not differentiate between substance use off campus and on campus. Students refusing to take a test will be considered in violation of the Substance Use and Possession Rule. Results of the test may be shared with parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are responsible for all testing costs.

A student who is found in violation of the Substance Use and Possession Rule, and who is allowed to remain at the School, may be subject to random drug or alcohol testing for the remainder of their enrollment at Berkshire. In these situations, the Dean of Students will typically initiate the time and date of the test. Drug and alcohol testing will generally be administered through Student Health Services. A positive test will be considered a violation of the Substance Use and Possession Rule and a serious breach of conduct.

#### *First Response Policy*

Berkshire's priority is the safety and well-being of its students. As a way of letting students know that their health and safety are of paramount concern, the School encourages students to ask for help from adults should they find themselves or another student impaired, ill, or struggling with substance use or abuse. This First Response Policy provides students with a way to access support around alcohol and substance abuse issues without concern that reaching out for help will trigger the disciplinary process.

The School believes that students should be guided by their obligation to, and respect for, other members of the community in seeking the best possible help for themselves and others. The School endeavors to foster an

atmosphere of trust on campus and views student-School conversations as vital to that effort. Students should seek guidance from any adults on campus whose judgment they trust and respect.

Invoking the First Response Policy: Any student may invoke this policy on the student's own behalf, or on behalf of another student, simply by contacting Student Health Services or anyone on the faculty, staff, or administration at the School in the following circumstances:

- For Medical Emergencies: In any apparent medical emergency, even if drug- or alcohol-induced, it is imperative for a medical evaluation and attention to begin as soon as possible. To encourage students to seek medical help in an emergency, obtaining Student Health Services assistance, or asking a faculty member to obtain emergency medical assistance, will initiate medical rather than disciplinary intervention.
- For Non-Emergencies: Students may bring First Response into effect for themselves or another student whose health is at risk because of alcohol or drug use, including, the ill-effects of recent ingestion of a prohibited substance, chronic use or abuse, or past use or abuse that may impair functioning at school.

In either scenario described, the request for assistance must be student-initiated and occur prior to any School administrator or faculty or staff member learning of the impacted student's use or abuse of drugs or alcohol.

Assessment, Consultation, and Notification: If a student invokes this policy, the School will promptly determine whether medical attention is warranted, and the student's advisor, the Student Health Services staff, counselors, the Dean of Students, the Head of School, the student's parents, and other appropriate administrators may be notified.

The student may be required to leave campus for a period. The student's family will be asked to conference with the Head of School and other appropriate personnel to discuss measures that the School may require for the student.

The School will determine whether follow-up evaluation or counseling is appropriate in an off-campus program. If lengthy follow-up is needed, the student may be allowed or required by the School to take a medical leave of absence. Following treatment, the School may require an independent assessment conducted within two weeks prior to returning to school. Before the student may return, the medical professional conducting the assessment is required to complete an assessment of the student's alcohol or drug use, make recommendations, and discuss those recommendations with the School. Students are expected to follow any recommendations arising from that consultation.

The law may require notification of state and local authorities in specific cases, including those involving child abuse and neglect, even when the School offers a non-disciplinary response. Students may be subject to law enforcement investigation and response.

If a student is already involved in the disciplinary process because of alcohol or substance abuse, the First Response Policy may not be invoked. Students who misuse this emergency protocol to avoid disciplinary action for drug or alcohol abuse may be referred to the Dean of Students. Determination as to whether a specific case has met the criteria for First Response rests with the School.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR INTERPERSONAL STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

The School is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for all members of its community. Such an environment precludes behaviors that are disrespectful of, and physically and/or emotionally harmful to, others. All members of the School community play important roles in maintaining these standards and intervening, as appropriate, when they witness or otherwise become aware of behavior that conflicts with community standards.

Awareness and acceptance of individual identity are central tenets of the School. The School expects all members of the School community to treat others with civility, respect, and dignity and to interact (whether in person or electronically) politely and appropriately. Before acting, students should give careful consideration to how their communications – whether through words, appearances, actions, or otherwise – may negatively impact others.

All students are valued members of the School's residential community, which presents unique opportunities to develop lasting partnerships with peers, faculty, and staff. The School strives to help students develop such close connections. However, the School expects these relationships to be appropriate and healthy. The School endeavors to promote this through education and intervention.

With these goals and interests in mind, as well as the legal requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the School has established policies to help students manage these interpersonal relationships safely and appropriately. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with the Head of School, Dean of Students, advisors and/or the School's Student Health Services staff with any questions or concerns regarding these policies. The School believes that open communication about these sensitive topics is integral to preventing serious misconduct from occurring and essential to fostering a culture of personal responsibility, mutual accountability, and positive peer leadership.

### **Sexual Intimacy, Displays of Affection, and Consent**

The School recognizes that sexuality is a normal part of human nature, and its discovery is often a part of adolescence. However, any level of sexual intimacy can bring with it physical, psychological, and emotional challenges that can be overwhelming to students. Moreover, in a residential community such as the School's, there are special considerations that students must respect: the campus is a shared space, and all members of the community have the right to be free of unwanted exposure to the intimate, sexual behaviors of others. Therefore, the School does not endorse or condone sexually intimate activity by or among students. Abstaining from sexual intimacy while at School is essential for our community to function in a manner that supports our core values and allows us to grant students the level of independence they desire in their day-to-day life on campus. In addition, public displays of affection that are overly physical or explicit are not appropriate in the School environment.

Students who would like to talk about the meaning of sexual intimacy in a relationship, or who engage in sexually intimate activity and then want to report or discuss the situation, are encouraged to reach out to a trusted adult or the School's Student Health Services staff so that appropriate support may be provided. Under certain circumstances, the School may be obligated to report to government authorities (including the Department of Children and Families ("DCF") and the local police).

If students are found to have engaged in sexually intimate activity, or in a situation that suggests they have been sexually intimate, the School will generally first respond to the situation as a health issue. This response may include notification to parents/guardians and, as appropriate, referral to the School's Student Health Services. It is imperative that students understand and appreciate that certain sexual activity may violate the law and, therefore, is prohibited by the School.

Following Massachusetts law, the School prohibits students from engaging in non consensual sexual activity, considering it to be egregious misconduct and a major disciplinary violation which may result in dismissal. Consent must be the basis for every sexually intimate encounter. Consent is clear, voluntary, and an unambiguous agreement

to participate in a particular sexual activity. However, as described below, certain circumstances may make it impossible for a person to legally give consent.

- By law in Massachusetts, there can be no consent to sexual intercourse, oral sex, or any penetrative act if the individual is under the age of 16.
- By law in Massachusetts, there can be no consent to intentionally touching the buttocks, breasts, or genitals of an individual under the age of 14.
- Consent cannot be obtained from someone who is asleep or otherwise mentally or physically incapacitated (whether due to drugs, alcohol, or some other condition).
- Consent cannot be obtained by threat, coercion, or force. In other words, if threat, coercion, or force is used, any “agreement” does not constitute consent.
- Consent is ongoing and may be withdrawn at any stage during an encounter.
- Consenting to one behavior does not obligate a person to consent to any other behavior.
- Consenting on one occasion does not obligate a person to consent on any other occasion.

Communicating consent means:

- The person is legally capable of giving consent.
- An ongoing verbal interaction, taken one step at a time, to an expressed and honest “yes.”
- Asking permission to engage in specific activity and to progress to new, different, or more intimate activity – regardless of who initiated the contact.
- Being clear about desires and expectations.
- A clear “yes.” The absence of “no” should not be understood to mean that there is consent.
- Remaining open to and respecting another’s expression of disagreement to engage in a particular activity. “No” means “no” in any sexual encounter.

The School prohibits and may be obligated to report sexual activity that violates the law, including rape, sexual assault, and statutory rape. The School may consider a disciplinary response for students who engage in sexual intercourse, including a heightened response for students to engage in sexual intercourse with someone under the age of 16. Sexual activity, of all kinds, is prohibited between any student or applicant and any School employee.

### **Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Hazing, Sexual Assault, and Sexual Harassment**

The School does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying (including cyberbullying), harassment, or discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, and sexual harassment (collectively referred to as “interpersonal misconduct”). The School is dedicated to preventing interpersonal misconduct by fostering a positive school culture and providing a curriculum that encourages social skills development. We work to enhance students’ abilities to develop healthy relationships and to take positive action when they witness or experience any form of interpersonal misconduct. The School is also committed to promptly addressing any behavior that impedes the learning of any student or interferes with the experience of any other member of the School community.

Interpersonal misconduct is prohibited on the School’s campus and the property immediately adjacent to School grounds, on School vehicles, at School-sponsored events, activities, athletic contests, and off-campus trips. School-owned technology may not be used to intimidate, harass, threaten, or bully another student. In addition, interpersonal misconduct is prohibited at a location, activity, function, or program that is not School-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the School, if such conduct: (a) creates a hostile environment at school for a student, (b) infringes on the rights of a student at school, or (c) substantially disrupts the educational process or the School’s orderly operations. Though interpersonal misconduct that occurs outside of the above locations may be outside of the School’s disciplinary reach, we still encourage families and students to share potential incidents with a trusted staff member (as discussed in more detail below) if the School may need to have a heightened awareness of protecting students’ safety while at school. Violation of this policy may be considered a Major Rule Violation.



### *Definitions*

Aggressor: A student or faculty/staff member who engages in bullying (including cyberbullying), harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or retaliation towards another student.

Bias: A bias-related incident occurs when language or behavior conveys prejudice against a target because of a dimension of the target's identity (race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, gender, religion, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability, or any other applicable legally protected status).

Bullying: Bullying is defined as the use of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students or members of the faculty/staff directed at a target that: (a) causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property; (b) places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's self or damage to the student's property; (c) creates a hostile environment at school for the student; (d) infringes on the rights of the student at school; or (e) materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operations of the School.

The School recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Please see the School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for more information.

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic communication, including, but not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic, or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to: (a) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, and (b) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation constitutes bullying conduct as defined above. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person, or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying.

Faculty/Staff: Faculty/staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, dining services workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, and paraprofessionals.

Harassment or Discrimination: Harassment or discrimination is behavior that is pervasive or severe and has the purpose or effect of: (a) creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; (b) interfering unreasonably with a student's academic performance; or (c) creating a situation where academic decisions of a student depend on the student submitting to and/or not objecting to the behavior.

Harassment and discrimination can take many forms. Examples include, but are not limited to, limiting opportunities to participate in certain clubs, teams, or activities based on certain characteristics, as well as slurs, jokes, statements, remarks, questions, gestures, pictures, emails, texts, or cartoons regarding a legally protected status that are derogatory or demeaning to an individual's or group's characteristics or that promote stereotypes. Harassment also includes sexual harassment (as defined below).

Hazing: Hazing means subjecting a student to a physical or mental health injury as part of an initiation, or as a prerequisite to membership, into any organized school group, including any society, athletic team, fraternity or sorority, or other similar group. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical or mental health or safety of a student or any other person, or which subjects the student or any other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Please see Appendix B for a more detailed review of Massachusetts law defining and prohibiting hazing.

Although Massachusetts State Law covers the treatment and definition of hazing for secondary school students, the School does not condone any form of hazing, whether consent is implied or given, or any other circumstances whatsoever, regardless of the grade level of the student.

The following questions are intended to help students identify and understand what hazing is:

- Would you have any reservation describing the activity to your parents, a teacher, or a school administrator?
- Would you object to the activity being photographed for the School newspaper or local TV news?
- Is there a risk of injury or a question of safety?
- Is this a team or group activity in which members are encouraged or expected to attend and where minors are consuming alcohol?
- Will current members refuse to participate with the new members?
- Does the activity risk emotional or physical abuse?

Hostile Environment: A hostile environment refers to a situation in which certain misconduct causes the School environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Racial Discrimination: Racial discrimination is a type of discrimination (as defined above). Racial discrimination involves treating a target unfavorably because the target is of a certain race or because of personal characteristics associated with race (such as hair texture, skin color, or certain facial features). Racial discrimination can occur when the target and the person who inflicted the discrimination are the same race or color.

Retaliation: Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports misconduct (including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, or sexual harassment), provides information during an investigation, or witnesses and/or has reliable information about such misconduct.

Sexual Assault: Sexual assault occurs when a person is forced or coerced into sexual activity without giving consent. Sexual activity includes, but is not limited to, touching or fondling, either directly or through the clothing, of another's intimate areas or any contact, intrusion or penetration of another's sex organs, anus, or mouth.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is a type of harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwilling and unwanted sexual attention, regardless of gender, from anyone with whom a person may interact in the course of attending the School or being present at School-sponsored activities.

Examples of behavior that may constitute sexual harassment include (regardless of whether the intent or consequence of such behavior is to make the target feel uncomfortable): (a) offensive body language (staring and/or leering at a person's body or standing/brushing too close); (b) offensive or unwanted sexual comments, abuse, jokes, or insults, delivered verbally or in writing; (c) derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons, or drawings; (d) pressure for sexual activity (such as hazing or threats, as well as repeated requests after rejections); (e) offering favors or benefits in exchange for sexual acts, or threatening mistreatment if one does not engage in sexual acts; and (f)

offensive or unwelcome physical advances (including kissing, hugging, pinching, grabbing, groping, “playful” slapping, etc.).

Target: Any student against whom interpersonal misconduct or retaliation has been perpetrated.

#### *Legal Definitions and School Policies*

In accordance with the School's mission, values, and standards of conduct, the School has supplemented and/or provided broader protections against bullying, discrimination, harassment, and other inappropriate conduct than may be required under applicable laws. In essence, the School's standards may be stricter than the law and the School may impose discipline accordingly. For example, although the law defines “bullying” as the “repeated use” of certain expressions, acts and/or gestures, under the School's policies, a “single instance” may be sufficient to rise to the level of bullying and, therefore, warrant disciplinary action or other corrective measures. The School's efforts to enhance its protection of students in no way expand an individual's rights under applicable laws. Further, the School may modify and amplify the standards set forth above and use its discretion in the interpretative enforcement of all ideals and standards of conduct.

#### *Reporting Complaints*

A student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or who has witnessed such an incident or any incident of retaliation, or who otherwise has relevant information about conduct prohibited by the School, is expected to report the matter promptly (either orally or in writing) to a Berkshire administrator or faculty member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. If a student is uncomfortable contacting one of these individuals, the student may ask an advisor, another adult, or a classmate to help.

With respect to reporting sexual assault in particular, students are strongly urged to speak to a trusted adult on campus or at home, to a member of the Student Health Services staff or school counselor(s). When making such outreach, students may share as little or as much information as they would like.

Parents/guardians of a student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about such conduct, are urged to immediately notify the Head of School or school counselor. Furthermore, any parent/guardian who has witnessed interpersonal misconduct, or has relevant information concerning such an incident or any incident of retaliation, are strongly encouraged to contact one of these administrators immediately.

The School expects students and parents/guardians not to make anonymous reports. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously and disciplinary action will generally not be taken against an individual solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The School cannot promise absolute confidentiality to those reporting interpersonal misconduct, as there may be a need to share information during an investigation or otherwise; however, the School will disclose such information with discretion, on a need-to-know basis.

#### *False Complaints*

All persons involved in a complaint or investigation should understand that false or exaggerated accusations can be extremely damaging to innocent persons; therefore, the School expects and requires the honest and full disclosure of facts by all involved. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation of interpersonal misconduct or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action.

### *Responding to Complaints*

The goals of an investigation, and any supportive, disciplinary, or other remedial process that is imposed following that investigation, are to correct the situation to the extent reasonably possible and to take steps to prevent repetition of the incident and retaliation.

When a complaint is brought to the attention of the School administration, an assessment is made to determine the initial steps appropriate to protect the well-being of the students involved (including both the alleged targets and aggressors) and to prevent disruption of the learning environment while the investigation is undertaken. The School may use strategies, such as increased supervision, stay-away mandates, and personal safety plans, as may be appropriate, to prevent further misconduct, witness interference, and/or retaliation during and after the investigation. In addition, students may be placed on leave during the investigation, as determined appropriate by the school.

The Head of School's designee will conduct an impartial, fact-finding investigation of the complaint. This investigation may include (but is not necessarily limited to) interviews with the complainant, alleged target(s), alleged aggressor(s), and any other witnesses or parties who have information relevant to the alleged incident. Investigations are typically conducted by an appropriate administrator; however, in certain situations, the School may use an external investigator. The School may consult with faculty, Student Health Services staff, the parents/guardians of the alleged target(s) and/or the alleged aggressor(s), or any other person deemed to have knowledge about, or circumstances surrounding, the complaint. The School expects students and their parents to cooperate with the School's investigations, which includes not retaining legal counsel to represent the student in any school investigations.

The School neither tolerates nor engages in retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint or cooperating in an investigation of interpersonal misconduct. The School will not take adverse action against a student for making a good faith report of interpersonal misconduct. An individual who is found to have engaged in retaliation against a student for filing or participating in the investigation of a complaint, may be subject to disciplinary action.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will generally determine whether and to what extent the allegation of interpersonal misconduct has been substantiated. Based on those determinations, the School implement any disciplinary action and/or other remedial action, as appropriate, as well as consider whether counseling, or a referral to appropriate services, should be offered to targets, aggressors, or family members of the affected students or targets

At the discretion of the Head of School, the Discipline Committee may be convened to investigate and make recommendations. The Head of School (or the Head's designee) will consider any recommendations from the Discipline Committee if it convenes, but the Head of School (or the Head's designee) will determine any appropriate disciplinary action for a student who is found to have committed an incident of interpersonal misconduct or retaliation consistent with the Discipline Guidelines section in this Handbook.

Information about consequences or other corrective action will be shared with the School community as deemed appropriate by the Head of School. Such announcements may be made in person, by electronic communication, or otherwise. Resources such as counseling or referral to appropriate services are available to all students – including the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s) – during and after an investigation.

### *Notification to Parents/Guardians*

The School will generally notify the parents/guardians of the alleged target(s) and the alleged aggressor(s) promptly after a complaint has been filed, upon completion of the investigation, and to report the results of the investigation. Parents/guardians of the target(s) will generally also be notified of any action to be taken to prevent further acts of interpersonal misconduct or retaliation.

In all situations, the amount of information shared by the School may be limited by confidentiality laws protecting student and employee records, other confidentiality or privacy considerations, and/or concerns regarding the integrity of the investigatory processes.

#### *Notification to Government Authorities*

In appropriate circumstances, such as when a crime may have been committed or a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect of the type that is reportable under M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A, law enforcement or other appropriate government agencies may be notified. At any point after receiving a report of misconduct, including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, or sexual harassment, the School may notify local law enforcement or other government agencies. If the School receives a complaint involving students from another school, the School may notify the appropriate administrator of the other school so that both may take appropriate action.

If the School determines it is appropriate to notify government agencies of a report of interpersonal misconduct, the School may defer investigative steps until notification that such authorities have concluded their initial fact-gathering and have authorized the School to proceed. The School's investigation is not a legal proceeding and is separate from any investigation that might be conducted by law enforcement or the DCF.

#### *Sanctuary Policy Applicable to Sexual Assault*

Student health and safety are more important than discipline. Therefore, a student should not refrain from seeking help for fear of discipline by the School. If a student is violating a School rule when the student needs to call for help due to a sexual assault, the student will generally be granted sanctuary from discipline for the rule violation (unless, for instance, the student perpetrated the sexual assault). We reiterate that we expect students to promptly report to a School employee any incident where the health or safety of a student may be at risk.

## DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

1. *Introduction: Embracing Responsible Digital Citizenship*
  - 1.1. At Berkshire School, we are committed to fostering a community of responsible digital citizens. This means equipping students, faculty, and staff with the knowledge and skills to navigate the digital world effectively, ethically, and safely. This policy outlines our expectations for technology use, both on and off campus, ensuring a secure and productive learning environment.
2. *Scope and Applicability*
  - 2.1. This policy applies to all members of the Berkshire School community, including students, faculty, staff, and guests, regardless of whether they are using school-provided or personal devices. It governs the use of the school network, internet access, and all technology resources, both on-campus and off-campus, during and outside of school hours, as long as an individual is affiliated with Berkshire School.
3. *Core Principles of Responsible Use*
  - 3.1. **Respect and Integrity:** All digital interactions must align with Berkshire School's standards of conduct and uphold the principles of respect, integrity, and consideration for others.
  - 3.2. **Safety and Security:** Users are responsible for protecting their personal information and the privacy of others. They must not engage in activities that compromise the security of the school network or its users.
  - 3.3. **Ethical Conduct:** All technology use must adhere to ethical standards, including respecting intellectual property rights, avoiding plagiarism, and refraining from harmful or discriminatory behavior.
  - 3.4. **Transparency and Accountability:** Users are accountable for their actions in the digital realm. They should be transparent about their use of technology and be prepared to address any consequences of their actions.
4. *Acceptable Use Guidelines--users may:*
  - 4.1. Utilize technology for educational purposes, including schoolwork, projects, and research, as directed by faculty.
  - 4.2. Access the internet for learning-related activities with appropriate supervision.
  - 4.3. Engage in limited recreational use of school technology when authorized, respecting shared resources.
  - 4.4. Connect to the student network only during their time at Berkshire.
  - 4.5. Connect up to 4 devices to the wireless network. This should include the computer they use for school and their mobile phone.
5. *Acceptable Use Guidelines--users must refrain from:*
  - 5.1. These guidelines are both best practice and what we expect of responsible technology users. These guidelines are in place both for your safety and the safety of all technology users in our community.
    - 5.1.1. Sharing personal contact information online.
    - 5.1.2. Attempting unauthorized access to network resources.
    - 5.1.3. Tamper with, alter, or delete files and/ or data of other community members.
    - 5.1.4. Sharing passwords with anyone, except with parents/guardians or the tech office when asked in person for legitimate reasons.
    - 5.1.5. Impersonating others or concealing their identity online.
    - 5.1.6. Communicate with or plan to meet strangers online.
    - 5.1.7. Using inappropriate language or images in digital communications.
    - 5.1.8. Engaging in cyberbullying, harassment, or sexting.
    - 5.1.9. Accessing inappropriate content online, including sites that bypass filters, promote hate or violence, or contain explicit material.
    - 5.1.10. Plagiarizing or violating intellectual property rights.
    - 5.1.11. Installing or attempting to install unauthorized software or hardware on school devices or the network.
    - 5.1.12. Using personal surveillance devices on campus, including in personal living spaces.
    - 5.1.13. Removing school equipment from its designated location without permission.

- 5.1.14. Storing personal files on the network outside of designated accounts.
- 5.1.15. Using personal electronic devices during academic time without permission.
- 5.1.16. Accessing social media during the academic day, during sports, activities, or during study hall.
- 5.1.17. Disclosing confidential information or spreading misinformation.
- 5.1.18. Vandalizing or disrupting school technology systems.
- 5.1.19. Perpetuating spam or chain letters.
- 5.1.20. Using AI tools that are not approved by the Technology Department.
- 5.1.21. Using AI tools to create harmful, discriminatory, or misleading content.
- 5.1.22. Creating false information or likenesses of community members for malicious purposes.
- 5.1.23. Sharing or uploading intellectual property to AI platforms without permission.

## 6. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

### 6.1. AI Overview

- 6.1.1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming our world, and Berkshire School recognizes its potential to enhance teaching, learning, and administrative processes. This policy outlines guidelines for the safe, responsible, and ethical use of AI tools, including generative AI, machine learning systems, and Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, DALL-E, and similar technologies, now and in the future.

### 6.2. Approval and Compliance

- 6.2.1. All AI tools used by students, faculty, staff, and administrators for Berkshire School-related purposes must be vetted and approved by the Technology Department. This approval process includes a review of the tool's Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, including age restrictions and data usage practices.
- 6.2.2. The use of AI technology must comply with Berkshire School's Honor Code, Academic Integrity policies, Responsible Use Policy (RUP), and any specific parameters established by teachers for individual courses or assignments.
- 6.2.3. The use of AI technology with likenesses of any person for legitimate purposes should not be done without express (preferably written) consent of the subject depicted.

### 6.3. Responsible and Ethical Use

- 6.3.1. Berkshire School is committed to supporting ethical and responsible AI usage. Students, faculty and staff will use AI tools safely, ethically, and appropriately.
- 6.3.2. AI tools should not be used in harmful, discriminatory, or misleading acts or processes.
- 6.3.3. The creation of false information, images, deep fakes, or false likenesses of students, teachers, or other community members for purposes of threat, bullying, extortion, harassment, embarrassment, reputational damage, or intentional misrepresentation is strictly prohibited and will be treated as a significant infraction.
- 6.3.4. Users must adhere to all platform rules and policies, including age limits.

### 6.4. Data Privacy and Security

- 6.4.1. Personally identifiable information (PII) or confidential information must never be entered into AI tools.
- 6.4.2. Students and employees should not share their own PII or the PII of others with AI tools.
- 6.4.3. Information entered into AI programs is not considered confidential, may be used by the AI for further development, and is vulnerable to cyberattacks.

### 6.5. Academic Integrity and Transparency

- 6.5.1. Students must follow all academic guidelines with regard to use of AI for school-related work. This includes all teacher instructions and guidance in Berkshire School's honor code.
- 6.5.2. Intellectual property that is not your own may not be shared or uploaded to any AI platform without explicit permission, in line with copyright and responsible use principles.

### 6.6. Information Verification and Critical Thinking



- 6.6.1. Students should be aware that AI-generated content may contain biases, misinformation, and hallucinations (errors).
  - 6.6.2. Students are expected to fact-check and verify the output from AI tools using reliable sources.
- 6.7. Enforcement and Policy Review
  - 6.7.1. Unauthorized use of AI tools (those not approved by the technology office) will be addressed in accordance with existing school policies, including those related to academic dishonesty and this Responsible Use Policy.
- 7. *Privacy and Monitoring*
  - 7.1. Users should have no expectation of privacy when using school technology resources.
  - 7.2. The school reserves the right to monitor all network activity and access data and communications stored on school systems.
  - 7.3. Users are responsible for the activity generated from their accounts.
- 8. *Device Usage and Settings*
  - 8.1. School device settings should not be altered without permission.
  - 8.2. Personal media devices are restricted during academic hours.
  - 8.3. Users are financially responsible for damages that occur due to negligent or inappropriate behaviors.
- 9. *Intellectual Property and Copyright*
  - 9.1. Users must respect copyright laws and obtain permission before reproducing copyrighted material.
  - 9.2. Illegal sharing of copyrighted materials is prohibited.
- 10. *Sexting and Sexually Explicit Material*
  - 10.1. The School prohibits students from creating, requesting, sending, or possessing any written or verbal message, image, or video that contains explicit representations or references to sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or nudity. This includes messages, images, and videos that are created through the use of AI technology or other artificial means. Massachusetts law prohibits anyone (regardless of age) from disseminating obscene or pornographic images of minors, and the School may contact law enforcement should any student violate this policy.
- 11. *Social Media and Online Conduct*
  - 11.1. Users should represent the school responsibly on social media platforms aligned with our core values and mission..
  - 11.2. Respect for privacy and intellectual property is crucial in online interactions.
  - 11.3. Inappropriate online behavior, including harassment and disrespectful comments, is prohibited.
  - 11.4. Students may not be friends with faculty members on social media sites that are not used for educational purposes.
- 12. *Reporting Violations*
  - 12.1. Users must report any accidental access to inappropriate content or suspected policy violations to a faculty member or designated authority.
  - 12.2. Users must report any uncomfortable online interactions with a school employee or other community member that are outside of normal school interactions.
- 13. *Consequences of Violations*
  - 13.1. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to warnings, detentions, suspension of privileges, and reporting to legal authorities when appropriate.
- 14. *Parent/Guardian Responsibilities*
  - 14.1. Parents/guardians are responsible for reviewing this policy with their children.
  - 14.2. They may be held financially responsible for damage to school technology.
- 15. *Termination of Accounts*
  - 15.1. Upon leaving Berkshire, users will lose access to school accounts and network resources at a date communicated by the technology office.
  - 15.2. School-owned software must be uninstalled from personal devices upon graduation.
- 16. *Policy Review and Updates*
  - 16.1. This policy will be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect changes in technology and best practices.



## DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

These guidelines are based on the School's philosophy and principles regarding good character and reflect the School's commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for students. The School strives to promote effective and caring communication among faculty, students, and parents that supports students in their personal growth and provides room for a young person to make mistakes and learn from them.

The guidelines are intended to provide students and their families with a general understanding of the School's disciplinary approach; however, the School will respond to each situation with a response that the School determines is appropriate. This section applies to all conduct by students, whether on or off campus, as long as they are enrolled at the School. Students who choose to remain present when other students are engaging in misconduct may be subject to disciplinary action.

### Conduct System

Berkshire's conduct system is not designed to penalize students for every minor infraction of the School's regulations. The Conduct System is designed to track patterns of behavior that can reveal a student's struggle to meet basic expectations such as timeliness, attendance, and respect. Conduct points are cumulative for each trimester. A description of each student's points is available to all advisors. (Please refer to the Attendance Policy section under the Academic Program for additional information regarding missed commitments.)

Conduct reports are monitored by the Student Life Office and form deans. Students and advisors receive notification from Veracross when conduct points are assigned; students are also expected to monitor their own conduct reports on Veracross. Students have 48 hours to address the points with the faculty member who assigned them if they feel they are not accurate. Excuses for conduct reports will not be accepted beyond 48 hours of being issued.

It is the responsibility of each student to meet required appointments. Alarm clock problems will never be accepted as an excuse for missing class or any other obligation. (We recommend that students who have a hard time waking up in the morning use an actual alarm clock or a rooster instead of their phones.) Please note the following penalties:

- 5 point offenses:      absence from class (*extreme lateness of 10 minutes or more is also considered an absence*), school meetings, athletics or afternoon programming, study hall or tutoring, visitations violation
- 3 point offenses:      late weekend forms, absence from Community Dinner, leaving room after lights-out, missing scheduled doctor appointments at Student Health Services, failed room inspections, handing in late forms for college visits, club sports, and other privileges
- 2 point offenses:      lateness (*extreme lateness carries larger penalties, see above*)

Continued violation or abuse of a School rule or regulation may result in a more serious penalty than the one normally applied. Conduct records are maintained each trimester and will close on the last day of the trimester.

### Disciplinary Warning

Students who have accumulated a total of 15 points (or three absences) during a trimester are placed on Disciplinary Warning, which includes the following consequences.

- Boarding students will be restricted from leaving campus during the day or for a weekend while on Warning. The only exception is for School-required activities.
- Day students must leave campus by 7:45 PM on weekdays.
- Students must serve Weekend Detention (Saturday 8:30-10:30 PM).
- Students will lose Interdorm Visitation Privileges for one week.

### *Disciplinary Probation*

Students who have accumulated 25 points (or five unexcused absences) during a trimester will be placed on Disciplinary Probation, and their cases will be referred to the Dean of Students for violation of a Major School Rule. Disciplinary Probation includes the following consequences.

- Boarding students will be restricted from leaving campus for a two-week period while on Probation. The only exception is for School-required activities.
- Day students must leave campus by 7:45 PM on weekdays.
- Students must serve two Weekend Detentions (Saturday 8:30-10:30 PM).
- Students will lose Interdorm Visitation privileges for two weeks.
- There is the potential loss of leadership title and responsibilities.

Whenever students are placed on Probation, their parents/guardians may be required to come to the School to discuss their child's overall record.

The Dean of Students will review the record of each student on Disciplinary Probation at the end of the trimester, or earlier if the situation warrants, and will refer the matter to the Discipline Committee for further action if necessary. Students placed on Disciplinary Probation more than once will receive heightened penalties, and faculty will review their records at the end of each conduct term to determine whether they remain eligible to be enrolled in the School.

Students on Disciplinary Warning or Probation will be allowed to leave campus only for a School-required activity. This permission is granted by the Dean of Students or the Duty Administrator and may not interfere with evening restrictions.

### *Disciplinary Restriction*

Students who exceed the threshold of 35 conduct points will be placed on Disciplinary Restriction. Restriction is taken very seriously and is intended to provide a highly structured environment that promotes accountability and identifies the underlying issues that are preventing a student from thriving at Berkshire. After a comprehensive review of the conduct record and a conversation with the Dean of Students and advisor, students on restriction will be expected to adhere to specific guidelines, such as reduced access to privileges, enhanced study time, engagement with counseling or tutoring services, and regular check-ins with their advisors.

Furthermore, adjustments may be made within the residential life department to help create an environment that supports a student's personal development. Strategies for change may include assigning a dorm parent who can provide additional guidance, conducting regular meetings to assess the student's progress, or establishing clear expectations regarding the student's behavior within the dorm.

To encourage self-reflection and accountability, the student may be required to complete a written reflection to share with the advisor and Student Life Office. This reflection should delve into the student's behavior, mindset, challenges faced, and strategies for improvement.

Both the student and their families should understand that reaching a cumulative total of 35 conduct points more than once, regardless of the trimester, may result in the student being suspended or dismissed from the School. Students are expected to understand the seriousness of this warning and take the necessary steps to avoid such consequences.

### **The Honor Committee**

Any student who has violated the Honor Code may be required to appear before the Honor Committee. In general, Academic Violations of the Honor Code are heard by the Honor Committee. The Honor Committee's composition and procedures are detailed under the Honor Code section.

### **The Discipline Committee**

When a student violates a Major School Rule, the matter goes to the Dean of Students, who may refer it to the Discipline Committee. The Discipline Committee is composed of three students and three faculty with a nonvoting faculty chair. Students who appear before the Discipline Committee will have an opportunity to make a statement regarding the circumstances of the infraction. The student's advisor and form dean will also be invited to the meeting to speak in support of the student, but no other representatives may participate in the Disciplinary process. The Discipline Committee may recommend Warning, Probation, suspensions, or combinations of these; dismissal; or other responses its members deem appropriate. The Discipline Committee may recommend the dismissal of a student for a first violation of a Major School Rule, including students found selling drugs or alcohol or procuring drugs or alcohol for other students will be dismissed for a first offense.

In any situation, the Head of School (or the Dean of Students) may impose disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, dismissing a student from the school, regardless of whether the Discipline Committee was convened and regardless of the Discipline Committee's recommendation.

### **Consequences**

In addition to those outlined in the Conduct System, the School may impose other consequences on students who engage in misconduct.

#### *Loss of Privileges*

Loss of privileges may result when a student fails to meet the expectations associated with those privileges, in addition to the disciplinary consequence associated with the rule violation. For instance, students who fail to honor the room visit standards may lose the visitation permission. In addition, failure to submit the required form for requested absences or other privileges (College Days, Athletic Special Request, etc.) may result in a student being placed on restriction.

Students who received discipline may be restricted from leaving campus. Students are encouraged to recognize that there are consequences for their actions, and that they must think ahead about whether there is an important weekend engagement coming up. Discipline will generally not be changed for the convenience of students or their families.

#### *Sixth Former Privileges*

Sixth Formers who violate Major School Rules after spring recess may not be permitted to participate in the commencement ceremony.

#### *Loss of Leadership Positions*

Students who violate one or more of the School's major rules may face disciplinary consequences, including the loss of leadership positions. When misconduct raises concerns about a student's ability to serve as a role model or representative of the Berkshire community, they should expect to lose any current leadership role for the remainder of the academic year. In addition, they may be restricted from pursuing future leadership opportunities. The loss of a leadership position is separate from—and may be applied in addition to—any other disciplinary response related to the rule violation.

#### *Suspension and Dismissal*

Students who have engaged in a serious act of misconduct, including Major School Rule violations, may be suspended from the School, prohibited from attending all School-related activities, or dismissed from School. Such serious acts of misconduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs;
- improper sexual conduct;
- sexual or other harassment;

- threat or use of physical violence;
- possession or use of matches, lighters, fireworks, explosives, weapons, or other dangerous materials;
- reprehensible conduct tending to reflect serious discredit to the School;
- Honor Code violations;
- willful destruction of property;
- stealing;
- dishonesty;
- bullying or malicious gossip;
- repeated acts of unkindness or misconduct;
- repeated classroom behavior that impedes other students' learning; and
- refusal to cooperate with an ongoing investigation by the School.

### **Behavioral Expectations While Away From School**

Students should be aware that they represent the School community at all times, both on and off campus. While it is not the School's intention to monitor students in all their off-campus activities, the School may take disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal, in response to inappropriate conduct occurring outside of campus, this includes when students take weekends to nearby homes.

When students participate in off-campus programs, whether it be short trips or trimester/semester/year-long programs, they do so with the School's recommendation and thus serve as representatives of Berkshire. These students are expected to act in a manner consistent with the guiding principles and expectations of the Berkshire community. If a student does not act accordingly, the School will respond appropriately to the situation.

### **Parental Involvement with Disciplinary Matters**

Disciplinary matters and student issues are handled directly by teachers, administrators, and appropriate staff. If a student is having an issue with another student, parents should not attempt to deal with the other student directly about that matter. Doing so may put a student in an intimidating situation and is best resolved, when appropriate, through a School administrator. Parents should speak to the appropriate administrator for guidance with respect to any questions about contacting another student or parent about a School-related matter.

The School may contact parents to address both minor and more serious instances of misconduct, at any stage of the discipline process. Just as every student manifests an agreement to abide by these rules by attending classes and other activities sponsored by the school, so does every family express its commitment to these policies by enrolling a student at the school. Along with this commitment is the firm understanding by all parties that parents and guardians accept and support any disciplinary action taken by the school. It is not for any student or family to determine what is appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Head of School Authority**

In any situation, the Head of School may impose disciplinary action up to and including dismissing a student from the School and removal of academic credit, regardless of whether the Discipline Committee is convened and regardless of the Discipline Committee's recommendation. The Head of School has sole and absolute discretion with respect to determining disciplinary consequences for students. All disciplinary decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

### **Disclosure to Community**

For purposes of providing an opportunity for the student body to learn and grow, information about disciplinary consequences or other corrective action will be shared with the School community as deemed appropriate by the Head of School. Such announcements may be made in person, by electronic communication, or otherwise.

### **Disclosure to Colleges and Next Schools**

Upon direct request from some colleges for information pertaining to a student's discipline record, the student must honestly and fully disclose if they have been subject to a disciplinary response including, but not limited to, probation,

suspension, dismissal, or withdrawal from Berkshire. The college will most likely follow up with their college counselor, and the student should work closely with their counselor to ensure that both are responding in a consistent and thoughtful manner.

If a student's disciplinary status changes after the filing of college applications in the sixth-form year, the student has the obligation to inform all schools that ask about discipline status in the application, or the school at which the student has submitted an enrollment deposit, if they require it. The student should notify the college or colleges within two weeks from the date of the change in status. Two weeks after the change in status, the Director of College Counseling will notify the colleges in writing, if required by the college, that the student's status has changed and the reason for the change.

It is the School's policy to support students in reporting disciplinary consequences to colleges and next schools where they are required to do so. Berkshire may also communicate with any next schools, colleges, or any other educational institution, regarding the student's disciplinary record.

This policy is in compliance with the National Association for College Admission Counseling's Statement of Principles of Good Practice.

## STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND SUPPORT

### Staffing

The Student Health Services (“SHS”) team consists of registered nurses and a pediatrician. SHS is centrally located in the lower level of de Windt dormitory.

### Hours

SHS has nurses available 24 hours a day while school is in session. If a student is ill or needs to talk to a nurse, the student should call SHS at 413-229-1275. The nurse will instruct the student on the next steps.

Daytime Hours:	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:	7:00 AM-4:00 PM
	Wednesday, Saturday:	7:00 AM-1:00 PM
	Sunday:	11:15 AM-12:30 PM
Evening Hours:	Monday-Sunday:	5:00 PM-7:30 PM

Between 7:15 PM and 10:30 PM, students must first contact the dorm parent on duty before going to SHS. Between 10:30 PM and 6:00 AM, students must be escorted by a Prefect (or a Sixth Former designated by the Prefect), and the dorm parent on duty must be notified. The Prefect, or student assisting, will first call SHS.

To get in touch with the nurse on call, phone 413-229-1275, or extension 1275 from all campus phones.

### Appointments with Doctors

A school physician is on campus Monday through Friday to see students as needed for acute illnesses or injuries. All off-campus medical appointments—whether with doctors, dentists, orthodontists, or at the hospital—must be scheduled through SHS. Arrangements may be made with SHS staff members by phone or in person. Transportation to and from such appointments must also be arranged through the SHS office and will be billed to the family. **Students are required to check in at SHS when they return from off-campus medical appointments with paperwork from the appointment.** Students returning to School after injury, illness, or doctor's appointments must bring letters from doctors stating the diagnosis, results of laboratory or x-ray studies, treatment, restricted activities, and date of the next appointment.

### Health Care Services

Generally, under Massachusetts law, minors are allowed to receive certain health care services without the consent of their parent or legal guardian. These services may include contraception/birth control methods; pregnancy testing; prenatal and obstetrical care; evaluation and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases; and evaluation and treatment for alcohol and/or other drug addiction problems. Berkshire respects the privacy of its students and makes every effort to help students maintain confidentiality when they obtain medical services for which they can individually consent. If a student requests assistance in seeking treatment for such a medical problem from Berkshire, we will encourage that student to establish an open and honest dialogue with their parent or legal guardian. However, it is possible that parents/guardians will not be informed about all care students may receive. Transportation for and the cost of such services may be billed to the family.

### Illnesses and Room Stay (Boarding Students)

Boarding students may be excused from classes, athletics, and other school appointments at the discretion of the school physician or the nurse on duty. Excuses will not be granted to students who have missed a class because they have overslept. If students have a class commitment at the time they leave SHS, they must go directly to the class in question. The nurse on duty will issue them a pass. Athletic excuses are issued by the school physician, nurse on duty, or athletic trainer on duty. Students are required to follow instructions given by nurses, athletic trainers, and doctors. (For information about day student absences due to illness or inclement weather, refer to the section on Day Students.)

If a student is too ill to walk to SHS, a faculty member must phone the office to notify the nurse on duty. Students who are too ill to attend class may be required to stay at SHS. Students who are excused and put on room stay must remain in their rooms except to go to the bathroom. No visitors are allowed for students on room stay. Room stay extends from the time it is issued until 7:00 AM the next day. Room stay is not canceled if a school holiday is announced.

### **Health Records and Forms**

All students are required to complete numerous medical forms and provide vital health information. The collection of all medical information is to be completed via Magnus Health, the secure electronic medical record system that SHS uses to collect and store student medical information. All medical information must be submitted directly to Magnus Health, not to SHS. Parents/guardians can login to Magnus Health via the Veracross Parent Portal where they can access all health forms and update information whenever necessary. Complete health forms must be on file before a student may attend school.

### **Immunizations**

In accordance with Massachusetts law, the School requires all students to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or a certificate of exemption before attending school. Proof of immunization should be recorded on a Certificate of Immunization form and signed by a medical professional. A student with a qualified religious and/or medical exemption must provide the School with an Immunization Exemption Certification, pursuant to state law. A Medical Immunization Exemption Certification must be signed by a medical professional, attesting that the student is exempt from a specific vaccine(s) because of medical reasons. A Religious Immunization Exemption Certification must be signed by the student's parent or guardian, attesting that immunization conflicts with their sincerely held religious beliefs. Students who do not provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or qualify for an exemption will not be permitted to attend the School or participate in any School activities.

If there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease impacting campus or the School community, the School may exclude non-immunized students, including those with valid religious or medical exemptions, from school and all School activities. Excluded students will not be permitted to return until (1) the danger of the outbreak has passed; (2) the student becomes ill with the disease and completely recovers; or (3) the student is immunized. In determining whether there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease, the School may consult with appropriate medical professionals and/or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. There are also times when the School may require additional immunizations beyond which the state requires for attendance at school.

### **Communicable Illnesses**

The School may exclude any student who (a) has a communicable illness, (b) has been exposed to an infected person, and/or (c) has traveled to an area impacted by a communicable illness, if the School determines that such exclusion is appropriate for the welfare of the student or the School community. The School may also screen students or require students to be screened by appropriate medical professionals to determine whether they pose a risk to the community. The School's decisions shall be based on current and well-informed medical judgments concerning the illness, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable illness, and an analysis of the identified risks and available alternatives for responding to an individual with a communicable illness.

If and when appropriate, the School will disseminate information to students and families regarding campus health and safety issues through regular internal communication channels. For example, the School may provide families with information about the nature and spread of communicable illnesses, including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an epidemic or outbreak. We encourage all parents and guardians to contact medical professionals with any questions or concerns about communicable illnesses or immunization issues.

## **Medications at School**

The School's medication policy has been developed to promote the health and safety of all students.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that we have a written order signed by a licensed medical practitioner for each prescription medication. Please have the prescribing practitioner complete the Medication Form for each prescription. Once completed (and before school starts), the form(s) must be uploaded into Magnus. If the prescription changes or a new medication is started during the school year, an updated Medication Form is required within three days. A responsible adult should deliver medications to the School in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container.

Students who take psychotropic and/or controlled medication must take each dose in person at Student Health Services and will enter through a separate entrance that is exclusively for medication only. These medications are not allowed in the student room and must be stored at SHS. Students who take psychotropic medications or controlled substances are not permitted to have these medications in their possession at any time, which means that they may not deliver them to School. There are exceptions to the possession rule for travel on and off campus, but only with permission from SHS. There may be other medications not listed here that also need to be taken at SHS. All prescription medications need to be checked in with SHS. Failure to follow the protocol associated with the distribution of medication will result in strong disciplinary action.

It is the responsibility of the family to ensure that their child maintains an adequate supply of prescription refills. According to Massachusetts law, we are not permitted to store more than a 30-day supply of any medication at School. It is for this reason that we ask parents/guardians to call our office monthly to check on their child's medication supply and compliance. We ask parents/guardians to also keep medication at home for weekends and vacations. If alternate arrangements need to be made, parents/guardians are asked to contact our office at least one week before the beginning of the vacation. Medications will be destroyed if not picked up at the close of school, or at any time the medication is discontinued, or if the student leaves School.

We require that all psychotropic prescriptions be filled through Lenox Village Integrative Pharmacy. There will be a one time fee of \$20 to set up a profile. Students who take psychotropic medication or medications regulated by the federal government as controlled substances must comply with the following protocol: the prescribing practitioner must send the medication prescription electronically or by hard copy directly to Lenox Village Integrative Pharmacy (not Berkshire) no earlier than August 15 (pharmacy information is available on the Veracross Parent Portal). Examples of psychotropic and controlled medications include, but are not limited to, medications for ADD/ADHD, anxiety, and depression.

It is the expectation that all students on psychotropic medication who are "stable" will be seen in person by their prescribing physician quarterly. Students who are new to medication or are having any associated concerns should be monitored by their physician in person more frequently. Please review, or have the provider review, the instructions and possible side effects of all prescribed medication, including the self-administration of inhalers and emergency medication, if applicable, with the student before arriving to the School.

## **Disclosure of Relevant Information About the Student**

It is in the best interest of students for the School to be fully aware of their medical and emotional health history so that appropriate support can be put in place while at school. Therefore, families are expected to disclose their child's complete social, disciplinary, medical, and academic history, including any psychological and educational evaluations, outpatient or inpatient treatments for emotional or psychological issues that may impact the school experience.

## **Counseling Services**

School counselors are available to speak with students to help facilitate educational, social, and emotional support, on an as-needed basis. In addition, the School may require a student to see a school counselor.



The School employs licensed counselors who provide counseling services to help support the social and emotional needs of students at the School. The counselors are available to meet with students and to consult with the School community regarding mental health. Communication between school counselors and a student may include, but is not limited to, meeting in-person, speaking via telephone, or communicating using third-party video communication applications such as Apple FaceTime, Doxy.me, Google Hangouts video, Zoom, or Skype.

The counselors, and any professional employed within the Berkshire School Counseling Office, are part of a team of faculty members and administrators who collaborate with respect to the students' educational experience at the School. As part of this collaborative effort, school counselors may share information obtained from parents/guardians and students on a "need-to-know" basis with other employees of the School, as deemed appropriate by the school counselor. In the case of an emergency where a student's safety or wellbeing is at risk, the counselors may communicate with any parent, guardian, or school personnel necessary to help ensure the safe treatment of the student. Parents should understand that the School generally does not disclose to parents when a student sees the school counselor or the information or topics discussed during a counseling session. The counselors always prefer and encourage students to inform parents/guardians when they are seeing a counselor, and communication from parents/guardians who have questions or concerns regarding their children is welcomed. However, information shared by the School to parents may be limited, unless there is a compelling reason for doing so, such as concerns about the student's safety. Please contact the Director of Counseling for more details pertaining to limits of confidentiality.

Additionally, Berkshire retains an outside consulting psychiatrist who is available to meet with students. The Counseling Office will inform parents/guardians of recommendations for assessment by the psychiatrist and seek permission prior to any appointment. The doctor will bill parents/guardians directly per appointment. In the case where a student is over the age of 18, the student will be required to give consent for the doctor to share details of any appointments with parents/guardians.

Emergency mental health support is also available for students, as needed. In addition to having on-call trained health professionals while classes are in session, the School has partnered with a number of local resources for students to access emergency support. In the event a student is exhibiting behavior that raises concerns about the student's safety or wellbeing (or the safety and wellbeing of others), the trained health professionals screen the student to help determine whether an assessment by an outside provider is appropriate. Families and students should understand that school-trained health professionals may screen students for potential risks, but that outside providers are generally used for assessments. The results of such assessments should be shared with School personnel, so that appropriate recommendations can be implemented.

The Berkshire School Counseling Office offers support for students experiencing concerns in any area of their life at school or home. In the case of an acute mental health crisis, the Director of Counseling will meet with the Leave of Absence Team to determine if a Leave of Absence is necessary. These circumstances could include, but are not limited to, when a student is unsafe to remain on campus (as determined by the Director of Counseling), when they are unable to meet their commitments as a student, or when the crisis is creating an impact (whether directly or indirectly) on the broader wellbeing or functioning of the community. (See Medical Leave for more information.)

Families seeking ongoing weekly counseling appointments for their student will be supported in obtaining a referral for a therapist or psychologist. Any appointments with a mental health professional not employed by Berkshire will be paid for by the parents/guardians.

Parents and students should understand that the School does not provide therapeutic services. If a student presents as requiring specific mental-health services inconsistent with, or beyond the scope of, services the School is able to reasonably provide, the School may require the student to separate or withdraw from the School.

### **Other Counseling**

The School maintains a list of referrals for educational, intellectual, psychological, or speech and language evaluations should parents/guardians wish to consult with the School regarding such an evaluation. Families are generally billed directly for these services. Parents who need guidance in this area are encouraged to consult the Director of Counseling or the Director of the Kenefick Center for Learning. It is recommended that the results of such evaluations be shared with School personnel so that appropriate recommendations can be implemented.

### **Medical Leave**

A medical leave of absence from School may be appropriate in case of serious illness, bodily injury, or mental health condition, as determined in accordance with this policy. Decisions about granting or requiring a leave of absence, or reinstating a student who has been on leave, rest with the Leave of Absence Team, which can include the Head of School, Associate Head of School, Dean of Academics, Dean of Students, Director of Counseling, Medical Director, and/or the Director of Nursing. They will be guided by the principal goal of a leave of absence: to give the student the opportunity to regain health and thereby function consistently, productively, and safely at School. In the absence of a treatment plan that, in the School's opinion, meets these needs, the School may decline to grant a leave of absence request, and instead require the student to withdraw.

A student's family may request a leave of absence. The School requires that any request for a leave of absence be accompanied by sufficient supporting documentation to allow the School to evaluate the leave request including, but not limited to, at least the following information: (a) a recommendation from the student's treating medical professionals that the student would benefit from taking a leave of absence; (b) a description of how the student's medical condition limits the student's ability to participate in required academic or extracurricular activities; (c) the plan for treatment of the student's medical condition; and (d) an anticipated date for the student's return.

Additionally, in certain situations, the School may require that the student be placed on a leave of absence. The School may initiate a discussion of a leave of absence in circumstances including, but not limited to:

- when mental health or physical symptoms are, or may be, impeding a student from meeting academic and community expectations or functioning appropriately academically;
- when a physical or mental health condition interferes with a student's attendance at School;
- When a student behaves in ways that may be self-destructive or dangerous to others;
- when a student is not engaged in treatment that the School has made a condition of attendance, after the student has been evaluated by medical and/or mental health professionals, who have deemed such treatment appropriate; or
- when a student exhibits symptoms or behavior that is of concern to the School.

This discussion may include the Leave of Absence Team, student's advisor, the parents/guardians, or the student, as deemed appropriate. The purpose of this initial discussion is to establish the steps that the family is taking to ensure that the student is well enough to participate fully in life at the School and the further steps that the School may require if the situation does not improve.

Once a student is placed on a leave of absence, the family will receive a Leave of Absence Letter outlining the School's expectations and requirements during the leave. While each student's needs are different, the School generally will expect ongoing treatment by a medical professional, regular communication with the family, and full compliance with the expectations documented in the Leave of Absence Letter. The Leave of Absence Letter may also outline conditions and requirements for the student's return to School. While a student on leave is excused from attending classes, the student must make up essential missed work either while on leave (if deemed appropriate) or upon return. The form dean, in consultation with the Dean of Academics, will work directly with the student and the student's teachers to determine the work to be completed and the timeline for completion. While the School will strive to minimize academic disruption, the School may require that a student drop a course or courses if a prolonged absence will make it difficult for the student to satisfactorily complete the requirements of the course.

To return to Berkshire from a leave of absence, the family must provide a thorough, written professional evaluation of the student's current mental health and/or medical condition from the physician, psychiatrist, or other professional who treated the student during the leave of absence. The School may require additional evaluation by a physician or mental health consultant of its choosing. The guiding principle of re-admission from a leave of absence is the School's confidence that the student can return safely and that the student's return will not compromise the student's continued recovery, interfere with the School's ability to serve other students' needs, or place an undue burden on the School. The decision regarding any student's return to the School from a leave of absence remains with the School. As a corollary to this principle, a student whom the School determines can safely participate in the regular school day may nevertheless be restricted from participation in the residential program, overnight field trips, or other co-curricular school activities.

### **Food Allergies**

Our goals are to provide a safe and respectful environment for all students, to educate the School community about the nature of food allergies, and to provide support and encouragement as our students develop good decision-making skills and learn the critical lessons of managing their allergies. We hope to foster self-confidence, self-respect, and self-advocacy in our students, and to support families as they help students learn to appropriately manage their allergies. For students without allergies, our goals are to increase their awareness of food allergies, and to encourage the development of empathy and the skills needed for them to become supportive allies for their peers. As a school, we strive to help our students graduate with the skills and confidence to advocate for their own and others' health and physical safety.

Parents of students who have severe allergies with the potential for developing anaphylaxis must meet with the School Nurse to develop an Action Plan *prior to the start of the school year*. Classroom management will be discussed at that time. This plan must be reviewed prior to the start of each school year.

In consideration of the number of students with food allergies, the School has the following guidelines for management of these allergies:

- food prepared by the dining hall staff will be labeled regarding allergens;
- sharing of food is prohibited;
- frequent and appropriate hand washing will be encouraged;
- surfaces will be cleaned to prevent cross-contamination;
- for students with severe allergies, the School will be provided with an Emergency Care Plan written by a primary care provider or allergist with parental input.

Successful management of food allergies is the jointly held responsibility of the School, families, and students. Education encompasses the entire School community including employees, parents, and students. It focuses on preventive strategies, the symptoms of anaphylaxis in individual students, and emergency care. We recognize that the management of food allergies is a developmental process, and we strive to take reasonable measures to protect our youngest students, while recognizing that students should learn to assume increasing responsibility for their own health and safety as they mature.

### **Health Emergencies**

SHS staff will attempt to contact parents regarding illness or injury, minor or serious, but in circumstances that warrant immediate attention when the School is unable to reach the parents/guardians, designated emergency contacts, or the student's physician, the School's Medical Director or Director of Nursing will be consulted to determine appropriate management. In the event of a serious emergency, an ambulance will be called, the student will be taken to the nearest hospital emergency room, and at least one parent will be notified immediately. Emergency situations arising on campus will generally be referred to Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington, MA.

**Insurance and Medical Costs**

Berkshire's Health Services fee pays for routine visits to SHS, the Counseling Office, and the Athletic Health Care Facility. It also pays for some over-the-counter medications dispensed on campus, laboratory work performed at SHS, and STD/GYN visits. Physical exams for school, college, camp, work, or summer programs are *not* done at SHS. Please contact the Berkshire School Business Office if you have any questions regarding this fee.

All students must show proof of medical insurance coverage, and policies must be billable within the United States. For families' convenience, Berkshire provides information to all domestic students with the opportunity to purchase a 24/7 sickness and accident insurance plan from the ISM Insurance group. Domestic families living abroad are advised to make certain that family policies cover students while they are at Berkshire. International students are sent information from ISM and are encouraged to purchase the ISM international insurance. Only in rare situations should the families use the "credit card" method. If a credit card is used, we will need a signed document from the family stating the credit card number can be used for medical situations. Please contact the Business Office for questions related to student health insurance coverage.

Families are responsible for the cost of visits and transportation to off-campus medical specialists and facilities, as well as obtaining pre-authorization/referrals for all appointments.

## **ATHLETICS AND AFTERNOON PROGRAMMING**

### **Eligibility**

Students are required to have on file a medical form completed and signed by a medical doctor stating that the student is physically fit to participate in athletics and afternoon programming. No student will be allowed to participate until this form is on file. Students must be in school for the majority of the school day to be eligible for participation in athletics and all extracurricular activities.

### **Athletic/Activity Requirements**

All new students must participate in a sport or activity other than managing a team in the fall season. Third, fourth, and fifth-form students must participate in at least two team programs per year and a third season of an individual pursuit but may participate in three team programs if they wish. Sixth-form students must participate in at least one team program per year and a team program or individual pursuit in the other two seasons. A full list of athletics offerings can be found on the school website.

### **Interscholastic Athletic Programs**

Students have the opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports. By participating in sports, students develop their individual skills, increase their knowledge of a sport, and enhance their self-esteem in an environment intended to inspire athletes to pursue personal excellence. Through goal setting, teamwork, succeeding and failing, athletes may learn more about themselves as well as others, and often apply the lessons learned on the field or court to other areas of their lives.

The School offers the following team sports:

- Fall - cross country, field hockey, football, soccer, volleyball
- Winter - alpine skiing, basketball, ice hockey, squash
- Spring - baseball, crew, golf, lacrosse, tennis, track and field

Teams practice on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at assigned times. Students are expected to attend every practice. If a student needs to be excused from practice, the student must speak to the coach ahead of time.

### **Independent Athletic Projects**

Independent Athletic Projects are available to Sixth Formers who have already met their athletic requirement and wish to pursue a passion that is not already offered within our current program. Project proposals are to be filled out and signed by a faculty advisor two weeks prior to the start of each athletic season. Proposals will be reviewed by the Director of Athletics.

### **Athletic Special Request**

Any request to participate in a club program, event, or showcase that will result in missing an academic class, athletic commitment, or any Berkshire event, must be submitted in writing to the Director of Athletics two weeks prior to the beginning of each athletic season. Requests will be reviewed by the Director of Athletics, Dean of Students, and Dean of Academics and will be decided upon before tryouts have been completed for said season. After approval from the Director of Athletics is received, an Athletic Special Request form must be submitted for each leave request where obligations will be missed. Athletic Special Request forms are located in the Athletic Office and must be turned in to the Student Life Office three days prior to the departure date. Students must first obtain a signature from their advisor, followed by their form dean, the Director of Athletics, teachers, and coach.

### **Procedures for Changing Sports and Activities**

During the first two weeks of each season, students are free to change from one sport or activity to another. To change activities, students need the approval of the Athletic Office. When the grace period for changing activities has expired, students wishing to change activities must have permission from the head coaches of the activity they want to leave and the activity they want to join. After securing these permissions, students need to go to the Athletic Office

and follow the procedures for switching. The Athletic Department may set maximum and minimum limits to the number of students participating in a particular activity.

### **Athletic Health Care Facility**

Two athletic trainers staff the Athletic Health Care Facility, located in the Stewart Athletic Center. Athletic trainers (ATs) are healthcare professionals who render service or treatment, under the direction of or in collaboration with a physician, in accordance with their education, training, and the state's statutes, rules, and regulations. They are not to be confused with personal trainers. As a part of the health care team, services provided by athletic trainers include primary care, injury and illness prevention, wellness promotion and education, emergent care, examination and clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention, and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions.

### **Athletic Health Care Facility Hours**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:	9:00 AM until the end of practices
Wednesday (game days):	9:00 AM until approximately 30 minutes prior to game time
Saturday (game days):	11:30 AM until approximately 30 minutes prior to game time

### **Sportsmanship**

Athletics enhance the overall educational experience and build well-rounded students and leaders. Integrity, fairness, and respect—these are the principles of good sportsmanship. With them, the spirit of competition thrives, fueled by honest rivalry, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of the results. Sportsmanship goals include:

- Developing a sense of dignity under all circumstances;
- Respecting the rules of the game, the officials who administer the rules, and their decisions;
- Respecting opponents as fellow students and acknowledging them for striving to do their best while students seek to do their best at the same time;
- Looking at athletic participation as a potentially beneficial learning experience, whether a win or loss;
- Educating other students and fans to understand the rules of the game, and the value of sportsmanship; and
- Accepting the personal responsibility that comes with one's actions on the court/field.

The School also encourages parents and other family members to act in a sportsman-like manner. As such, the School hopes parents and other individuals associated with the student will:

- Realize that athletics are part of the educational experience, and the benefits of involvement go beyond the final score of a game;
- Encourage students to perform their best, just as we would urge them on with their classwork, knowing that others will always turn in better or lesser performances;
- Participate in positive cheers and encourage our athletes, and discourage any cheer that would redirect that focus;
- Learn, understand, and respect the rules of the game, the officials who administer them and their decisions;
- Respect the task our coaches face as teachers, and support them as they strive to educate our youth;
- Respect our opponents as students, and acknowledge them for striving to do their best; and
- Remember that we would all like to be victorious in every situation we face in life, but just like in athletic competition, sometimes we fall short.

Students, parents, teachers, coaches, and spectators are all expected to refrain from:

- Use of profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game;
- Booring or heckling an official's decisions, criticizing officials in any way, or displaying temper with an official's call;
- Trash talking or yelling that antagonizes opponents;
- Using verbal abuse or intimidation tactics;
- Disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs, gestures, signs, posters, or banners;

- Any distracting activity such as yelling, waving arms, or feet-stomping during an opponent's free-throw attempts or other solo efforts; and
- Use of artificial noisemakers of any kind.
- We cheer for Berkshire not against our opponents

### **Athletic Calendar and Communication**

Please refer to the Athletic Calendar on the School's website which is updated regularly, or call the Athletic Office for last minute changes due to weather and daily events.

### **Parent-Coach Communications**

As with parent-teacher and parent-advisor relations, athletics promote the establishment of good communication between parents and coaches. It is assumed that parents and coaches will understand their respective roles in order to best support our student athletes. In an effort to promote effective communication, the following guidelines should be followed:

Parents may expect to learn from coaches information about:

- The coach's and program's philosophy;
- Individual and team expectations;
- Location and times of all practices and games;
- Team requirements (*i.e.*, practices, equipment, off-season conditioning);
- Procedures regarding injuries during practices/games; and
- Discipline that may result in the denial of participation.

Parents are expected to:

- Express concerns directly to the coach;
- Notify coaches well in advance of any schedule conflicts;
- Support the program; and
- Encourage students to strive for excellence.

Appropriate concerns for parents to discuss with coaches include, but are not limited to:

- Students' psychological or physical treatment;
- Ways to help students develop and improve;
- Questions about the coach's philosophy; and
- Concerns regarding students' behavior during athletics.

Inappropriate concerns for parents to discuss with coaches include, but are not limited to:

- The amount of playing time for students;
- Team strategies or play calls; and
- Other student-athletes.

If a parent has a concern to discuss with a coach, the parent should call to set up an appointment with the coach. If the coach cannot be reached, a parent should call the Director of Athletics, who will help to set up a meeting with the coach. Parents should not confront a coach before, after, or during a practice or game. If, after meeting with a coach, a parent still has concerns, the parent should call and set up an appointment with the Director of Athletics to discuss the situation.

### **Athletic Clothing and Equipment**

- For practice, students are required to wear Berkshire-issued shorts and t-shirts.

- Cleats are required for the following sports: field hockey, soccer, baseball, and football. Metal cleats are not allowed. Appropriate polycarbonate eyewear is necessary for all squash players. Field hockey and lacrosse players are also required to wear protective eyewear.
- Athletes are also required to have the appropriate sports equipment for their sport (*i.e.*, sticks, baseball glove, tennis racquet).
- At the beginning of the season, all players are issued a team uniform. Uniforms are worn only on game days, are expected to be handed in after each event, and will be collected at the end of the season. Any athlete who does not return their uniform, or returns it in poor condition, will be billed through the Business Office.
- Jewelry may not be worn during practices and/or during competitive events.
- All athletes who wear glasses when playing any sport must have polycarbonate lenses in their frames. No substitute is acceptable. A note from the student's optometrist or a receipt stating that the lenses are polycarbonate must be mailed to the Director of Athletics prior to a student's participation in athletic activities.

### **Head Injury/Concussion Policy**

A "concussion" is a complex disturbance in brain function, due to direct or indirect trauma to the head, related to neurometabolic dysfunction, rather than structural injury. Most individuals who experience a concussion can recover completely as long as they do not return to play or return to learn prematurely. The effects of repeated concussions can be cumulative, and after a concussion, there is a period in which the brain is particularly vulnerable to further injury. If the individual sustains a second concussion during this period, the risk of permanent brain injury increases significantly.

As such, the guidelines outlined below should be followed to ensure that student-athletes are identified, treated, and referred appropriately, receive appropriate follow-up care during the school day, and are recovered prior to returning to full activity.

#### *Concussion Awareness*

Concussions and other brain injuries can be serious and potentially life threatening. If managed properly, most athletes can enjoy long careers in sports after a concussion. If not managed properly, research indicates that these injuries can also have serious consequences later in life.

A concussion occurs when there is a direct or indirect injury to the brain. As a result, transient impairment of mental functions such as memory, balance/equilibrium, and vision may occur. It is important to recognize that many sport-related concussions do not result in loss of consciousness and, therefore, all suspected head injuries should be taken seriously. Coaches, parents, and fellow teammates can be helpful in identifying those who may potentially have a concussion, because a concussed student-athlete may not be aware of the athlete's condition or may be trying to hide the injury to stay in the game or practice.

Second-Impact Syndrome (SIS) results from an acute brain swelling that occurs when a second concussion is sustained before complete recovery from a previous concussion. Student-athletes who have mild symptoms or symptoms that have cleared are still at risk for developing brain swelling after a second impact to the head. The School utilizes Sway Medical Testing for additional testing and returning back to sport, especially in our high impact sports.

The School requires every new student to take both the Sway and ImPACT baseline concussion tests before the start of the school year, and strongly recommends that all student-athletes and their parents read training materials or watch online training materials offered by the School prior to participation in athletics at the School.



### *Signs and Symptoms*

When a student-athlete sustains a concussion, the student-athlete may report one or more of the following symptoms: headache or “pressure” in head; double or fuzzy vision; dizziness; tinnitus (ringing in the ears); nausea; just doesn’t “feel right;” sensitivity to light and/or noise; feeling sluggish, foggy, or groggy; concentration/memory problems; and/or confusion.

When a student-athlete sustains a concussion, one or more of the following symptoms may be observed in the athlete: loss of consciousness; appears dazed or stunned; moves clumsily; unsure of score, opponent, date, etc.; cannot recall events prior to incident; cannot recall events after incident; answers questions slowly; confused about what to do—assignments, position, etc.; forgets an instruction; and/or shows mood, behavior, or personality changes.

The School recommends that a student-athlete receive prompt medical attention for the following dangerous symptoms of a concussion:

- loss of consciousness;
- vomiting;
- confusion;
- convulsions or seizures;
- one pupil is larger than the other;
- difficulty recognizing people or places;
- extreme drowsiness or cannot be awakened;
- any weakness or numbness; and
- headache worsens or does not go away after 24 hours.

### *Management Procedures*

The School strongly recommends that student-athletes take a pre-season baseline assessment for concussion that will remain on hand in the event of a concussion. It is also strongly recommended that parents and student-athletes take an online course prior to the start of each school year.

When a student-athlete shows any signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion, the student-athlete is expected to be promptly removed from practice or competition and evaluated by the School Nurse, Athletic trainer, and/or the student-athlete’s healthcare provider. At away events, when there is no qualified medical professional available, the coaching staff will typically abide by, “When in doubt, sit them out,” as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control. If any danger signs are exhibited as described above, the School will strive to contact a parent/guardian and will accompany the student-athlete to an Emergency Room by Emergency Medical Service.

### *Post-Concussion – Return to Play*

The student-athlete must meet all of the following criteria in order to progress to activity:

- symptom-free at rest and with exertion (including mental exertion in school).
- have written clearance from the appropriate health care provider.
- once the above criteria are met, the student-athlete will be progressed back to full activity following a stepwise process that includes:
  - light aerobic exercise (stationary bike, swimming, etc. at <70% PMHR, predicted maximum heart rate);
  - sport-specific training (running, throwing, catching, body weight exercises);
  - non-contact training drills; weight lifting (full non-contact practice);
  - full-contact practice (controlled contact drills);
  - game play (no activity restrictions).

## LEADERSHIP AT BERKSHIRE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

### Student Government

One of the School's goals is for every student to develop a sense of responsibility to and for the community. In keeping with this spirit, much of the School's government is directed by the students as well as student leaders. Students should prioritize being a cooperative and constructive citizen in their environment.

The central agency of self-government at Berkshire is the Student Government, led by the All-School Presidents and Prefects, a group of Sixth Formers who have demonstrated special qualities of leadership and high character. The All-School Presidents work closely with the Form representatives, and the Prefects assist in the supervision of the dorms and accept a large share of the responsibility for the day-to-day conduct of the School's affairs.

Student Government positions are typically elected in the spring for the following school year. The members of each class typically elect the class officers. Prefects are elected in May before their sixth-form year by the faculty. The Head of School selects the Head Prefects.

All forms are given opportunities in self-government through participation in Student Government. As students progress through the School, they are awarded a greater share of the privileges and responsibilities of democratic living. Thus, through a predictable and gradual process, students develop a sense of personal and group responsibility that is recognized in the sixth-form year by a substantial measure of self-government.

### Student Leadership

There are many opportunities for students to develop leadership skills. Student Council, student clubs and activities, dorm prefects, affinity space leaders, and peer listeners are just a few of the ways students from all Forms can assume leadership positions. Sixth Formers are a large part of the overall health and well-being of the community. Because we ask so much of our Sixth Form, the focus of our *Pro Vita* programming for the Fifth Form focuses on leadership skills. We work closely with the Fifth Form to help them develop a definition of leadership, identify their leadership strengths, and form an action plan for their sixth-form year.

#### *Student Council*

The Student Council is a group of students who represent the ideas and opinions of the student body and act as liaisons between students and the faculty. There are two student presidents elected for each Form. The group is led by the All-School Presidents, two Sixth Formers selected by vote of the school community in the spring preceding the students' sixth-form year.

#### *Dorm and Day Prefects*

Prefects are selected by a committee of faculty in the spring preceding the students' sixth-form year. The Head of School selects two of these students to serve as Head Prefects. Most of the "duties" performed by a Prefect are "behind the scenes": talking to students in the dorm on an informal basis, filling the role of friend/mentor, and gently guiding students in the right direction or in making the right decision. Day Prefects focus on the experience of day students on campus. Some of the Prefect duties include:

- assisting with daily operations of the dorm or day student experience, such as supervising study hall and lights out, assisting with dorm/day student meetings, organizing schedules, and assisting with move-in days;
- being a consistent, positive, and visible presence in the dorm or campus center, including most weekends, and available to both faculty and students;
- working to develop a keen understanding of the dorm or day student climate and any underlying issues;
- displaying an ability and willingness to connect with all types and ages of students and taking the initiative to check in with all residents of the dorm or day student group.

### *Green Key Leaders*

Green Key Leaders work closely with the Admission Office. The main responsibility of a Green Key Leader is to help coordinate the daily tour schedule. Green Key Leaders perform a variety of duties for the Admission Office, including helping around the office, attending off-campus admission events, and giving tours to placement directors from other schools as well as candidates for faculty/staff positions. Applicants must be current members of the Green Key Society.

### *1907 Society Student Leaders*

The 1907 Society is an enthusiastic group of students that organize fundraising activities such as phone-a-thons to ask alumni for their support, as well as to thank alumni who have given in the past. The student leaders work closely with the Advancement and Communication/Marketing Offices. In addition, the society leaders participate in alumni events and act as the student liaisons between the Advancement Office and the student body.

### *Green and Gray Leaders*

Green and Gray Leaders organize and run school-wide competitions between the Green and Gray teams during the school year. Green vs. Gray, which began in 1907, was created with the purpose of creating a fun and spirited Berkshire community. All students and faculty/staff are selected for one of the two teams when they arrive on campus, and they remain on that team for their Berkshire career. The student leaders are responsible for organizing some of the School's traditional events and for creating new and exciting competitions which take place throughout the school year. Student leaders should be spirited, organized, work well in groups, and be committed to creating a positive school culture.

### *International Student Leaders*

International Student Leaders assist in orientation of new students, support all international students during the year, and work closely with the Director of the International Student Program.

### *Trailblazers*

Trailblazers is a mentorship and orientation program for incoming BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) students. New Trailblazers connect with student and adult mentors and learn how to access the services and resources available to navigate a residential academic setting.

### *Peer Listeners*

Peer Listeners is a leadership position open to Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Formers. Based on the premise that students will seek the support of their peers during difficult times, their mission is to foster student emotional well-being through confidential peer-to-peer interaction. Working in collaboration with the Counseling Office and other adult facilitators, Peer Listeners are trained in active listening, problem solving, crisis response, and stress reduction. They also lead campus programming to raise awareness about mental health and decrease stigma around seeking support.

### *Affinity Space Leaders*

Affinity Groups bring together people who have a common social identity involving race, gender, religion, family structure, sexuality, etc. and are for students who identify as a member of that group. They are spaces where people can be their authentic selves so that everyone has a sense of belonging.

## **Student Activities and Organizations**

The Student Life Office works with the Student Activities Coordinator, Student Council, and the Green and Gray Coordinator and Captains to plan and coordinate events throughout the year. Students have the opportunity to participate in many extracurricular clubs and activities at School. A full list of activities and clubs can be found on the school website. Students who have special interests that fall beyond the scope of the activities listed are invited to start their own organizations with the School's permission and guidance of a faculty member.

**Community Service**

All students are encouraged to perform community service. Students may also participate in community service as an afternoon activity (not offered every season). Students may perform community service on campus in such places as the Admission Office, Student Life Office, Advancement Office, library, or with other large offices on campus. Students may also create their own service on campus, coordinating the tasks with an adult on campus (for instance, working around student dorms or working in a science lab). Note that each office may have its own unique requirements, so be sure to discuss those requirements thoroughly before committing your time. We also encourage students to perform service off campus (for instance, work in a soup kitchen, Habitat for Humanity, etc.).

**Fundraising**

Student governments, clubs, teams and organizations that wish to raise money for charitable causes, to help finance their activities, or for any other purpose must consult with the Dean of Students for approval of their methods and products. The Dean will not approve fundraising projects whose primary goal is to provide resources to feed the members of organizations. In other words, buy pizza and raise money for something worthwhile. Anything made for sale must be approved by the Dean of Students.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **School Directory**

The School has a directory by Form and contact information for families, faculty and staff, and other members of the community. The directory is updated each September and made available to families online. The directory may only be used for School purposes, and not for personal or commercial purposes. Failure to properly use the directory may result in restricted use and other consequences, as determined appropriate by the School.

### **Student Records and Transcripts**

Students' records are kept on file at the School. Each student's record contains a transcript with grades, athletic involvement, commendations, test scores, formal academic, athletic and advisor comments, advisor letters, and letters involving any major discipline infractions.

### **Confidentiality**

Members of the School community commit themselves to maintaining appropriate professional tact and discretion with regard to confidential information they receive. However, confidential information may be disclosed to the Head of School, Associate Head of School, appropriate administrators and faculty, outside professionals, law enforcement officers, families, or others when there is a compelling reason for doing so, including, without limitation, in cases of health and safety emergencies (when students or others are in imminent danger of harm); when there is concern about an individual's ability to function academically, emotionally, physically, and/or mentally within the School environment; or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed.

### **Student Media Information**

In order to portray its program accurately and vibrantly, the School makes a concerted effort to highlight the accomplishments of our students and faculty, as well as to publicize the strength of the entire program offered by the School, in a variety of media formats. Student Media Information—including student names, photographic images (for example, portrait, picture, video, or other reproductions), audio recordings of students' voices, video recordings of students, and/or reproductions of students' work and likenesses—may be used for educational and/or promotional purposes in print and electronic media. Outlets for publication of Student Media Information may include, but not be limited to, the School magazine, marketing materials, the School website, press releases, social media outlets (including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, and Threads), newsletters, and local newspapers.

While the School strives to abide by parent/guardian wishes, we do not guarantee use of a student's name or image will never occur. Parents are asked to contact the School if they would like to opt out of the use of Student Media Information.

### **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students**

The School strives to provide a safe and supportive environment that will help students succeed academically and socially. To that end, the School promotes respect for all people, and will not tolerate harassment or bullying based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This is the case whether the bullying or harassment takes place on or off campus, including cyberbullying using electronic technology (on or off the School's campus, and on or off the School's network). Particularly with respect to transgender and gender non-conforming students, the School will work closely with students and their families to strive to honor their wishes with respect to use of School facilities, participation in athletics, accuracy of student records, use of preferred name and pronouns, and privacy, in accordance with applicable law, and to the extent that the School's campus facilities reasonably permit.

### **Students Age 18 and Older**

Students who reach the age of 18 before graduation will be required to sign an addendum to the (re)enrollment agreement that their parents or legal guardians signed. This will provide the School permission to continue to discuss and release information and records to the student's parent(s) and legal guardian(s) about any issues relating to the

student's enrollment. It will also allow the School to interact with the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) as if the student were under the age of 18. The addendum will cover all (re)enrollment agreements signed by the parent(s) or legal guardians during the student's enrollment in Berkshire. Parent(s) and legal guardians will continue to be responsible under the terms of the (re)enrollment agreement, including being solely responsible for the payment of all tuition and fees.

### **International Students**

Students enrolled in the School from countries outside of the United States are required to ensure that their visas, health insurance coverage, and all other requirements applicable to domestic students (including vaccinations and completion of all enrollment and orientation forms) are in order prior to arriving on campus at the beginning of the school year. International students are also responsible for ensuring that their travel arrangements coincide with the School calendar. The School is not responsible for housing international students outside of the published School calendar.

### **School Trips**

The School offers a variety of field trips during the school year. All School trips are required to be alcohol, drug, and tobacco free. Students participating in School trips are required to comply with all applicable School rules and all applicable laws.

### **Service Animals**

A student or other visitor to campus who has a disability that requires the assistance of a service animal, as defined by applicable law, is generally permitted to bring the service animal to campus and school programs. When it is not obvious what service the animal provides, the School may ask whether the animal is required because of a disability and the job or task the animal is trained to perform.

As soon as a student is aware of plans to bring a service animal to campus or school programs, the student is expected to contact the Dean of Students. The goal is to help ensure that the student and service animal have appropriate access to the School's premises, facilities, and programs. If the service animal would fundamentally alter the School's programs, services, or activities; create an undue burden; or present legitimate safety concerns, the School may limit or deny the service animal access to campus and school programs.

Service animals are generally permitted in all areas on campus where the student is allowed to go. However, there may be some locations and activities where service animals are not allowed for health and safety reasons, including facilities management areas; food service preparation areas; certain areas of SHS; and other areas where there is a danger or health concern to the service animal or a community member.

Handlers are encouraged to use a leash, harness, cape, or another marker to help identify their animal as a service animal. The School expects service animals to comply with the School's licensing, medical, and behavioral requirements, and expectations concerning supervision, control, and care of the animal. A service animal must always be under the handler's control and harnessed. Failure to meet these expectations, or if there are concerns that the service animal presents a threat to the health, safety, or property of the School or members of its community, the School may exclude or restrict the service animal's access to campus and school programs or impose other restrictions that the School determines appropriate.

Students and other members of the Berkshire community are expected to recognize that a service animal is not a pet. They should not approach or engage with a service animal unless the service animal is not working, and they have the express permission of the handler to engage with the service animal.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

The School is committed to the highest standards of care for its students, which includes protecting students from inappropriate or hurtful actions by adults responsible for their care.

In accordance with Massachusetts law, the School's employees (including, but not limited to, its faculty, staff, school administrators, counselors, etc.) are required to report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) suspected abuse or neglect of children under the age of eighteen (18). This duty is triggered when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from abuse or neglect. The responsibility to report rests both on the School and on School employees.

The following procedure is established to ensure that reports are made in a timely and effective manner, and that information about students and their families is treated respectfully. We ask that families understand that the School and its employees are sometimes required to make a report to DCF, and we ask that families support our decisions to do so.

### **Background Checks**

With student safety as a priority at the School, the School conducts state and national criminal history and sex offender registry checks on all current and prospective faculty and staff of the School who may have "direct and unmonitored access to children," including any individual who regularly provides School-related transportation to students.

The School requires any volunteers who will work independently with students to undergo a state criminal background check or "CORI" (Criminal Offender Record Information) and a state sex offender registry check or "SORI" (Sexual Offender Registry Information). It is also School policy to require that volunteers with direct and unmonitored access to students undergo a fingerprint-based check, which is run through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and provides access to national criminal history databases. Examples of the types of volunteer activities requiring a background check include, but are not limited to, field trips and tutoring students one-on-one. A background check is typically not necessary for parent volunteers involved with larger School functions at which many adults are typically present or in instances where there is only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with students in commonly used areas of the School grounds.

These background checks require the completion of a brief application form and verification of a government-issued photographic identification and are only conducted with the consent of an individual employee or volunteer. A volunteer's service, and an individual's employment, is contingent upon successful completion of the checks, which may take several days or weeks to process.

Completed CORI and fingerprint-based check forms must be returned to the Business Office at least two weeks in advance of volunteering.

### **Security, Emergencies, and Drills**

Berkshire takes the safety of its students and the community very seriously. There are systems in place in the event of an emergency on campus, and regular drills are conducted to make all those on campus aware of the procedures. While School is in session, there is 24-hour security coverage.

All dormitories hold at least one fire drill each trimester, including one during the first week of school. At the first sound of the alarm, each person is to move quickly and quietly out of the building according to a predetermined plan of exit. Attendance is taken outside the building under the supervision of the dormitory parent on duty. Fire drills are of obvious importance and are conducted more frequently if they have not been held to the satisfaction of School authorities. Drills to prepare for response to an emergency are also held. Students will receive instruction on how to prepare for such situations and the precautions that should be taken.

### **Surveillance Cameras on Campus**

The School has installed video cameras at certain open and public spaces on campus, such as all official entrances to the School's campus, as well as at key campus crossroads. The School seeks to balance the security, safety, and

other benefits derived from the use of video surveillance with any privacy concerns of the School's employees, students, families, and guests. In all cases, security equipment is used in a manner that adheres to legal statutes and ethical standards where the right of privacy is concerned and is not used where there exists a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as in restrooms, locker rooms, etc. In addition, all entrances to the School's campus are posted with signs notifying School community members and other visitors that there are video surveillance cameras actively in use on campus. These surveillance cameras record visual footage in each location, but do not record any sound or other audio.

### **Search and Seizure**

The School may conduct a search of a student and/or the student's belongings, including personal items, such as bags and backpacks, personal electronic devices, and other effects, if the School suspects a student may be violating the law or violating a School rule or code of conduct. Lockers and dorm rooms are the property of the School. Students exercise control over their lockers and dorm rooms from other students, but not from the School and its officials. As a result, the Head of School and the Head's designees, as well as law enforcement officials, may search lockers and dorm rooms as the School determines may be appropriate, which may include random searches. The School and law enforcement officials may seize items that may jeopardize the safety of others or property, constitute a health hazard, or are otherwise prohibited by the School's policies.

Parking on School premises is a privilege, not a right. As such, any person who operates a vehicle on School property or in connection with any School-related activity is agreeing that the School may inspect and search the vehicle and its contents without notice and without further consent.

### **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act**

This notification is required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act). Asbestos Management Plans have been developed for the School. These plans are available and accessible to the public at the School's business office. This notification is required by law and should not be construed to indicate the existence of any hazardous conditions in our school buildings.

### **Emergency School Closure**

It is possible for certain events beyond the reasonable control of the School to occur during the academic year that, in the judgment of the School and/or government authorities, render the School unsafe or unsuitable for its students, staff, and/or faculty and require closure of the School and its boarding facilities for some period. Such events include, but are not limited to, acts of God, fire, acts of terrorism, threats of violence, and the outbreak of a health epidemic or other contagious disease at, or in the vicinity of, the School. In any such event, the School will, as promptly as possible after the decision has been made to close, use reasonable efforts to notify parents/guardians of such closure using the contact information on record with the School through the Veracross Parent Portal. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the contact information up-to-date and to make necessary arrangements to pick up their child at the earliest possible time. Families who are not within a 48-hour driving (not air travel) distance are required to identify a domestic caretaker in the event of an emergency. If the School is unable to contact the parents/guardians regarding the closure or the parents/guardians fail to pick up their child after notification of such closure, the School will make alternate arrangements for such student's care at the parent's sole expense. In any case of a school closure, the School will notify the parents/guardians of the reopening of the School and of any adjustments or modifications to the School calendar that may be made as a result of such closure. No refunds of amounts paid or credits for amounts due hereunder will be given as a result of or in connection with any such closure. Please refer to the enrollment contracts for more information.



## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

### **Parental Comportment and Support for School Policies**

At Berkshire, we believe that a positive relationship between the School and a student's parents or guardians is essential to the fulfillment of the School's mission. We recognize that effective relationships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be achieved.

The School understands and appreciates that parents and guardians may employ different means to meet the expectations and responsibilities expressed in this policy. Nevertheless, Berkshire may dismiss a student whose parent, guardian, family member, or other adult involved with the student, in the judgment of the School, fails to comply with this or any other policy or procedure of the School, engages in conduct either on or off the School's property that could undermine the authority of the School's administration, and/or otherwise behaves in a manner that is unbecoming of a member of the School community. The School may refuse re-enrollment of a student if the School believes the actions of a parent or guardian (or another individual associated with the student) on or off the School's property make a positive, constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise may interfere with the School's accomplishment of its mission and/or educational goals.

To assist in creating the most effective relationship, the School expects that families will observe the following guidelines.

1. Share in the School's vision.
  - Support the mission of the School.
  - Understand and support the School's philosophy, policies, and procedures.
  - Support the School's disciplinary process and understand that the School's authority in such matters is final.
  - Be supportive of the School's commitment to a diverse and inclusive community.
  - Acknowledge that the payment of tuition is an investment in the education of the student, not an investment of ownership in the School.
  - Support the School's emphasis on sustainable practices.
2. Provide a home environment that supports the intellectual, physical, and emotional growth of the student.
  - Create a schedule and structure that supports a student's study and completion of homework requirements.
  - Be aware of the student's online activities and use of computers, television, and video games.
  - Encourage integrity and civility in the student.
  - Be a role model, especially when it comes to behavior at School and at athletic events.
  - Encourage the student's participation in events that promote high standards; actively discourage participation in events that can lead to illegal or unwise behavior.
3. Participate in the establishment of a home/School and School community relationship built on communication, collaboration, and mutual respect.
  - Provide a home environment that supports positive attitudes toward the School.
  - Treat each member of the community with respect, assume good will, and maintain a collaborative approach when conflicts and challenges arise.
  - Help build and maintain a positive School environment by not participating in or tolerating gossip.
  - Maintain tact and discretion with regard to confidential information. In cases when students or others are in imminent danger of harm, when there is a compelling reason for doing so, or when legal requirements demand that confidential information must be revealed, information may be disclosed to the Head of School, administrators, outside professionals, or law enforcement officers.
  - Respect the School's responsibility to do what is best for the entire community, while recognizing the needs of an individual student.
  - Seek to resolve problems and secure information through appropriate channels (*i.e.*, teacher, advisor,

- counselor, Head of School, in that order).
- Acknowledge the value of the educational experience at the School by making regular and timely School attendance a priority.
- Support the School through volunteerism and attendance at School events.
- Financially support the School to the best of one's ability.
- Share with the School any religious, cultural, medical, or personal information that the School may need to best serve students and the School community.
- Understand and support the School's technology policies.

### **Current Family Contact Information**

Parents are expected to keep the School informed of contact information for emergency situations. If a parent is going to be away from home for an extended length of time, please leave a forwarding address and telephone number where the parent can be reached, as well as information regarding who will be responsible for the student and how they may be reached in case of illness or other emergencies.

### **Multiple Households**

For the School to communicate effectively with families and support each student, it is important for teachers and administrators to be aware of students who spend time in multiple households. On the Parent Portal, parents are expected to identify whether co-parenting arrangements exist. If there are court-ordered guidelines regarding visitations, picking up a student from school, parent involvement in field trips, or other issues, please notify and provide proper documentation to the Admission and Student Life Offices.

Believing that a student's educational experience is enhanced through active parent participation and partnership, the School seeks to facilitate communication with all parents. Absent a court order to the contrary, all parents for whom the School has contact information will receive normal school mailings (i.e., grades, teacher comments, all-School email) and other School communications. As part of this commitment, it is parents' responsibility to ensure that any communication from the School is shared among their family. In addition, parents are expected to include any other parent(s)/guardian(s) of their child on electronic communications to the School, including emails to teachers. Given the unique legal situation of each family, the School may make exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis.

The School expects separated or divorced parents to cooperate and partner with the School with respect to their child's education. For this reason, the School will not get involved in parental disputes or custody issues.

### **School Gatherings Off Campus (Not Sponsored by the School)**

It is important to remember, through their quest for acceptance from peers and their desire for greater independence, that students still need clear boundaries and guidance, and the following section provides some ideas to consider. They are designed to be practical and, more importantly, are based on the values that we, as a school, stand for as part of our mission. In this sense, we hope that all our parents will support these in spirit, if not in letter.

1. Always be at an event or party in your own home.
  - The parents should be the greeters. During the party, parents should casually make their presence known.
  - Have the party in a part of the house where the guests will be comfortable and where you can maintain adequate supervision.
  - Be the ones to bring in the food and beverages. This will keep the party running smoothly, and it will allow you to meet your child's friends.
  - Occasionally walk around outside.
2. Clearly establish ground rules and expectations with your child before the party takes place (before your child goes to any social event).
  - Let students know your expectations: they want guidelines, though you may hear something quite different.
  - Give students options, but with clear guidelines. Discuss their responsibilities and discuss what the

- consequences are for inappropriate behavior and what the rewards are for appropriate behavior.
- Stress the concept of shared responsibility.
- Parents should take the responsibility of “playing the heavy,” if there is inappropriate behavior.

3. Make sure there is plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages and plan activities.

4. If your child is invited to a party, you should contact the parent giving the party and:
- Verify the location.
  - Verify that parents will be present.
  - Verify the starting and ending time.
  - Offer assistance (e.g., chaperone, food, etc.).
  - If there is to be a sleepover, find out what the ground rules will be.

If parents must be away for any length of time, make arrangements for quality supervision in the home to ensure that parents, students, and the home are protected. Too many parties occur in homes when parents are away. Let the School and neighbors know if parents are away.

### **Parents Association**

The mission of the Berkshire Parents Association is to support and enhance the Berkshire experience and community for every student, parent, and faculty member. We accomplish this through volunteer efforts and stewardship of faculty appreciation, event participation, and parent giving. Our goal is for Berkshire parents to feel connected to one another and the School. For more information please visit the Parents page on Berkshire School's website.

### **Volunteering**

There are a number of ways to contribute your time, energy, and passion! For more information please visit the Parents page on Berkshire School's website.

### **Annual Fund and Fundraising**

Berkshire students succeed thanks to outstanding faculty, programs, and facilities supported by alumni, parents, and friends. Every contribution—whether toward the Annual Fund, endowment, or a planned gift—makes the Berkshire experience even better for our Bears. For more information please visit the Support page on Berkshire School's website.

## **ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **Enrollment Contracts**

Enrollment contracts are typically sent to families each spring. Students may not attend classes unless a properly executed enrollment agreement is submitted to the School in a timely manner. Enrollment contracts will be sent to returning students only if all financial obligations are current and the School is generally satisfied with the student's academic performance and behavior. Please see the Re-Enrollment policy for additional information.

Unless otherwise permitted by the enrollment contract, parents are responsible for the full tuition for the academic year, regardless of whether their child attends the School or withdrawals or is separated from the School. Please see the Handbook's Tuition Refund Plan policy for additional information.

### **Tuition Assistance**

Berkshire School is committed to supporting families and students from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds as they navigate affording a private school education. Believe it or not, the actual cost of attending Berkshire exceeds tuition, and we are fortunate to have fiscally responsible leaders, a healthy endowment, and annual donations from friends, families, and alumni to make up the difference. Understanding that even this adjusted tuition is out of range for many families, Berkshire maintains a generous need-based financial aid budget that supports approximately 25% of our student body. Financial aid support ranges from \$5,000 to nearly full tuition. If the tuition cost feels prohibitive to you, we encourage you to apply for financial aid.

Our School community is committed to helping families effectively meet the cost of the School education to the extent that the School's resources permit. Families who demonstrate that their financial resources are insufficient to pay the full cost of tuition are eligible to apply for financial assistance. To apply for financial assistance or receive additional information about financial aid, parents can access information on the admission page of the School's website.

### **Tuition Billing Schedule**

Tuition is due in full by June 30, 2025, or may be paid in installments, consistent with the payment plans offered by the School and selected by the family. Students may not attend classes, take examinations, or graduate, unless tuition is paid in a timely manner consistent with the terms of the Enrollment Contract.

### **Billing**

No student will be permitted to begin school in September unless the tuition has been paid in full or a family is participating in one of the payment plans and is current with payment. The School does recognize that families may experience extenuating financial circumstances. While the School is willing to work with families in these instances, all accommodating payment plans must be approved in writing by the Head of School and payments must be received on a regular basis.

If an account is more than 60 days' overdue, it will be brought to the attention of the Business Office, Chief Financial Officer, and the Head of School. The School will review the case, make appropriate arrangements regarding collection, and may decide the student will not be permitted to return to School the following trimester or for the remainder of the school year. Students may be prohibited from re-enrolling if there is an outstanding account balance from the previous school year. Furthermore, the School will not release any student records, to the extent permissible by law, and may litigate for monies due.

### **Tuition Refund Plan**

The Tuition Refund Plan offers enrolled families an insurance policy for recovering tuition in the event of certain absences, withdrawals, or dismissals. Insurance information and an application are included in the enrollment package. The plan is optional, but families participating in the installment payment plans are encouraged to participate.

**Re-Enrollment**

The Head of School reviews the academic and behavioral records of students at the end of each school year. A decision to re-enroll a student and to subsequently forward a re-enrollment contract to the parents is based upon a student's academic record, effort, attitude, and behavior throughout the prior year, and upon the willingness of the parents to accept and exemplify their responsibility in the partnership of education. On occasion, re-enrollment contracts are held until later (usually April or May) when the School decides that an appropriate decision about placement can be made, or are not extended at all, if the School determines that such a recommendation is in the best interest of the student and/or the School community. The Head of School makes the final decision as to whether a student will be invited to return for another year.

This difficult conclusion is only reached after careful consideration. While parents are obviously involved in this process, the School will make the ultimate decision, and will assist, if possible, in the process of locating an appropriate alternative school.

**Family Leave**

Families who take a leave of absence from the School of a year or more are generally expected to apply to the School for readmission. The student will be considered on a space-available basis, as well as within the context and competition of the applicant pool for the student's grade level. Strength of the applicant's file is important, including a strong finish to the student's last year at the School, as well as a strong record of academic performance and citizenship while the student is away. Ultimately, the School cannot predict the number of openings or competitiveness of applicant pools for specific grade levels, and given the School's high enrollment, there is never a guarantee of readmission for the following year. Applications for admission, from both current and new families, must be submitted by the agreed upon timeline initiated by the School. Enrollment decisions, regardless of a family's prior or current relationship with the School, always rest exclusively with the School.

**Leave of Absence**

Should a student's extended absence from School be necessary or desired, a leave of absence may be appropriate. A leave for medical reasons will be handled in accordance with the School's Medical Leave policy. The School may recommend or grant a request for a voluntary leave of absence for other compelling reasons. The initial request for a voluntary leave of absence should be made to the Associate Head of School. The School requires sufficient supporting documentation prior to the approval of any leave. The sufficiency of any supporting documentation will be determined by the School.

The School makes the final determination as to whether to grant a leave of absence, as well as the duration of the leave and the conditions necessary for a student's return (including, but not limited to, whether the student must reapply for admission). Whether the period of leave is counted towards academic requirements for promotion and graduation is determined by the School.

Leaves of absence may be noted in the student's educational record, including on the student's transcript. A leave of absence may be appropriate pending the outcome of an investigation involving student misconduct. However, a leave of absence will not be used in lieu of disciplinary action to address violations of the School's code of conduct, rules, or policies. Additionally, a student granted a leave of absence while on academic and/or disciplinary status may return on that same status.

Families remain financially responsible for tuition and other fees while the student is on a leave of absence. International students are advised to consult with the Director of the International Student Program to address any effect the leave of absence may have on student visa status.

## APPENDIX A: BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

### Introduction

Berkshire expects that all members of our school community will treat each other with civility and respect. It is the policy of the School to provide and maintain a learning environment that is free of bullying and any other verbal or physical misconduct that disrupts the learning environment or makes it unsafe.

The Berkshire School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan"), set forth below, is published in response to the Massachusetts law (Act 2010, Chapter 92). The Plan is an integral part of our efforts to promote learning and to prevent behavior that can impede the learning process. Our Plan spells out Berkshire's comprehensive approach to addressing bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation.

This Plan is consistent with broader protections at Berkshire against discrimination, harassment, bullying, and retaliation that appear in the *Student and Family Handbook*.

It is important that this Plan be well understood by all members of the Berkshire community. The Head of School is responsible for the implementation and administration of the Plan. The Plan shall be updated at least every two years to reflect any changes in the law or other necessary changes in the policy. Questions and concerns related to this Plan may be referred to the Head of School or Dean of Students.

### Policy Against Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Retaliation

The School will not tolerate any form of bullying or cyberbullying, nor will it tolerate retaliation against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

The School recognizes that certain students may be more "*vulnerable*" to becoming a target for bullying and cyberbullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics and will support vulnerable students by making the School community aware that a more vulnerable class exists and providing annual training to students and faculty in regard to the more vulnerable students.

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited:

- anywhere on School grounds and at School-sponsored events, activities, functions, and programs;
- on school buses and other vehicles owned, leased, or used by the School, and through use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the School;
- at a location, activity, function, or program that is not School-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the School, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at School for a targeted student; infringes on the rights of a targeted student at School; or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the School.

### Definitions Under the Law

The following definitions are drawn from the Massachusetts law against bullying.

*Aggressor ("Perpetrator")*: A student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation.

*Bullying*: Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to the targeted student's property;
- places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property;
- creates a hostile environment at School for the targeted student;
- infringes on the rights of the targeted student at School; or

- materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the School.

Bullying typically involves repeat behavior, though a single instance of conduct may rise to the level of bullying.

*Cyberbullying:* Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic communications, artificial intelligence (AI), social media, or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, fax machines, and the internet.. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and internet postings, whether on a webpage, in a blog, or otherwise.

Examples of cyberbullying include, but are not limited to:

- The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person.
- The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation constitutes bullying.
- The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying.

*Hostile Environment:* A hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

*Retaliation:* Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

*Target ("Victim"):* A student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation have been directed.

*Vulnerable:* Certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target for bullying and cyberbullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socio-economic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

### **Legal Definitions and School Policy**

It is important to bear in mind that stricter standards of behavior may apply under Berkshire's policies in order that we may prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct before a student has been subject to bullying as it is defined under the law. For example, although the law defines bullying as "repeated use" of certain expressions, acts, and/or gestures, the School reserves the right to apply disciplinary measures and other corrective action in a case of a single expression, act or gesture, if the School determines that it is of sufficient severity to warrant disciplinary measures or other remedial action or that the repetition of that expression, act, or gesture might reasonably result in bullying as defined under the law.

### **Prevention of Bullying and Cyberbullying**

Every student in the Berkshire community has a right to be treated with civility and respect. Our curriculum emphasizes respect for differences, and teachers are clear in their expectations for student behavior. In addition, the Head of School, Dean of Students, and other school administrators use school meetings and similar community gatherings to make sure students are well informed about what is expected of them and to reinforce positive conduct. When necessary, parents/guardians are notified and asked to reinforce standards for membership in the Berkshire community.

All Berkshire students and parents/guardians are expected, on an annual basis, to read the *Student/Family Handbook* and “Berkshire Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.” Both are posted and available to be downloaded on the School website. The *Student/Family Handbook* includes explicit policies around the acceptable use of technology at Berkshire.

All Berkshire faculty and staff shall, on an annual basis, read the School’s “Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan” to become familiar with or review its content. In addition, all Berkshire faculty and staff shall receive annual training on its content.

The administration and faculty recognize that it is essential that expectations for student conduct extend to corridors, locker rooms, meals, school activities, carpools, buses, and the like. The School strives to ensure that ample adult supervision is provided on School premises, including in the corridors and locker rooms, meals, school activities, and on School-provided transportation throughout the school day as well as at School-sponsored events.

### **Reports of Bullying, Cyberbullying, or Retaliation**

*Reporting by Student:* Any student who is the target of bullying or cyberbullying or has witnessed an incident of bullying or cyberbullying or otherwise has relevant information about bullying or cyberbullying prohibited by this policy is strongly encouraged to promptly report the matter orally or in writing to the Head of School, Dean of Students, or to any other faculty or staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Also, any student who is subject to retaliation in violation of this policy or who knows of another student who has been subject to retaliation is urged to report it as soon as possible.

*Reporting by Parent/Guardian:* A parent or guardian of a student who is the target of bullying or cyberbullying or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about bullying or cyberbullying is strongly urged to promptly notify the Head of School or Dean of Students. Furthermore, any parent or guardian who has witnessed bullying or cyberbullying or has relevant information concerning such an incident is strongly urged to come forward to the Head of School or Dean of Students. A parent or guardian should also report any incident of retaliation in violation of this policy to the Head of School or Dean of Students.

*Reporting by Faculty or Staff:* Any member of the faculty or staff of the School who witnesses or otherwise becomes aware of bullying or cyberbullying in violation of this policy or who becomes aware of retaliation against a student who reported information concerning a violation of this policy is required to report it immediately to the Head of School or Dean of Students. There are to be no exceptions. A member of the faculty or staff may not make promises of confidentiality to a student or parent/guardian who informs them of an allegation of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

*Anonymous Reports:* Faculty and staff may not make reports under this policy anonymously. The School also urges students and their parents/guardians not to make reports anonymously. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously. Please note that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to bear in mind that the School takes its policy against retaliation seriously.

*Confidentiality:* While the School cannot promise strict confidentiality, because information must be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation, the School releases information concerning complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation only on a legitimate need-to-know basis.

*False Reports:* Any student who, after an effective investigation, is found to have knowingly made a false accusation of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.



*Massachusetts Department of Secondary Education Problem Resolution System:* The education department has a system for seeking assistance or filing a claim. Information can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>.

### **Responding to a Report of Bullying, Cyberbullying, or Retaliation**

*A. Preliminary Considerations:* When a complaint of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is brought to the attention of the Head of School or Dean of Students, an assessment is made as to whether any initial steps need to be taken to protect the well-being of students and to prevent disruption of their learning environment while the investigation is being conducted. As appropriate, strategies such as increased supervision may be implemented to prevent further bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation during an investigation.

*B. Obligation to Notify Parents or Guardians:* It is the policy of the School to notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of any student who is an alleged target of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of any student who may have been accused of engaging in such behavior promptly after a complaint has been made.

*C. Investigation:* The following is an outline of the procedure that is pursued once a complaint has been brought to the attention of the Head of School:

An impartial investigation of the complaint is conducted by the Head of School or by someone designated by the Head of School. That investigation may include (but will not necessarily be limited to) interviews with the person who made the complaint, with the student who was the target of the alleged bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, with the person or persons against whom the complaint was made, and with any students, faculty, staff, or other persons who witnessed or who may otherwise have relevant information about the alleged incident.

Depending on the circumstances, the Head of School or designee conducting the investigation also may choose to consult with other teachers and/or the school counselor when conducting the investigation.

*Notice to Law Enforcement Agency (603 MCR 49.06):* In accordance with 603 MCR 49.06, the Head of School shall do the following:

(1) Upon receipt and review of a report of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School shall make a preliminary determination whether to notify the local law enforcement agency of the reported incident. The Head of School shall notify the law enforcement agency if they have a reasonable basis to believe that the incident may result in criminal charges against the alleged perpetrator. The Head of School shall, consistent with school policy and procedure, consult with other individuals they deem appropriate in making such determination.

(a) If the Head of School decides to notify the local law enforcement agency, they shall document the reasons for the decision and immediately contact the local law enforcement agency to discuss the incident and the law enforcement agency's involvement. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Head of School from taking appropriate disciplinary or other action pursuant to school policy and state law.

(b) If the Head of School decides not to notify the local law enforcement agency, or the local law enforcement agency determines that its involvement is not necessary under the circumstances, the Head of School shall respond to the incident of bullying or retaliation as provided in the bullying prevention and intervention plan. If the Head of School subsequently determines facts that cause them to believe that the perpetrator's conduct may be criminal, the Head of School shall notify the local law enforcement agency.

(2) The Head of School shall notify the local law enforcement agency of a report of bullying or retaliation consistent with 603 CMR 49.06(1) if bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21.

*D. Resolution, Notification, and Follow-up:* Following interviews and any other investigation undertaken, as the School deems appropriate, the Head of School or designee will determine whether and to what extent the allegation of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been substantiated. If it is determined that the policy set forth in this Plan has been violated, the Head of School will determine what disciplinary action and/or other remedial action is appropriate and how it will be implemented.

The goal of an investigation, and any disciplinary or other remedial process that is imposed following that investigation, is to correct the situation to the extent it is reasonably possible and to take such steps as can be taken to prevent there being a repetition of the incident and to prevent the student or students targeted and others who participated in the investigation from being subject to retaliation.

In appropriate circumstances, such as when a crime may have been committed or a child may have been subject to abuse or neglect of the type that is reportable under Section 51A of the Massachusetts laws, law enforcement or another appropriate government agency may be notified.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Head of School or the Dean of Students will meet individually with the student or students who were the target of the alleged incident and the student or students against whom the complaint was made and their parents or guardians to report the results of the investigation and, where disciplinary or other corrective action is determined to be appropriate, to inform the parties of the steps that will be taken to correct the situation. The amount of information provided in these meetings may be limited by confidentiality laws protecting student records.

Follow-up contacts will be made with any student found to have been targeted in violation of this policy and their parents or guardians to inquire as to whether there have been any further incidents.

#### **Access to Resources and Services**

Incidents of bullying or cyberbullying shall be referred to the School's Counseling Office so that appropriate counseling may be available for victims (targets), perpetrators (aggressors), and family members of those students.

#### **Conclusion**

This Plan is intended (1) to prevent bullying and cyberbullying among our students, (2) to encourage students and their parents or guardians to have confidence in the School's procedures and to come forward promptly whenever a student is subject to conduct that is prohibited by this or any other School policy; and (3) to implement appropriate discipline and other corrective measures when they are found to be warranted.

## **APPENDIX B: HAZING POLICY**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires secondary schools to provide students and families enrolled in the School with a copy of the state law defining and prohibiting hazing. All members of the School community are reminded that these laws include a requirement to report promptly any alleged incidents of hazing. Students are briefed on this matter during assemblies and team meetings.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, §§17-19 are provided below.

### **Section 17**

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

### **Section 18**

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to herself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

### **Section 19**

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team, or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team, or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams, or organizations.

Each such group, team, or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team, or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team, or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team, or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Berkshire adheres to and enforces Massachusetts law that prohibits the practice of hazing. Students who fail to comply with the hazing law may be in violation of a Major School Rule.