John F. Kennedy Elementary School

2025-2026 Student/Parent Handbook Student Expectations

Contents of Student/Parent Handbook

J.F.K. ElementarySchool

2025-2026

Welcome Letter

Dear J.F.K. Students and Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to John F. Kennedy Elementary School. This is a very special time for new and returning students, their parents/guardians and families to join us on a journey as life-long learners.

This handbook has been prepared as a resource guide for you and it is our hope that it will answer many of the questions or concerns you may have, not only at the beginning but throughout the school year. As partners in education we invite you to read through the handbook carefully, discuss safety issues and routines with your child and keep it as a handy reference.

The faculty and staff at John F. Kennedy Elementary School are dedicated to your child's academic, social, and emotional development and growth. Through our combined efforts, we are confident that we are going to have a wonderful year and the vision of the Brewster schools that every student be **"successful, productive citizens who contribute to society"** will be actualized.

Sincerely,

John Conroy
Principal

Eileen Cruz
Assistant Principal

Administration & Contacts

Board of Education

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John F. Kennedy Elementary School

Main Office: (845) 279-2087
Fax: (845) 279-7638

John F. Kennedy Building Administrators

Mr. John Conroy, Principal
Mrs. Eileen Cruz, Assistant Principal

Brewster Central School District Administrative Offices

District Office: (845) 279-8000

Dr. Michelle Gosh, Ed.D.	Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Victor Karlsson	Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
Mr. Stephen Hancock	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Mrs. Maggie Andriello	Assistant Sup. for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Mrs. Amelia Carpanzano	Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Mr. Glen Freyer	Director of Facilities
Mr. Dean Berardo	Director of Physical Education, Health & Athletics
Ms. Mary Smith	Supervisor of Transportation
Ms. Cathy Hancock	Director of Child Nutrition Services

Brewster Central School District Mission Statement

Brewster's Mission:

The mission of BCSD, the unifying center of a diverse community that embraces, engages, and supports every student, is to educate, inspire, and create multiple pathways for success that fosters responsible and impactful global citizens through the use of authentic and dynamic learning experiences that instill intellectual risk-taking, critical and creative thinking, and nurtures student well-being in partnership between school, home, and the community.

Brewster's Vision:

We believe that a Brewster Central School District education will be appropriate, challenging, holistic and will prepare students to be successful, productive citizens who contribute to society.

SCHOOL HOURS FOR STUDENTS

School begins at 9:10 am and ends at 3:35 pm for all grades at J.F.K.

There is a before and/or after school childcare program available for those who may need this service. (See Before/After School Child Care Program.)

In the event of a 2-hour delay school will begin at 11:10 am.

Attendance

General Attendance Information
J.F.K. Elementary School is in session from 9:10 AM until 3:35 PM. Students being driven by a parent/guardian should be dropped off at the side of the building along the traffic loop. Staff will be outside to receive students from 9:00 AM until 9:10 AM each day. All students arriving after 9:10 AM will need to use the main entrance and be signed in at the attendance office (Main Entrance vestibule).

Consistent attendance is the heart of education. Please only sign a student out for important reasons. Understand that while he/she is out of school, classroom instruction continues. Excessive absenteeism can have an adverse effect on academic achievement.

Attendance Guidelines
If a student is absent from school, the parent/guardian must call the school's attendance office at **279-2087 extension 4112 or 279-2852** OR email jfk-attendance@brewsterschools.org to report their child's absence. The New York State Education Department requires schools to produce a monthly attendance report. All children between 6 and 16 years of age must attend school the entire time school is in session, unless:

- He/she is physically or mentally incompetent
- He/she has completed a four-year high school course of study

The following conditions may excuse a student from school attendance:

- Sickness of pupil
- Sickness in the family (not to exceed 3 days)
- Death in family
- Extremely bad weather
- Impassable roads
- Religious observations

The consent of the parent/guardian to the absence of the student has no effect upon the lawful dominion of the State in regard to attendance.

The following would be considered unexcused for student absences:

- Parent/Guardian work schedule
- Errands
- Shopping
- Caring for siblings
- Vacation

Written Excuses
Students are expected to bring a note from their parent/guardian upon their return to school. The following information should be included:

- Student's name
- Dates of absences
- Reason for absences

- Parent/Guardian signature
- Parent/Guardian phone number or best contact information

Chronic Absences
The building administration will follow the steps below for those students with chronic absences:

- Step one - A letter of concern will be sent home.
- Step two - The second letter of concern will be sent home, possibly requesting the parents/guardian to come in for a meeting with the building administration.
- Step three - Students may be referred to the MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) team to further address attendance related concerns.

Tardiness (Lateness)
Students who arrive tardy (late) to school (after 9:10 AM) are required to report to the attendance office immediately upon arrival. Also, students are required to bring a note, written on the day that he/she is late, and should be given to the attendance office upon arrival. It is important that we have parent/guardian cooperation and support in ensuring your child's prompt arrival at school. When a student is late, they may miss valuable instruction and disrupt the learning of their classmates. It is important to recognize that from 9:10 AM to 9:20 AM critical procedures, daily organization, and schedules are practiced and implemented.

Early Release by a Parent/Guardian
When there is a need to pick a student(s) up early from school, a parent/guardian note stating so must be provided and the student(s) must be signed out at the Main Office. A note from the parent/guardian should be brought to the child's teacher at the beginning of the day. The parent/guardian, or other approved pick-up, will be required to show proof of identification prior to signing out their child. Please be prepared to show a photo ID.

Childcare Forms
These forms must be filled out *ten days prior* to the date change for new baby sitting/childcare arrangements. This is to give us enough time to notify all who are involved with this change - bus drivers, teachers - and to update our computer system, so no student is misplaced or left unaccounted for. The policy allows for two locations a week on the same days every week. It also requires the location to be in your attendance zone or a licensed day care located in the district. **These forms are available <u>at the school or Transportation Department, or on the district website under "Programs & Services" and then select "Transportation."</u>**

Before/After-School Childcare Program
This program is sponsored by the Town of Southeast Recreation Department and is located at the John F. Kennedy Elementary School. The program is offered to students in Kindergarten through Grade 5. The program is available from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. For more information, please call 845-279-3915.

Requesting Homework
A parent requesting homework for an absent student must notify the main office by 9:30 AM on the day of absence and may pick up materials after 3:50 PM. Requests made after 9:30 AM will be completed and available for parents on the following school day.

Custodial Arrangements
Please inform the building Principal in writing if there is any custody issue regarding your child. Copies of legal documents detailing custodial arrangements should also be provided and updated as necessary.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. Additional information can be obtained at www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa.

Breakfast and Lunch Programs

Breakfast and lunch are served daily in our school cafeteria and are offered free of charge to all our students. In addition to breakfast and lunch, snacks are also available for purchase in the cafeteria. Should you have any questions about the Breakfast or Lunch programs, please call the Food Service Department at 279-3702, extension 2124.

Cafeteria Rules:
There are many children in the cafeteria during lunch times. Therefore, certain rules are necessary to ensure the safety of the children and allow all students adequate time to eat. Please discuss the following rules with your child:

- Stay seated unless an adult has given you permission to leave your seat.
- Use an indoor speaking voice.
- Be considerate and respectful of adults and other students.
- The signal for quiet is closing of the lights and/or a hand clap cadence.
- Clean up after yourself.
- Appropriate table manners are expected.

Drop-off, Pick-up & Visitor Procedures

AM Drop-off
When a parent/guardian finds it necessary to bring their child to school, students are to be dropped off at the side parking lot of J.F.K., which will be open from 9:00 AM to 9:10 AM.

Please note the following:

- 9:00 AM – 9:10 AM J.F.K. staff will be outside to assist with parent drop-off.
- After 9:10 AM, there will not be staff outside to receive your child. If you find yourself arriving at the side lot and no one is there, please drive around to the front of J.F.K. and escort your child(ren) into the main entrance of the building.
- Do not let your child out if there are no adults outside to greet and receive them.
- Students who arrive after 9:10 AM are considered tardy and will be recorded as so.
- All students arriving at and after 9:10 AM will need to use the main entrance and report immediately to the attendance office.

Students may not be dropped off before 9:00 AM because there will be no supervision until that time.

PM Pick-up
If you have not sent in a note, but it becomes necessary for you to pick up your child during the course of the day, please notify the main office no later than 12:00 PM. Calls after 12:00 PM may not be honored due to time constraints in notifying your child's teacher. We will not honor a request for someone other than the parent/guardian to pick up a student unless we have written permission signed by the parent/guardian.

Pick-up is from 3:20 PM to 3:40 PM each day. Parents/guardians will form a line in their vehicles in the side lot beginning at 3:20 PM. A staff member will check adult identification and call for students to come outside to be picked up. Parents/guardians will remain inside their vehicles at all times.

PM Dismissal/Pick-Up/Emergency Procedures
(For your convenience Form "A" and Form "B" are attached at the end of this document.)
If you are picking your child up at school we ask you to adhere to the procedures outlined below to maintain the safety and comfort of the students, and to lessen classroom disruption.

For all students:
Please complete and sign the "**Dismissal/Pick-Up Authorization Form" (Form "A**") even if you do not anticipate having to pick up your child. Often students need to be picked up for an urgent or emergency reason and the parent/guardian cannot be reached easily; if we already have this authorization it will make the process run more smoothly. **Anyone picking up a child (including parents, step-parents, and guardians) must be prepared to show a valid, government- issued photo ID (driver's license, passport, military ID) when requested. Please note that no child will be released to anyone who is not listed on this form and who cannot produce appropriate ID when requested.**

Please complete and sign the **"After School Activities Cancellation/Half-Day/Emergency Dismissal Plan" (Form "B")** for instances of **emergency early dismissals** OR **cancellation of after school activities (Girl/Boy Scouts; CCD; JFK After-school program, etc.)** which are usually, but not always, weather-related.

Note: If your child's regular pick up day falls on a regularly scheduled early dismissal day and **she/he needs to be sent home on the bus**, please complete the **"After School Activities Cancellation/Half-Day/Emergency Dismissal Plan" (Form "B").**

After School Activities:

- In cases of **emergency early dismissals** OR **cancellation of after school activities (Girl/Boy Scouts; CCD; JFK After-school program, etc.)** which are usually, but not always, weather-related, please complete the "**After School Activities Cancellation Dismissal Plan" (Form "B".)** If we do not receive a completed **Form "B"** for your child, she/he will be sent home on their home bus.

- If your child participates in an after-school activity, such as Girl/Boy Scouts, etc., that **DOES NOT MEET EVERY WEEK**, **please send in a note EACH DAY the child will be picked up for the activity**. Please do not send in notes listing various meeting dates. Please indicate the activity and the name of the person signing the child out.

- **For CCD**: We do not know which dates CCD begins/ends or is in session. Parents/guardians need to inform us of their child's dismissal arrangements on those dates. Please understand that our students attend several different CCD programs and it is not possible for teachers and office staff to monitor the various schedules. If your child is normally picked up for CCD every week she/he will be sent to the auditorium for pick up unless we have a note from you indicating other arrangements.

Visitors

All visitors are required to buzz-in at the front door by showing their ID and identifying themselves. At this point entry is granted and the visitor(s) ID will be scanned at the attendance window. Once clearance is granted an ID is printed for the visitor to wear during their visit. Anyone not wearing a pass will be asked to return to the Attendance Office to sign in. We ask that visitors sign-out when leaving the building.

If parents wish to speak to or schedule an appointment with a teacher, please email or leave a voicemail message for the teacher. Email addresses are the teacher's first name initial and last name @brewsterschools.org (ex: jdoe@brewsterschools.org). The teacher will call parents in a timely manner. **Please do not go to the classroom unless it has been previously arranged. Classes may not be interrupted, as instructional time is a precious commodity**.

Bus Information

Bus Drills

School bus evacuation drills are required by the State Education Department three times a year. Each bus driver reviews the following with all the children:

- How to evacuate the bus in case of emergency
- How to enter and exit the bus safely
- Waiting at the bus stop
- Proper crossing procedures
- Proper behavior

These drills occur upon arrival and before exiting the bus at school. They take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Bus Procedures
Administration and staff greet the students every day as they are dismissed from the buses. The children quickly learn where to meet their class and daily routine. **BUS TAGS: these tags, provided by the transportation department, are mailed to you, are very important and must be worn by Kindergarten students.** They provide teachers and bus drivers with important information.

Seat Belts
Buses are equipped with seat belts and are there for student use. Drivers encourage but cannot enforce their use. **Parents, for the safety of your child, please reinforce the use of seat belts.**

Items Not Allowed on the Bus
For safety reasons, we do not allow the following items on the school bus:

- Helium balloons, bats, balls, glass, skateboards, animals, hermit crabs, Lacrosse sticks, etc.
- Items that take up more room than your child's spot on the bus: large projects, large musical instrument

Bus Passes
For your child's safety, please note that **we cannot accept phone call requests to change your child's bus for a particular day.** A signed request indicating the date, the child's name, teacher, bus number and bus stop street (ex: J-23, 99 Main Street) and the name of the person receiving your child from the bus must be hand delivered or faxed to the office prior to 12:00 pm. **Our fax number is (845)-279-7638.** Forms indicating the person/s you authorize to receive your child from the bus stop are available from the Transportation Department located at 30 Farm to Market Road (279-4700,) and on the district website under 'Programs & Services,' select 'Transportation.'

- If your child will be taking a different bus home one or more days every week, please complete the "Request for Change of Bus Stop for Child Care," form and return it to the attendance office. These forms are available in the J.F.K. attendance office and the Transportation Department located at 30 Farm to Market Road (279-4700,) and on the district website under 'Programs & Services,' select 'Transportation.' The Transportation Department requires 10 days notice.

Student Conduct
Students are expected to behave and stay seated while the bus is in motion. Warnings are given for improper behavior. After a warning the student is written up on a bus discipline report. For serious or hazardous occurrences, a write-up is completed immediately and forwarded to the Principal. Bus service may be suspended for a given period of time if inappropriate, serious and hazardous behaviors continue.

If your child does not behave, it is unsafe for all passengers. When drivers take their attention off the road and focus on internal problems, there is a chance for an accident to occur. We need your assistance in reinforcing proper bus behavior.

Open Door Policy
The Transportation Office is open all year. Please call in advance if you would like to tour and/or ride in a school bus. We encourage your visit, your questions, and, of course, your interest and support.

Change of Address or Other Information
Please notify the school of any change in address, phone number, or emergency contact information. If someone other than you will be meeting your child at the bus stop, please notify us so we may inform the driver. The drivers are very protective of their passengers. The driver will not release students without prior notification. This is for your child's protection. **Since emergency situations may arise, it is imperative that all information be current and accurate.**

Academics

Report Cards
Report Cards will be issued three times a year. Report cards are springboards for discussion between you and your child, and you and your child's teacher(s). Your child's report card highlights specific strengths and areas that have room for growth. Remember that children vary in their rate of development and they do not all reach the same level at the same time. It is important to communicate any learning concerns to your child's teacher(s).

All report cards will utilize an academic performance level grade of (NY) Not Yet Meeting Expectations, (P) Progressing Towards Expectations, (M) Meeting Expectations, and (CE) Consistently Exceeding Expectations.

Within the grading system, teachers develop procedures for grading which best suits the uniqueness of the subject matter. Student effort is included as part of our grading criteria. Excessive absenteeism, lateness, and requests for early pick-up can have an adverse effect on academic performance.

If you have concerns regarding grades received, discuss your concerns with your child's teacher in a positive manner, at an appropriate time. Discussions like this can lead to an improvement in your student's performance and to a better understanding of the problem. Your child's teachers are committed to student success and can assist in setting learning goals and plan to support student achievement.

In the Special Area subjects (Art, Library, Music, and Physical Education) students will receive comments for each of the three trimester reporting periods. These comments will represent achievement and effort.

Homework Guidelines
John F. Kennedy Elementary School provides the following homework guidelines for teachers, parents/guardians, and students. Homework may be assigned to review material presented, prepare for the next day's classes, extend learning, and/or help students develop habits of independent work and study. Since most work tends to be sequential in nature, homework is best

handed in on time, or upon return from a school absence. Any issues or communication surrounding homework should be first discussed with your child's teacher(s).

Students working to complete homework should complete the assigned work to the best of their ability, make the teacher and/or the parent/guardian aware of any difficulties they may be having, and ask the teacher about missed classwork due to absences.

School-to-Home
Open Houses are held in September. Additionally, classroom teachers have a variety of ways of sharing information with our parents. These may include weekly or monthly letters as well as phone calls. Every teacher maintains a website with important and updated information.
Here at the BCSD we are committed to "Going Green" and doing our part to help the environment. As a result, we now utilize "Bears Backpack." This is our web-based electronic message board link used to inform families of important events and/or updates we will have throughout the school year. **As was last year's practice, we will not send letters home using traditional paper via the U.S. post office or in student backpacks unless a parental request is made.**

Bears Backpack
To access Bears Backpack:
1.) Log on to www.brewsterschools.org
2.) Scroll down and on the right side of the main home page under "Quick Links" click on Bears Backpack.
3.) Notices are posted there.

A PTA/school sponsored newsletter to parents is issued bi-monthly throughout the year. The newsletter contains information on special events or activities the school would like to share with parents.

Cable Channel 22 shares information about the district along with information related to specific school events.

Home-to-School
Parents may send a note, e-mail, or leave a voice mail message for their child's teacher. If a parent needs additional information, the school principal, or assistant principal may be contacted.

For additional news, updates, district/school goals, programs and services, including meetings and closings, log on to www.brewsterschools.org.

Parent Conferences
Parent conferences are scheduled twice during the year, at the end of the first and second marking periods. When necessary, additional conferences may be requested by either parents or teachers outside of school hours.

Code of Conduct and Student Behavior Responsibilities

Code of Conduct
School is and should always be a safe, special place for all children. It is our goal to nurture children's self-esteem, encourage them to develop positive relationships with peers and staff members, experience success, and exhibit control. Each school within the Brewster Central School District is required to adhere to the District Code on School Conduct and Discipline Policy. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the policy can find this information located on the District website.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices
We recognize that cell phones are an important tool in life and many of our families and students use them for a variety of reasons. With that said, it is important to remind everyone of acceptable and responsible cell phone usage when here at school, as referenced in the District Code of Conduct and John F. Kennedy Elementary School Student Handbook.

- Cell phones/devices must remain turned off and/or placed on silent mode and must remain in student backpacks. They are not permitted to be out during the school day (i.e. in classrooms, bathrooms, physical education areas, auditorium, cafeteria/recess, and hallways). We also strongly encourage cell phones/devices to remain in backpacks while on the bus as well. **Lunch and outdoor recess are tech-free zones.** If we have to be indoors for recess, students may use their Chromebook.
- Using a cell phone or electronic device to record, store, or transmit images or videos is prohibited without the express authorization of appropriate school personnel. This also applies to District issued devices as well (i.e.: Chromebooks and iPad).
    - Any unauthorized video or audio recordings will result in disciplinary consequences, which can include suspension from school.
    - This includes cyberbullying which is defined as harassment or bullying by any form of electronic communication and includes incidents occurring off school property that creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment.
- In the event that a cell phone or Smartwatch becomes problematic and/or violates building/district policy, it may be requested to be turned over to a staff member and disciplinary consequences may ensue. It is not the responsibility of the school or district if a phone is lost, tampered with, or stolen**.**

Exceptions for Specific Purposes:
Use of internet-enabled devices must be permitted where included in a student's Individualized Education Program, Section 504 plan, or where required by law. Additionally, student use of otherwise prohibited devices during the school day on school grounds may be permitted:

1. if authorized by a teacher, principal, the Superintendent, or other personnel as the Superintendent may designate, for a specific educational purpose;
2. where necessary for the management of a student's healthcare;
3. in the event of an emergency, as determined by teachers or administrators; or
4. for translation services.

Parents may request an exception for their children to use internet-enabled devices during the

school day as listed above. Requests must be made to the Building Principal, and for healthcare exceptions, must include documentation from an appropriate healthcare professional.

In the event that a student needs to call a parent/guardian, they should come to the main office and request the use of the building phone. If you have a message that needs to be communicated to your child, the main office is happy to relate it to your child and have them call you back if necessary.

In the event that a student is found with a cell phone on their person, the consequences for non-compliance will be as follows:

- **First offense:** Student's technology is confiscated by a staff member and held in the main office for the remainder of the day. Parent is notified by phone and in writing.

- **Second offense:** Student's technology is confiscated by a staff member and held in the main office for the remainder of the day. Parent is notified and must come to the building to pick up the device and sign acknowledging the offense.

- **Third offense:** The student's cell phone will be collected at the beginning of each day and can be picked up after school in the main office until further notice.

Dress Code

John F. Kennedy Elementary School is committed to providing a safe and welcoming learning environment for its students. The primary responsibility for acceptable student attire resides with the student and parents or guardians. The school district and individual schools are responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any individual and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile, intimidating, or disrespectful atmosphere thereby disrupting the educational process.

Building administrators have the final decision as to the appropriateness of all clothing and attire. To establish this climate, we ask that the following guidelines be followed at school and school-sponsored activities:

- Hoods are not permitted to be worn in school.
- Student attire (clothing, footwear, accessories) should not contain or promote offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, and pornography.
- Student attire should not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or illegal drugs, and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
- **Student attire should adequately cover midriffs and private areas. Undergarments should be covered by clothing at all times.**
- Footwear should be worn at all times. Footwear that poses a safety risk or hazard (slippers/slides/flip flops) is advised against and may interfere with a student’s ability to participate.

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or

oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

Toys
Radios, electronic games, tape-recorders, walkie-talkies, dolls, stuffed animals, trading cards, etc., are enjoyable toys for children of all ages. However, because of the potential interruption to the learning environment, and the danger of being broken, lost or stolen, these items are not to be brought to school. Items that may be significant to a child personally should not be brought to school because of the possibility of loss or damage. Other items that are not suitable for school are those that may be sharp or pointed and can lead to injury. Special exceptions may be granted when they relate to school projects.

Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)
In addition to the Code of Conduct, each school within the Brewster Central School District is required to adhere to The Dignity for All Students Act (DASA). This Act specifically ensures all children have the right to attend school in a safe, welcoming, and caring environment. On September 13, 2010, DASA was signed into law and became effective on July 1, 2012. This Act protects all public school students in New York State from harassment or discrimination by other students or adults. This Act prohibits harassment and discrimination of individuals on school property or at a school function based upon a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnicity, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.

It also includes cyber bullying which is defined as harassment or bullying by any form of electronic communication and includes incidents occurring off school property that creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment.

DASA Coordinator, Eileen Cruz, Assistant Principal, John F. Kennedy Elementary School, email: ecruz@brewsterschools.org

Recognizing Responsible Behavior
Our school building practices a positive behavior system that recognizes and rewards students for positive behaviors and the upholding of building values and expectations. This system has been developed, and continues to be shaped, based on our mission and goal of 'CUBS'.

Our CUBS Mission reflects as follows:
C*are* for Others
U*se* Respectful Behavior
B*e* Responsible
S*afety* Matters

Our CUBS Goal is: As a school community we look to learn, practice, and recognize habits that promote our well-being and our ability to learn.

Discipline Policy
The classroom teacher or the adult in charge is responsible for helping students define, maintain, and enforce behavioral expectations by:

- Establishing behavioral rules and defining them so students will understand what is expected of them.
- Determining positive rewards for good behavior.
- Presenting the discipline plan to students.
- Students may NOT tease one another for any reason.
- Students MUST treat each other kindly.
- If a student is unkind to one or more students with their words or actions, that student will:
    1. Be sent to the main office.
    2. Meet with a Principal.
    3. Your parent/guardian will be contacted.
    4. Receive a consequence determined by a Principal.

It is expected that minor discipline concerns are handled by the teacher. Office referrals are not accepted without the teacher first interacting with student and/or parents regarding the problem.

When a student is referred to the principal's office for discipline, the teacher or staff member who is referring the child will complete a referral form. The child will meet with an administrator to discuss the incident. At that time consequences will be determined. The child will take the referral form home to be shared with and signed by parents before returning the form to school. Parents may also be notified by phone to discuss student behaviors.

The following misbehaviors are considered serious and a student will be sent directly to the office:

- Harassment - verbal, physical and/or sexual
- Fighting
- Abusive language
- Insubordination
- Vandalism

Examples of "Proactive Discipline:"

- Oral/verbal correction
- Warning
- Written referral (Parent notification)
- Parent notification/parent conference
- Corrective Instruction or other relevant learning or service experience
- Supportive Interventions
- Referral to pupil support (counselor, school psychologist, social worker)
- Behavior assessment. Contract/growth plan
- Investigation and report

Note: In cases of on-going or extreme misconduct, consequences may involve detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and/or police involvement.

Sometimes a student may be sent to the Office for a time out. At this time, disciplinary measures may/may not be taken.

Basic Principles Regarding Student Investigations

- Parental permission is not required for school administrators to meet with a student regarding a discipline issue. Under District policy, school officials may conduct an investigation into school policy or Code of Conduct violations, or other school disciplinary matters (See, Policy No. 5310).
- There is no requirement for school personnel to provide a student with a "Miranda" type warning prior to questioning or to advise the student of the consequences of answering questions.
- The District is required to investigate claims of harassment (e.g. on the basis of race, disability or sexual harassment) under federal law and District policy (See, Policy No. 5311.3).
- School officials should not allow police to enter the school building to interview students or use school facilities in connection with police department work unless they have a warrant. In cases where the police have a warrant, the school will attempt to reach the parents.

Use of Surveillance Cameras in the District and on School Buses

It is the Board's responsibility to ensure the safety of the District's students, staff, facilities, and property. While the Board recognizes the importance of privacy, it has authorized the use of surveillance cameras on District property including in school buildings, school facilities, as well as on school buses, when necessary. These surveillance cameras will help to assist the Board in maintaining the overall safety and welfare of the District's students, staff, property, and visitors, as well as deter theft, violence, and other criminal activities.

Further, surveillance cameras will only be placed in public or common areas, such as stairwells, hallways, cafeterias, parking lots, or playgrounds, and not in private areas such as locker rooms, bathrooms, or other areas in which individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Signage/Notification

The District will place signage at entrances to the school campus or at major entrances into school buildings notifying students, staff, as well as any visitors of the District's use of surveillance cameras. Students and staff will also receive additional notification, as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent, regarding the use of its surveillance cameras through means such as publication in the District calendar, employee handbook, and/or the student handbook.

Maintenance of Video Recordings

Any video surveillance recording in the schools, on school buses or on school property, on tape, CD, or digitally, will be the sole property of the District and stored in its original form and in a secure location to avoid tampering and also to ensure its confidentiality in accordance with relevant law and regulations.

In addition, to the extent that any video images create student or personnel records, the District will comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record retention, record

maintenance, and record disclosure, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA").

Child Nutrition Services

Please refer to the Child Nutrition Policy on the BCSD webpage at:
https://www.brewsterschools.org/domain/25

Early Dismissal/Emergency Closing

Please refer to the Unplanned Early Dismissals Policy on the BCSD webpage at:
https://ny50000157.schoolwires.net/Page/1496

Emergency Drills

Emergency evacuation drills are an important part of the school safety program and must receive serious consideration. Types of drills that are practiced are as follows:

- Shelter-In-Place: Used to shelter students and staff inside the building.
- Hold-In-Place: Used to limit movement of students and staff while responding to short-term emergencies.
- Evacuation: Used to evacuate students and staff from the building (i.e. fire drill).
- Lockout: Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the school.
- Lockdown: Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that post an immediate threat of violence in or around the school.

Transportation

Please refer to the Transportation Information on the BCSD webpage at:
https://ny50000157.schoolwires.net/domain/31

Student Events, Supports, & Services

Birthdays (Invitations)
When children celebrate their birthdays it is a special time for them with parties and party invitations. We ask parents to respect the "all or none" concept when sending invitations into school. Unless there is an invitation for each student in class, invitations will not be handed out. It is very upsetting for students in the class who do not receive an invitation.

Class Trips

Class trips are an integral part of the educational process. They are planned to extend and enrich the curriculum through live experiences. We hope that all of the class trips are exciting adventures for our students. It is important that all students remember appropriate behavior and follow the regular school rules to ensure everyone's safety.

Before your child may attend a class trip, a permission slip must be completed with all necessary information, including emergency contact information. Transportation is provided by the school transportation department unless otherwise specified. Chaperones will be requested on a needs basis depending on the field trip.

Lost and Found
Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the lost and found, located in the main entrance of J.F.K., where they can be claimed by the owner. Items of value (money, jewelry, etc.) will be kept in the main office. Any items lost or found on the bus may be held at the Transportation Department or turned over to the building.

Support Staff
At J.F.K., we have a School Psychologist, School Social Worker, and School Counselor on staff to assist students. The following are some services they may provide:

- Orientation for new students/families
- Support of building systems, collaboration with staff, offer general instruction to students
- Individualized and group counseling services (both mandated and informal/acute care)
- Liaison between school, family, and community personnel/resources

Photographs for Publication
During the school year, special events are covered by the local news media for publication purposes. Students may be photographed during these events, and photographs may be printed in local newspapers or district bulletins, and/or posted on the district website. Should you wish to place your child on the DO NOT PHOTOGRAPH list, please complete the related form toward the end of this handbook.

Recess
Recess is a daily activity for our children. Students should come to school dressed appropriately for outside play. Hats, gloves, and boots should be worn or brought to school so children will be comfortable and warm during the winter months. All children are encouraged to go outside for recess. A doctor's note is needed if a child is to remain inside for recess. Flip-flops are unsafe footwear for the playground. **Secure play shoes or sneakers should be worn**.

In-door or out-door recess should be an enjoyable time for all students. Please discuss the following rules which should be followed on the playground:

- Respect and consideration for all adults and all students at all times.
- All play equipment should be used in a safe manner according to the rules.
- Directions from teachers or aides on duty must be followed.
- Students must get permission from an adult on duty to leave the recess/playground area.
- Students should not be re-entering and walking through the building without permission.

Personal Property Reimbursement
As stated in Board Policy (3240), no student, visitor, parent/guardian, or any other non-employee of the district will be reimbursed for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property brought on the school premises for any purpose. Personal effects brought in by students and other parties who are not employed by the district may include but are not limited to, clothing, jewelry, sports equipment, musical instruments, electronics, and other items used in the educational curriculum or recreational activities of third parties not employed by the district which are brought on the district premises for any purpose.

The District will not reimburse students or other non-employees for the cost of replacing or repairing dental work, eyeglasses, hearing aids, or other prosthetic devices which are destroyed or lost as a result of injuries sustained during the course of the school day.

For further information on student conduct, student discipline, and school policies and procedures, please refer to the District's Code of Conduct and Policy Manual.

PTA (Parent Teacher Association)
The Brewster Elementary PTA is a Local Unit linked to the State and National PTA. The National PTA is the oldest and largest volunteer association working exclusively on behalf of all children and youth. For more than 100 years, the National PTA has promoted the education, health, and safety of children and families. Membership in the PTA is open to anyone who believes in the National PTA Mission and Objectives. The Brewster Elementary PTA represents the John F. Kennedy School. The PTA organization consists of an Executive Committee, an Executive Board, and the General Association.

Our Executive Board and our General Association meetings meet monthly. More information about dates/times will be shared with you. There are many other activities, which we are involved in to support our schools, children, and parents. You are encouraged to come to the meetings and learn more about how you can contribute your talents. Meet other busy parents who have the same interests, concerns, and challenges as you.

Health Office Information

Medications
If a child needs to take medications during the day, written orders from the physician and a medication permission form signed by the parent/guardian must be submitted. It is required that such medications be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent in the original prescription bottle. This includes over the counter medications such as Tylenol or cough medicine. Any student who brings medication to school without the required permission will have the medication confiscated and the parent will be called. Medications should **NEVER** be sent on the bus. **Due to the possibility of accidental choking; cough drops, throat lozenges, and hard candies are not to be brought to school or be dispensed by school personnel.**

Immunizations
New York State Requirements for School Entrance and Attendance grades K-12: 2 doses of measles and mumps vaccines and 1 dose of rubella vaccine (MMR); 5 doses of diphtheria and tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine and acellular pertussis vaccine (DTaP) required for school entry (if 4th dose of DTaP received at 4 years of age or older, only 4 doses required); 4 doses of

poliomyelitis vaccine (IPV) required for school entry (if 3rd dose received at 4 years of age or older, only 3 doses required).

School Physicals
All new entrants and kindergarten students are required by New York State Law to have a complete physical examination which includes the student's BMI, and routinely at grades 2, 4, 7, and 10.

Screenings: Eyes and Ears
All new entrants and kindergarten students will be screened for distance, near vision, hyperopia, and color perception within 6 months of entrance. Distant vision screening will be done on all students in grades 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 10. Hearing screening will be done on all students in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 10 and within 6 months for all new entrants. Parents will be informed of any abnormal finding.

Dental Health Certificate New York State Law (Chapter 281) permits schools to request a dental examination in the following grades: school entry, 2, 4, 7 and 10. The form may be obtained on the Brewster School website, **www.brewsterschools.org** and clicking on the Registration page.

Emergency Forms
Every student is required to have an emergency form filled out completely at the start of the school year. There should be two emergency pick-up contacts in case a parent/legal guardian cannot be reached. **Please keep emergency information on file up to date**. **The form may be obtained on the Brewster School website, www.brewsterschools.org and clicking on the Registration page.**

Accident or Illness
If a child becomes ill or injured at school, he/she is sent to the health office. If the school nurse believes the child is able to remain in school, the child may be allowed to rest for a short time and return to class. In case of minor accidents, first aid will be administered and the child sent back to class. When it is determined by the school nurse that the child should not remain in school, the parents will be contacted and asked to make arrangements to transport the child. If a parent or the designated contact individuals cannot be contacted or cannot pick up the student, an ambulance will be called to take the child to the hospital in case of an emergency.

Health Problems
If your child has a particular health problem, it is essential that you discuss it with the school nurse. It is important that parents recognize symptoms of illness quickly and keep a sick child home. Please do not send your child to school with a fever of 100 degrees or more, suspicious rash, harsh cough, or red draining eyes. After a fever, your child's temperature should be normal for 24 hours before returning to school.

Please do not ask the school nurse to diagnose your child's health problems regarding pulled muscles, broken fingers and toes. Only your physician can and should make the diagnosis.

Excuse From Physical Education and Outdoor Recess
The New York State Department of Education requires a Physician's note to excuse a student from physical education classes or outdoor activity. It will be at the school's discretion to keep children indoors during winter months or inclement weather, depending on the wind chill. Chronic illness, such as asthma, will be considered on a day-to-day basis by a parent note or school nurse.

Handbook Awareness Acknowledgement

The J.F.K. Handbook is posted on the John F. Kennedy Elementary School website. My signature below indicates that I have read all the information contained in the John F. Kennedy Elementary School Student Handbook.

Student's Name (Print):

_____

Student's Signature:

_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature:

_____

Date: _____ Grade: _____

Classroom Teacher: _____

Form "A"

JFK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
DISMISSAL PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION FORM
2025-2026

Please return this form to your child's homeroom teacher during the first week of school. ***On any day that your child's dismissal arrangements are different than what you have indicated below, a note must be sent in to your child's teacher.***

IMPORTANT: Please inform anyone who is authorized to pick up your child that they must be prepared to show a valid, government-issued photo ID (driver's license, passport, military ID) at any time. ***No child will be released to anyone who cannot produce appropriate ID when requested.***

(Print) Child's Name_____Grade_____

Teacher_____

Please complete this section with the names and relationship of everyone, *including parents, step-parents, and guardians,* who have your permission to pick up your child from school.

Name _____ Relationship _____
Name _____ Relationship _____
Name _____ Relationship _____
Name _____ Relationship _____
Name _____ Relationship _____
Name _____ Relationship _____

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION ONLY IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE PICKED UP ON A REGULAR BASIS ON ANY DAY(S) OF THE WEEK. Students must be signed out by a Parent/Guardian or person **authorized in writing by Parent/Guardian**. On any day that your child's dismissal arrangements are different than what you have indicated below, a note must be sent in to your child's homeroom teacher.

DAY	**Indicate on which day(s) student will be picked up and by whom.**
Monday	_____
Tuesday	_____
Wednesday	_____
Thursday	_____
Friday	_____

Parent/Guardian Signature_____Date_____

Revised 08/2025

Form "B"

JFK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES CANCELLATION/HALF-DAY/
EMERGENCY DISMISSAL PLAN
2025-2026

Please return this form to your child's homeroom teacher. If we do not receive this completed **Form** from you, your child will be sent home on their home bus on early dismissal/cancellation of after-school activities days.

(Please print clearly) Child's Name_____Grade_____

Teacher_____

Please complete this section with dismissal arrangements for your child in the event AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (including *JFK Afterschool Program; Girl/Boy Scouts; CCD, etc.*) are cancelled, (i.e., due to weather.) Please note there is no early dismissal on these days - school ends at regular time.

Please check ONE arrangement for after school activities:

___ **Home bus number: J-_____**
___ **Alternate bus number: J-_____**
Alternate bus stop (street name):_____
Will be met at bus stop by _____
_____

Please complete the following with information on your child's AFTER SCHOOL program:_____ after school program on _____
(name of activity) (day of week)

Please complete the following with dismissal arrangements for your child in the event of an EMERGENCY EARLY DISMISSAL (usually, but not always, weather related) and/or REGULARLY SCHEDULED HALF-DAY

Please check ONE arrangement

___ **Home bus number: J- _____**
___ **Alternate bus number: J-_____**
Alternate bus stop _____
Will be met at bus stop by _____
_____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____Date: _____

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Directory Information Out Form

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires Brewster Central School District (the "District"), with certain exceptions, to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the District may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the Brewster Central School District to the contrary by completing the attached form. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the District to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications.

The District only permits limited directory information disclosure, meaning that the District limits disclosure of its designated directory information to specific parties, for specific purposes. Only the District is permitted to use student directory information for such limited purposes as school yearbooks, honor roll lists, graduation programs, playbills, and other similar uses, without obtaining individual consent.

The District designates the following as directory information for its own limited use: student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height (for members of athletic teams), dates of attendance, honors, degrees and awards received, email address, photograph, name of educational institution previously attended.

To indicate your preference to opt-out of the release of directory information pertaining to your child, please click the link below to access the form.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION OPT-OUT FORM

Computer Network Usage Student & Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form

The Brewster Central School District is committed to optimizing student learning and teaching. The district considers student access to digital learning resources, including the Internet, to be a powerful and valuable educational and research tool, and encourages the use of computers and other web-enabled technology in district classrooms for the purpose of advancing and promoting learning, student engagement, and teaching.

Digital learning resources can provide a powerful forum for learning and the use of software applications, online databases, collaborative tools, and other web-based forums can significantly enhance learning experiences and provide global communication opportunities for staff and students.

The Director of Technology and Innovation shall establish regulations governing the use and security of the district's computer network. All users of the district's computer network and equipment shall comply with this policy and those regulations. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action as well as suspension and/or revocation of computer access privileges.

The Director of Technology and Innovation shall oversee the use of district computer resources. S/he will coordinate the preparation of in-service programs for the training and professional learning of district staff in computer skills, and for the incorporation of digital learning in all subject areas.

The Director of Technology and Innovation, working in conjunction with the district's purchasing agent, and the district's technology committee, will be responsible for the purchase and distribution of computer software and hardware throughout district schools. S/he shall prepare and submit for the Superintendent's approval a comprehensive multi-year technology plan which shall be revised as necessary to reflect changing technology and/or district needs.

Student's Name (Print):_____

Student's Signature:_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature:_____

Date: _____ Grade: _____