



Student Handbook with Code of Conduct & Responsibility

Bridgeport Public Schools envisions a culturally responsive, high-performing learning environment where students thrive academically, socially, emotionally and civically.

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Bridgeport Public Schools

Board of Education

Revision Date: July 2025

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It is the policy of the Bridgeport Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual

orientation, marital status, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, mental disorder or intellectual disability, in any of its educational programs, activities or employment policies.

The Bridgeport Public Schools prohibits sex discrimination in any educational program or activity that it operates. Individuals are encouraged to report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. The notice of non-discrimination is [LOCATED HERE](#).

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to Bridgeport Public Schools' Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both.

Any individual may make a report of sex and sex-based discrimination and/or sexual and sex-based harassment to the Title IX Coordinator using any one or multiple of the following points of contact:

Chief Human Resource Officer

Bridgeport Public Schools

45 Lyon Terrace – Room 324

Bridgeport, CT 06604

203-275-1042

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Board of Education Mission

We model excellence and equity in education for every child at every level by focusing on quality instruction and providing efficient systems and structures in schools to sustain a culture committed to success.

Philosophy

Bridgeport Public Schools envisions a culturally responsive, high-performing learning environment where students thrive academically, socially, emotionally and civically.

Dear Bridgeport Families,

At the heart of every great school is a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment. To help us create that environment together, we have the Student Handbook, also called our Student Code of Conduct.

This guide is more than a set of rules. It represents a commitment to accountability, structure, and respect. When students understand the boundaries and responsibilities that come with being part of a school community, they are better prepared to focus on what matters most: learning and growing.

As parents, guardians, and educators, we share the responsibility of reinforcing the values that help students succeed. By working together, we can ensure that every child has the opportunity to learn in an environment that is safe, structured, and full of possibility.

Thank you for partnering with us to make Bridgeport schools a place where accountability and care go hand in hand.

With care,

Dr. Royce Avery
Interim Superintendent

Purpose of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility

All students are required to be respectful and responsible of all policies, procedures and responsibilities of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct:

- before, during and after school.
- on school grounds and at school-related activities on or off school grounds.
- while traveling to and from school
- while awaiting transportation or traveling on a school bus or other form of school provided transportation in route to or from the school for a school- sponsored activity.
- off school grounds and during non-school time when the conduct is violating publicized policy of the Board of Education and the return of the student(s) committing the offense would contribute to a disruptive effect in the school and its educational process. These acts must be of a serious nature, *e.g., dangerous weapon offenses, drug offenses or crimes accompanied by violent conduct such as robbery or sexual offenses.*

The success of school discipline depends upon shared responsibility among home, school and community. As our partners in education parents/guardians and community members should be familiar with and understand the Code of Conduct & Responsibility.

Review of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility

It is important that students, parents, teachers, administrators, and district staff read, understand and discuss the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility.

School staff will spend time at the start of the school year reviewing the handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility with students in their classrooms. Presentations on Safe Schools, Bullying, and Sex-Based Discrimination will be provided as well.

As learning partners, parents/caregivers/guardians are asked to review the handbook and have discussions with students about the importance of school attendance, upholding the Code of Conduct & Responsibility, and logical consequences.

Parents/Caregivers/Guardians and students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment of the Handbook and the Code of Conduct & Responsibility.

Annual Notification of Parental Rights Related to School Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, et seq., affords parents and eligible students (i.e., students over 18, emancipated minors, and those attending post-secondary educational institutions) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) calendar days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will arrange access and notify the parents or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parents or eligible student believe are inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise violates the student's privacy rights.

Parents or eligible students may ask the District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise violates the student's privacy rights. Parents or an eligible student should write the Custodian of Records, Frances Aponte, 45 Lyon Terrace Rm. #330, Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604 clearly identifying the part of the record the parents or eligible student want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise violates the student's privacy rights.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parents or eligible student, the District will notify the parents or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to a school official with legitimate interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Education; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District will disclose a student's education record without consent to officials of another public school, including a public charter school, in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.

Washington, DC 20202-4605 2

Unless notified in writing by a parent or eligible student to the contrary within two weeks of the date of this notice, the school district will be permitted to disclose "Directory Information" concerning a student. Directory Information means information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the parent's name and/or e-mail address, the student's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, photographic and video images, date and place of birth, major field(s) of study, grade level, participation in school-sponsored activities or athletics, weight and height (if the student is a member of an athletic team), dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The written objection to the disclosure of directory information shall be good for only one year. School districts are legally obligated to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon request, with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary school students, unless a parent or eligible student objects to such disclosure in writing. Such objection shall be in writing and shall be effective for one year. In all other circumstances, information designated as directory information will not be released when requested by a third party unless the release of such information is determined by the administration to be in the educational interest of the school district and is consistent with the district's obligations under both state and federal law.

Parent Bill of Rights for English Learners/Multilingual Learners

The Bridgeport Public Schools is committed to supporting our English Learner (EL) and Multilingual Learner (ML) students and their families. Connecticut law ensures that parents and guardians of EL/ML students have specific rights regarding their child's education.

Your Rights Include:

- **Right to a Program:** You have the right to have your child participate in a bilingual education program or an English as a new language program, designed to help them learn English and succeed academically.
- **Access to Information in Your Language:** You have the right to receive important school information and communications in your dominant language, including translations and interpreters for meetings (such as parent-teacher conferences and PPT/IEP meetings).
- **Participation in School Life:** You have the right to participate in school activities and programs, and to receive information about your child's academic progress and English language development.
- **Support Services:** Your child has the right to receive support services aligned with any intervention plan the school or district provides to all students.
- **Continuous Enrollment:** Your child has the right to be continuously enrolled in a bilingual education or English as a new language program for as long as they are eligible.
- **Contact for Concerns:** You have the right to contact the Department of Education with any questions or concerns regarding your child's right to receive multilingual learner services or accommodations.

For more detailed information, please refer to the full Multilingual Learner Bill of Rights available on our school district's website at [Parent Bill of Rights for English Learners/Multilingual Learners](#)

Creating Safe, Inclusive, Supportive and Fair Schools

Positive School Climate and Culture

Our Commitment to School Climate: Our school district has adopted the new Connecticut School Climate Policy, as required by Connecticut Public Act 23-167. This policy guides our efforts to create a positive, welcoming, and safe environment where all students can thrive academically, socially, emotionally, and civically.

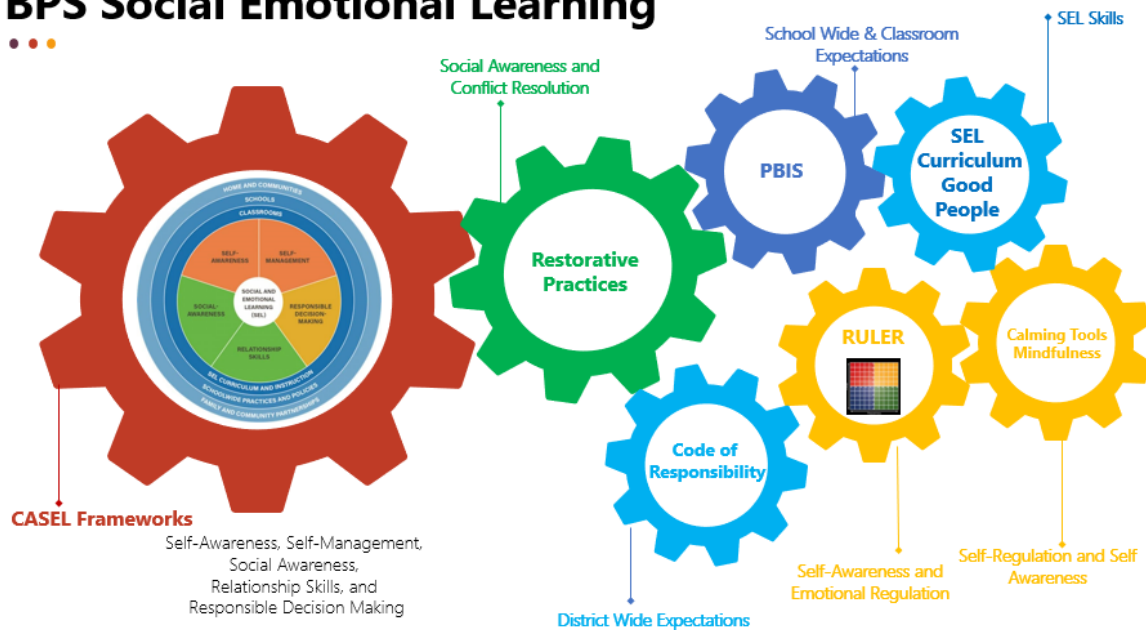
School Climate Surveys and Your Right to Opt Out:

- To continuously improve our school environment, we administer **biennial (every two years) school climate surveys** to students, school employees, and families. These surveys help us understand our school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Parents/Guardians have the right to opt their child out of participating in the student survey.** If you wish to opt your child out, please notify your school administrator in writing prior to the survey administration date which will be communicated separately.

Social-Emotional Learning

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is a foundational component of a school's program of universal prevention for all students. Providing a range of positive behavioral supports and meaningful opportunities for social-emotional learning fosters resiliency. Effective social emotional learning helps students develop fundamental life skills, including recognizing and managing emotions; developing caring and concern for others; establishing positive relationships; making responsible decisions; and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically. When students develop these skills, they experience more positive relationships with peers, engage in more positive social behaviors and are less likely to engage in misconduct.

BPS Social Emotional Learning

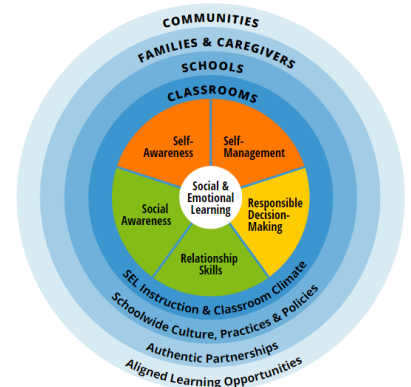


CASEL Framework

The Bridgeport Public Schools will utilize resources from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) for knowledge about high-quality, evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL). CASEL's mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school.

The CASEL Framework includes five core areas:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Management
3. Social Awareness
4. Relationship skills
5. Responsible Decision-making



The CASEL 5 Framework can be taught and applied at various developmental stages from childhood to adulthood and across diverse cultural contexts.

Restorative Mindset

Disciplinary responses aligned with Restorative Practices provides schools and building leaders with approaches to address social and behavioral situations through a consistent, and equitable framework. The purpose in all cases is to restore a sense of safety, belonging, and community for all parties. Restorative practices increase dialogue between students and adults increasing social awareness and conflict resolution.

Traditional Approach	Restorative Approach
<i>The focus is on:</i>	<i>The focus is on:</i>
Rule-breaking	Who has been harmed and how
Establish guilt or innocence	Address student's needs
Use of punishment such as time-out or removal from class to motivate positive behavior.	Positive behavior results from the opportunity to make amends and re-enter the class.
Accountability equals punishment	Accountability equals understanding the impact of behavior, taking responsibility, and suggesting ways to repair the harm.

Logical Consequences

Logical consequence connects the student's behavior to the action taken and how it has impacted others. The consequence provided to the student should align with their actions.

School Wide Expectations

Schoolwide expectations explicitly explain to students the social, emotional, and behavioral skills expected of adults and students in the school and on school grounds. The schoolwide expectations are explained at the start of the school year, focusing on the school's values and behaviors in the hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms, playgrounds, and classrooms.

SEL Curriculum

The Good People Curriculum is a Social Emotional Learning Curriculum for grades K-8th grade. The curriculum will incorporate learning expectations, making good choices, how to regulate our emotions, awareness of others and their needs, and relationship skills.

At the high school level, a High School Social Justice Action Committee works with students and staff on SEL and Restorative Practices. SEL is addressed through high school health classes.

Calming Tools and Mindfulness

Calming tools are strategies that assist students at any grade level to recognize emotions and self-regulate in a healthy manner.

Rights of Homeless Students (McKinney-Vento Act):

- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures that children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to a free, appropriate public education. This includes the right to:
 - Immediate Enrollment: Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking typical enrollment documents (e.g., birth certificate, medical records).
 - School Choice: Attend either their school of origin (the school they attended when permanently housed or the last school they attended) or the local school where they are currently residing, whichever is in their best interest.
 - Transportation: Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested and feasible.
 - Access to Services: Access all educational and other services for which they are eligible, including special education, gifted and talented programs, and school nutrition programs.
- Our school district has a McKinney-Vento Liaison to assist families experiencing homelessness. Please contact (203) 275-1336

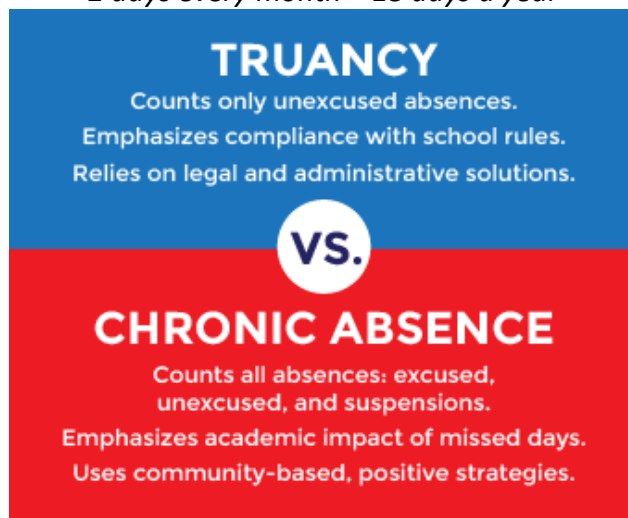
Chronic Absenteeism, Attendance and Truancy

The Bridgeport Board of Education is committed to working with students and their families to promote regular attendance, which in turn, encourages personal growth by preparing the student to accept similar responsibilities in the world outside of the school setting. The attendance regulations are designed to help students understand that the benefits of regular attendance will be gained through responsibility and commitment.

Chronic Absenteeism vs. Truancy

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of the school year for any reason, including excused, unexcused, and out of school suspensions.

*10% of the school year = 18 days a year
2 days every month = 18 days a year*



Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) LEAP Bridgeport is a program that works to build and strengthen the relationship between families and schools while working to reduce both academic and non-academic barriers to student learning and engagement.

LEAP works to improve school attendance for chronically absent students and their families through scheduled relationship focused visitations at home or another community location, and to help provide support and services.

LEAP Visitors are school and community members that help identify attendance barriers and create and monitor success plans to get students back to school and reconnect to the school community.

Daily Attendance Procedures

1. Students who are tardy 10 minutes after the official start of school time must first report to the main office to sign in and receive a pass to class.
2. If a student is 45 minutes late for school, a parent, guardian, or caregiver must accompany the student, send a written note, or call the school.

3. Students who are tardy must follow school established procedures to enter the building.
4. Parents, Guardians and Caregivers should call the main office by 10 am if a student is going to be absent for the day.
5. If there is no notification, the school will make a reasonable attempt by phone to contact the parent, guardian or caregiver at home or work about the absence.
6. When returning to school, a written note must be submitted, signed by the parent, guardian, or caregiver. A parent may come in to speak to an authorized school staff member or the School Nurse may speak with the parent, guardian, or caregiver. The following information will be need according to the state:

Parent or Guardian Note	In-Person Explanation from Parent or Guardian to an Authorized School Staff Member	School Nurse Evaluation (either in person or telephone consultation)
Dates of absence	Dates of absence	Dates of absence
Reason for absence	Reason for absence parent or guardian reports	Reason for absence
Signature of parent or guardian	Name of parent or guardian reporting the absence	Date and location of the consultation
	Date and location of the report by parent or guardian	Type of the consultation (i.e., did they see the student themselves or speak to a parent about the student)
	Signature of staff member receiving report	Signature of school nurse

7. Text messaging does not meet the level of security needed and is not an acceptable form of an absence note.
8. Without a note or in-person explanation, the absence will become unexcused. Notification must be within ten (10) school days from the student's return to be considered excused.

Excused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered excused if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school or in accordance with [Section 10-198b](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes and meets the following criteria:

- Absences one (1) through nine (9), are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation.
 - Emailing a scanned image of an absence note is acceptable
 - An absence note in the parent's proficient language must be accepted
 - A verbal report of an absence from a parent not proficient in writing in any language must be accepted.
- For the tenth (10) absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:

- A student's illness (Note: all student absences due to illness must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused regardless of the length of absence)
- [Mental Health Wellness Day](#) (Note: students enrolled in kindergarten through Grade 12 can be absent from school for up to two mental health wellness days during the school year). The two mental health wellness days may not be taken consecutively. Parents/guardian must approve absences and submit appropriate documentation.)
- A student's observance of a religious holiday
- A death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family
- A mandated court appearance (additional documentation required)
- The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason)
- Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

Unexcused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the following criteria:

- The absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation requirements)
- The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence.

Tardiness

Being on time for school is important to learning and routines. BPS believe the most effective way to change behavior is to increase dialogue, re-teach and reinforce expectations like coming to school on time. The following procedures and guidelines have been developed to support parents and students to get to school on time.

Tardiness to school

- Interventions such as referral to the school counselor or social worker, before school tutoring or mentoring
- Continued tardiness to school could lead to a referral to the SRBI team.

Tardiness to class for Middle and High School

- If a student is tardy three (3) times to an individual class during the marking period, it may result in the student's referral to the administration for further dialogue and intervention.
- Any student entering class unexcused, missing 20% of the scheduled class time will be marked as cut.

- Each marking period is to be considered a separate entity.

Early Dismissal Procedures

Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers should make every effort to schedule appointments for students after school hours.

- If a student needs to leave school early, written notification to the main office must be received and approved by an administrator.

Truancy

Truancy means a child ages 5 to 18 who is enrolled in BPS and has 4 unexcused absences from school in any 30-day period or 10 unexcused absences from school in a year.

Habitual Truancy is any child who has 20 unexcused absences within a school year.

Make-up Work

If a student is absent from school, two weeks will be provided for the all-missing work to be completed. Upon returning to school, the student should speak with the teacher about what work, homework, or classwork, is mandatory for make-up.

If a student is suspended or expelled, classwork and homework will be provided by the teacher or teachers for completion during the suspension or expulsion.

ATTENDANCE *Board of Education Approved 4.3.12 Policy No. 5113*

The Bridgeport Board of Education is committed to working with students and their families to promote regular attendance, which in turn encourages personal growth by preparing the student to accept similar responsibilities in the world outside of the high school setting. These attendance regulations are designed to help students to understand that the benefits of regular attendance will be gained through responsibility and commitment.

High school students must be present in school for a minimum of 160 days to receive course credit (toward the 22.5 Credits required for graduation from high school until the 2023 graduates – 25 Credits are required for graduation from high school for 2024 graduates onward) for full year courses and for a minimum of 80 days for Semester courses at the high school level.

Students who do not meet this minimum requirement may appeal their loss of course credit to an Attendance Review Committee comprised of school administration and other staff, specifically: a teacher, administrator (not the student's housemaster), guidance counselor (not the student's counselor), and a member of the school's support staff (nurse, psychologist, social worker, possibly a second teacher or counselor).

Board of Education Policies and Procedures

Bullying

Bullying behavior and teen dating violence by any student in the Bridgeport Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Students who engage in bullying shall be subject to school disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with this handbook on student responsibility, suspension and expulsion, BOE policy, and consistent with state and federal law.

Under Public Act 23-167, "bullying" is defined as:

"unwanted and aggressive behavior among students in grades kindergarten through twelve, involving a real or perceived power imbalance."

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, actions based on protected characteristics (race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability).

Bridgeport Public Schools expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior:

- On school grounds
- At a school-sponsored or school-related activity, event, or program whether on or off school grounds
- At a school bus stop, on the school bus, or other BOE vehicle
- Through the use of electronic or mobile electronic devices, owned or leased or used by the BOE
- Through the use of personal electronic devices, such as cellphones, during school hours

Cyberbullying means any act of bullying through the use of the internet, interactive and digital technologies such as gaming systems, smart or cellular phones, or other mobile electronic devices or communication.

Please refer to Policy 5142 for the full Bullying Policy. Please be advised that policy and procedures may be updated during the school year as per BOE policy changes or state legislation.

Challenging Behaviors

Challenging behaviors is defined as "behavior that adversely affects school climate or disrupts, or is likely to disrupt, student learning or the safety of a student or school personnel."

Bullying is one type of challenging behaviors.

Reporting Challenging Behaviors and Bullying: Our Process

This section explains how you can report concerns and what steps the school will take to address them.

What are Challenging Behaviors and Bullying?

- **Challenging Behavior:** Any behavior that negatively impacts our school's environment or interferes with student learning or safety, or the safety of school staff. This is a broad term that covers many types of actions.
- **Bullying:** A specific type of challenging behavior that is unwanted and aggressive, occurring among students in grades K-12, and involves a real or perceived power imbalance. This includes actions based on characteristics like race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or appearance.
- **Cyberbullying:** Any act of bullying that happens through the use of the Internet, digital technologies, cell phones, or other electronic communications.

Who Can Report?

Anyone in our school community can and should report challenging behaviors or bullying:

- **Students:** If you are experiencing or witnessing challenging behavior or bullying.
- **Parents/Guardians:** If you have concerns about your child or another student.
- **School Employees:** All staff members are required to report incidents they witness or are told about.
- **Other School Community Members:** Including volunteers, coaches, or other adults involved with the school.

How to Report a Concern

We encourage you to report any concerns promptly.

1. **Use the Official Reporting Form (Appendix A):**
 - The primary way to make a formal report is by completing the **Challenging Behavior Reporting Form**.
 - This form is available on our school district's website and can also be requested from the main office.
 - The form will ask for details about what happened, when, where, and who was involved.
2. **Speak to a Trusted Adult (Verbal Report):**
 - You can also report your concerns verbally to your teacher, administrator or school counselor.
 - **Important for Staff:** If a school employee witnesses challenging behavior or receives a verbal report, they are required to notify the designated School Climate Specialist (or administrator) within **one school day** and submit a written report within **two school days**.
3. **Anonymous Reporting (for Students):**
 - Students have the option to make an anonymous report if they prefer. While the school will review anonymous reports, please be aware that disciplinary action cannot be taken based *solely* on an anonymous report. However, it can help us identify patterns and take other appropriate steps.

What Happens After a Report is Made? (The School's Response)

Once a report is received, the school will follow a structured process to address the situation:

1. **Prompt Review and Assessment:**

- The School Climate Specialist or a designated administrator will promptly review the report.
- They will gather facts to understand the situation, including the severity and nature of the behavior, and if there's a power imbalance.
- 2. **Meeting with Reporting Employee:**
 - If a school employee witnessed or received the initial report, an administrator will meet with them within two school days to discuss the incident and determine initial supports or interventions needed.
- 3. **Parent/Guardian Notification:**
 - The parents/guardians of the student(s) who were the target of the challenging behavior/bullying will be notified.
 - The parents/guardians of the student(s) who engaged in the challenging behavior/bullying will also be notified.
 - For incidents that cause severe physical or emotional harm, we will also provide information about external resources, such as the 2-1-1 Infoline program.
- 4. **Interventions and Supports:**
 - The school will implement appropriate interventions and supports based on the assessment of the situation. These may include:
 - **Restorative Practices:** For nonviolent challenging behaviors or conflicts, we will often use restorative practices. These focus on repairing harm, building positive relationships, and helping students take responsibility for their actions and reintegrate into the school community. For these nonviolent incidents, law enforcement will generally not be involved unless the behavior escalates to violence or constitutes a crime.
 - Counseling or social-emotional support for students involved.
 - Behavioral interventions or disciplinary actions as appropriate, in line with the school's code of conduct.
 - Creating a Student Safety Support Plan for students who have been targeted.
- 5. **Documentation:**
 - All reports, assessments, interventions, and communications will be documented and maintained by the school.
- 6. **No Retaliation:**
 - Our school strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report challenging behavior or bullying in good faith, or who assist in an investigation. Any act of retaliation will be addressed with serious consequences.

Cellphones and Electronics

- Cellphones or mobile devices are not permitted during school hours for non-academic purposes.
- Administrators can confiscate and return devices at the end of the day.
- Administration will provide verbal warning and parent notification that repeated offenses will result in the device being confiscated for one month's time.

Skippping Class

- Students are to be present in scheduled classes when in the school building
- A class cut is an equal to an unexcused absence for that class

- Any 3 or more-class skipped in a marking period will be reported to administration

Drugs and Alcohol

- Student who is in possession of a controlled substance such as edibles, vaping paraphernalia, alcohol, or other contraband will be referred to appropriate social service agency when drugs and/or alcohol are involved.
- When possible, a cessation program and drug/alcohol counseling will be offered to the student. Enrollment in the program may, at the administrator's discretion, lessen the length of suspension or other disciplinary actions.
- A student who is in possession of a controlled substance such as edibles, vaping paraphernalia, alcohol, or other contraband, with the intent to sell is subject to mandatory referral for expulsion.
- A student will be referred to law enforcement in alignment with the Memorandum of Agreement.

Hazing

Hazing is defined as any form or type of physical, verbal, and/or emotional mistreatment, abuse, and/or harassment of a student in connection with a student's participation in or membership of an interscholastic athletic team or in any school-sponsored activity and/or forcing, coercing or intimidating any student to participate in any illegal or inappropriate activities in connection with the students' participation or membership in the foregoing.

- Hazing of any type is prohibited whether it occurs during, prior to or after the season or school day
- Hazing is inconsistent with the social, emotional, academic, and safety goals of the school district and therefore regarded as a disciplinary offense according to BOE policy and this Student Code of Conduct & Responsibility and Handbook
- Students who engage in Hazing activities are subject to disciplinary measures and
- Hazing activities and participation in Hazing may constitute a violation of the Connecticut Criminal Statutes as a form of assault and the student may be liable for arrest and prosecution as well as civil liability

Hazing Reporting Procedures

Please refer to Board Policy 5138.1 Series for the full Hazing Policy. Please be advised that policy and procedures may be updated during the course of a school year as per BOE policy changes or state legislation.

1. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to the school administrator and Director of Athletics.
2. The building administrator and the Director of Athletics are the persons responsible for receiving reports of hazing at the building level.

3. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

School District Action

1. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, the school district shall immediately investigate.
2. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action, if warranted, in accordance with the Bridgeport School District's Code of Conduct and/or District policies and/or procedures, and/or state or federal law.

Lockers

- All lockers are the property of the Bridgeport Board of Education and therefore subject of search
- As school property, there is no expectation of privacy in relation to the contents of the school provided locker
- Lockers are considered a student privilege and can be revoked at any time
- If your school uses school issued locks, the school issued lock is the only lock allowed on lockers. All other locks can be cut off.

School-issued Locks

- School issued locks are the property of the Board of Education and can be opened or removed at any time according to this handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility.

Personal Locks

- In schools where students or parents/guardians/caretakers supply their own lock, the locker remains the school's property and is subject to search of contents in accordance with this policy. A student owned lock does not create any reasonable expectation of privacy.

Searches and Confiscations

- All desks and lockers are the property of the Bridgeport Board of Education and therefore subject of search at any time to enforce school policies, expectations, regulations, or any other reason.
- School administration or designees retain the right to open and search lockers and desks at any time to enforce district policies and the Code of Conduct & Responsibility or any other safety reason.
- Any search may include the use of an electronic and/or mechanical device.
- During a valid search or while conducting other school business, if the school administration or the designee observes or finds any object or substance prohibited by the Code of Conduct & Responsibility, it shall be confiscated.

Sex-Based Harassment

Sex-based harassment is a form of sex discrimination and means sexual harassment and other harassment on the basis of sex, including on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

The Bridgeport Public Schools prohibits sex discrimination in any educational program or activity

that it operates. Individuals are encouraged to report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. The notice of non-discrimination is [LOCATED HERE](#).

Sex-Based Harassment Reporting Procedures

Please be advised that policy and procedures may be updated during the school year as per BOE policy changes or state legislation.

BPS has adopted grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints made by students, employees, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in its education program or activity, or by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or the Title IX regulations.

1. Any employee, student or other individual within the school community who is the victim of sex-based harassment by a student should promptly report the matter to a teacher, school counselor, social worker, or administrator who will direct them to the designated Title IX Coordinator/Officer. The complainant will be requested to complete a written complaint form including
2. If the complainant is a minor, the Title IX Coordinator/Officer will assess whether the conduct constitutes the basis for a child abuse report and, if so, will follow District child abuse reporting procedures.
3. The Title IX Coordinator/Officer shall conduct any necessary investigation and refer the alleged harasser to the administrator for further action, which may include referral to counseling or disciplinary procedures

Teen Dating Violence

Teen dating violence is defined as any act of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassment, threats, that occur between students who are currently or previously in dating or in a physical relationship. These acts can be considered Sex-Discrimination and/or Bullying, will be considered under these policies. A referral to law enforcement will be made if necessary.

Social Media and Technology

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

The AUP promotes the exchange of information that supports learning and encourages research. This goal is accomplished by providing users access to software located on the District's file server and the Internet and providing the ability to send e-mail and work on online platforms. This is consistent with the mission of the Bridgeport Public School District. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a student right, and should be used for education purposes only. Students who abuse this privilege will have their access revoked and may face disciplinary response.

Expectations

1. Each student requesting access to the Bridgeport Internet link must complete the Student Account Agreement Form and have it signed by a parent or guardian. Any use of the network without authorization is prohibited.
2. Neither Bridgeport's instructional network nor Internet access is to be used for commercial business use, political, religious advocacy or illegal purposes.
3. Users may not use the system in any way that is insulting, disruptive, offensive, objectionable, or contrary to the educational goals of the District.
4. Use of Bridgeport's Internet to access or send obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit messages, cartoons, jokes, unwelcome propositions or love letters, messages advocating violence or threats of any kind, racial, ethnic or religious slurs or any other message that can be construed to be harassment or disparagement of others based upon their sex, race, sexual orientation, age, national origin or religious or political beliefs is prohibited.
5. Sending material critical of school administration, teachers, staff, students or anyone associated with the school district is prohibited.
6. Harassing network users, infiltrating computer systems and/or damaging software components is prohibited.
7. Subscriptions to list servers, news groups, bulletin boards or any other online promotional services will be subject to review and approval by District staff.
8. Deliberate misuse of the network and its equipment will be considered an act of vandalism and subject the user to disciplinary action. The District will hold the user financially responsible for any damage incurred.
9. No individual shall make any unauthorized entry or alteration of any document, either paper or electronic, not created by such individual(s).
10. E-mail messages should be deleted regularly by each user to conserve storage space.
11. The installation of software on District computers must be pre-approved by the Director of Information Technology and only performed by technical support staff.
12. Profanity or obscenity will not be tolerated. All community members shall use language which is appropriate for school situations as indicated by the Bridgeport Public Schools' Code of Conduct & Responsibility.
13. Impersonations, anonymity or pseudonyms are not permitted. Individuals shall be held responsible for their actions and words.
14. No individual shall use the District Network for the purpose of on-line shopping

Social Media

The Bridgeport Board of Education understands the importance of teachers, students and parents/guardians/caregivers engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing through online platforms, apps, and "social media" through tools, such as Facebook, X, Google Apps, Teams, blogs, and many others that allow people to connect and share information.

It is important to consider the following guidelines when posting anything online: have been developed for students and the school community:

1. Post and work online responsibly
2. Keep in mind the location where one participates, and the content posted as it reflects on the person individually and the school district

3. Understand copyright and trademarks
4. Confidentiality of personal information as well as others information and sensitive issues is essential

The information produced by the district, its schools, our faculty, staff and students and their parents reflect on the entire district community,

Students

Online platforms and programs provide students with a real-world audience and products and documents have the potential to reach beyond the classroom. This translates into a large responsibility and accountability for everyone. BPS students always represent their school and district when posting online, and students should follow these guidelines when material is posted that could identify a student or the relationship to the school or district.

Below are the guidelines students should follow when using online platforms, social media, or other online tools in the classroom, school activities, and for educational purposes:

- Be aware of what you post online- social media is very public. What you post or publish leaves a digital footprint for all to see. Only post what you want friends, parents, teachers or future educators to see. What you put on the internet is never truly erased.
- Follow the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility when writing online. It is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, however, do it in a respectful way. Make sure that criticism is constructive and not hurtful. What is inappropriate in the classroom or at school is inappropriate online.
- Be safe online. Never give out personal information, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birthdates, and pictures. Do not share your password with anyone other than your teachers and parents.
- How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself.
- If you run across inappropriate material that makes you feel uncomfortable, or is not respectful, tell your teacher or counselor right away.
- Students who do not abide by these guidelines may lose their opportunity to take part in the online version of the project and/or access to future use of online tools. Paper copies will be provided.

Parent Guidelines

Classroom blogs, online platforms, and other social media are powerful tools that open communication between students, parents, and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration can have a huge impact on learning. The district encourages parents to participate in such projects when appropriate, but requests that parents always act responsibly and respectfully, understanding that their conduct not only reflects on the school community, but will be a model for our students as well.

Uniform Policy

- All students in grades PK-12 are to wear mandatory uniforms every school day.
- The mandatory school uniform includes:

- **Pants:** Dress or Dockers style pants worn with a belt at the waist; specific colors of the uniform pants will be determined by the specific school.
- **Skirts, Jumpers or Skorts:** Should be knee level or longer. Blouses or polo shirts must be worn under the jumper.
- **Shorts:** Knee length or Dockers style shorts must be worn with a belt.
- **Shirts:** Collared polo shirt or dress shirt (long or short sleeve). Additional colors, representative of the individual Bridgeport school students attend, will also be acceptable.
- **Sweatshirt/Sweaters:** Pullover, zippered or cardigan, in solid colors specific to the school, without patterns, hoods, decorations or wording. A vest or blazer in the color representative of the individual Bridgeport school will also be permitted.
- **Shoes/Sneakers:** Shoes are strongly recommended over sneakers. In addition to shoes, sneakers are permitted and appropriate everyday boots. Laces on shoes, sneakers or boots must be tied. *SANDALS, FLIP FLOPS, SLIDES (i.e., Crocs) or SLIPPERS are not permitted at school.*
- **Outerwear** for outside activities and recess.
- **Physical Education Day Attire:** Students may wear sweatpants/shirts and sneakers to school on scheduled physical education days. School-approved tee shirts and shorts are permitted.
- School dress, jewelry or accessories that impedes a safe and comfortable learning environment for all is prohibited. These include but are not limited to:
 - impairs safety or increases the risk of injury to self or others or causes discomfort to others, (i.e. un-cleanliness, obscene, offensive language, symbols, gang insignia)
 - advertises or advocates the use of alcohol or drugs,
 - pornographic, transparent, or revealing (halter or midriff) clothing
 - libelous is inherently likely to upset others
 - face or head coverings
- Prescription and blue-light glasses are permitted only.
- Any student transferring into the Bridgeport School District from another school district during the school year will be allowed a seven (7) day grace period during which students will not be disciplined for failing to wear the mandatory uniform.
- If there are any circumstances that limit uniform requirements or attire, please contact the student's school administration, social worker, or school counselor for assistance.

Use of Physical Restraint or Force

- De-escalation strategies to diffuse a student will always be utilized before restraint, except in emergency situations. For more information, please see [Laws and Regulations Governing the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools](#)

- When de-escalation strategies are not effective or an emergency presents itself, school personnel may use reasonable and prudent physical restraint or force upon a student when necessary to:
 - Prevent immediate or imminent injury the student or others
 - Take any type of dangerous item that could be used to hurt oneself or others
 - Confiscate illegal drugs or controlled substances
 - Protect property
 - Restrain or remove the student to maintain safety and order

Vandalism

- A student who vandalizes any area of the school property is subject to repair, restore and/or provide restitution for the damaged or stolen property.
- A student will be referred to law enforcement in alignment with the Memorandum of Agreement.

Vaping

State law prohibits lighting or carrying a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe or similar item in any school area including school grounds. The Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility reinforces state law by prohibiting students from smoking in any area in the school or on school grounds. State law and the Student Code of Conduct & Responsibility also prohibit smoking while traveling on a school bus. It is the Bridgeport Public Schools' policy that there is no smoking, use or possession of tobacco in any form, anywhere in school buildings, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. Violations for this infraction also occur whenever students possess matches, lighters or other items that promote combustion that are of no reasonable use to students at school.

Weapons

- A student who is in possession of a weapon is subject to mandatory referral to expulsion.
- A student will be referred to law enforcement in alignment with the Memorandum of Agreement.
- A student will be referred to appropriate social service agencies like the Youth Diversion Team.

Code of Conduct & Responsibility

Progressive Discipline

Bridgeport Public Schools and the Connecticut State Department of Education recognize that students of different grades and ages are different developmental levels, thus behaviors will vary and may call for differentiated interventions. When considering logical consequences, restorative interventions, and progressive discipline, the following will be considered:

- Age
- Grade Level
- Developmental stage

In some cases, culture and communication must be considered when interpreting behaviors, especially in cases involving social situations that may be interpreted differently depending on a student's own racial, ethnic, language and cultural identity.

The Administrator or Designee has the authority to use his/her sole discretion to determine the level of consequence and the range of interventions. Progressive discipline should be considered to ensure...

Progressive Discipline considers:

- Understanding discipline as a “teachable moment” is fundamental to a positive approach to discipline
- Progressive discipline uses incremental interventions, whenever possible, to address inappropriate behavior, with the ultimate goal of teaching pro-social behavior
- Disciplinary responses are coupled, when appropriate with support and interventions

Decisions will be made based on the student's age and development, the level of the infraction, the severity of the offense, and its impact on the learning community.

Disciplinary Infractions and Interventions

The Code of Conduct & Responsibility outlines the behavioral expectations of the BPS and the logical disciplinary and restorative interventions when expectations are not met. The infractions are organized into four categories from minor disciplinary infractions to the most significant (Tier 1 to Major) and at times illegal. The BPS promotes disciplinary responses that refrain from interrupting a student's education to the greatest extent possible and those exclusionary practices such as suspension, referral to expulsion, and law enforcement are a last resort.

Tier 1 Infractions: These infractions are minor disruptive or harmful educational events and usually occur at the classroom level. These infractions generally are not malicious, safety risks, property damage, or harm oneself or others, physically, emotionally, socially or academically.

Tier 2 Infractions: These infractions are disruptive to the learning of others or the educational process. This tier of infractions has the potential of a safety risk, damage to property or harm to oneself or others, physically, emotionally, socially or academically. This may include repetitive Tier 1 infractions.

Tier 3 Infractions: These infractions are serious and disruptive to the learning environment of the classroom or school. These infractions may result in Out of School Suspensions up to 5 days. This includes repetitive Tier 1 and Tier 2 Infractions.

Major Infractions: These are detrimental to the safety, security, and well-being of others and seriously disruptive to the learning environment. These infractions may result in Out of School Suspensions up to 5 days for Prek-2 and up to 10 days in grades 3-12, or a referral to expulsion, and possible law enforcement involvement.

	Types of Disciplinary Responses and Interventions	
	Restorative Interventions	Disciplinary Response
Tier 1 Disciplinary Infraction Responses Classroom Level	• Whole Class Reset • Planned Ignoring • Prompt (Verbal/Nonverbal) • Proximity • Re-teaching expectations • Private Teacher/Student Dialogue • Restorative Affirmative Statements • Mood Meter Check-in • Meta-Moment • Prompting a Coping Skills • Increase positive reinforcement • Informal Restorative Conference • Restorative Circle • Seat Change • Apology of Action (Written) • Reflection Sheet (Written) • Short term Counseling • Mediation with adult support at elementary level and with Social Justice Action Committee at high school • Referral to Support Services • Meeting with Restorative Facilitator	• Teacher-Parent Communication • Loss of privileges for 1-3 days, including computer and online platforms • Teacher Detention • Student Success Behavior Contract at classroom level • In-class Calming Corner/ Reset Spot • Administrator meeting with student after 3 Tier 1 referrals

Tier 2 Disciplinary Infraction Administrative Level	• <i>Any Tier 1 Interventions</i> • Teacher/Parent/ Student Conference • Tier 2/ Check in/Check Out • Peer-Peer mediation • Referral to Community-Based Organization • Community Service with parental consent • Counseling	• <i>Any Tier 1 Interventions</i> • Administrative notification of Parent/Guardian/Caregiver required • Out of Class Reset (90 minutes maximum) • Loss of privileges for 3-5 days including computer and online platforms • Administrator detention • Student Success Behavior Contract at school level • Reset Room-In School Suspension with Restorative reflection up to 1-5 days • Out of School suspension 1-3 days*
Tier 3 Disciplinary Infraction Administrative Level	• <i>Any Tier 1 or 2 Interventions</i> • Referral to Community-Based Organization such as social service, mental health agency, or drug and alcohol rehabilitation • Referral to a mentoring program • Referral to MTSS • Development or modification of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and a Behavior Intervention plan (BIP)	• Administrative notification of Parent/Guardian/Caregiver required • Out of School suspension 3-5 days* •
Major Disruptive or Harmful Disciplinary Infraction Administrative Level	• <i>Any Tier 1 or 2 Interventions and Disciplinary response</i>	• Administrative notification of Parent/Guardian/Caregiver required • Planning and Placement Team Referral • Out of School suspension 5-10 days* • Possible School Reassignment • Possible Emergency Removal from School • Possible Recommendation for Expulsion

***Note:** Out-of-school suspensions for preschool to grade 2 are only up to 5 days.
Out-of-school suspensions for grades 3-12 may be up to 10 days.

Infractions and Response Tiers

On the first instance of an inappropriate or disruptive behavior, one or more interventions from the lowest level indicator may be assigned.

The age, grade level and/or ability will be considered by administration when determining the logical consequence and intervention for the individual student.

Behavior	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Major
Area Violation: Remaining or entering a classroom, a school building or grounds, or leaving school without permission or authorization	*	*		
Arson, False Alarms, Bomb Threats, Possession of flammables/explosives				*
Bullying (Refer to BOE policy series 5000)				*
Bus Disruptions - Minor- eating on the bus, loud music, standing, screaming - Major- throwing objects out windows, foul language, disrespecting driver	*			
		*	*	
Cheating or Plagiarism	*	*		
Controlled Substance: Alcohol, drugs, paraphernalia Under the influence, using or possession			*	*
Controlled Substance: Alcohol, drugs, paraphernalia Selling or Distributing				*
Disrespect of Staff (Talking back, not following directions, refusing to participate)	*	*		
Disruption: Disrupting the educational process in an area other than a classroom	*	*		
Driving recklessly on school grounds and parking lots	*	*		
Fighting (applies to all parties involved) Pushing, shoving, hands-on, play "fighting"		*	*	
Fighting (applies to all parties involved) Punching, hair-pulling, injuries involved			*	*
Hazing (see BOE policy 5138.1)				*
Identification: Refusing to identify oneself to school personnel	*	*		
Improper use of school entrance, exit doors, propping or holding outside doors open	*	*		
Leaving the classroom without permission	*	*		
Leaving school building or grounds without permission	*	*		
Lying to avoid blame or responsibility	*	*		
Obscene, Vulgar language or gestures	*	*		
Physical Assault of another person, adult or student- Intentionally causing serious injury to another person				*
Slurs: Racial or other Discriminatory Slurs		*	*	*

Stealing school property or the property of others				*
Stealing by force of school property or the property of others				*
Sexual Assault				*
Sex-Based Harassment (Refer to BOE Policy Series 5000)				*
Technology: Improper Use of Technology/Cellphones/ Electronics/ Violating BPS Acceptable Use Policy while in school or attending any school-sponsored event or that disrupts the educational process		*	*	*
Threatening a staff member or student				*
Threatening behaviors against school, staff, or students in form of writings including emails, letters, lists.				*
Throwing objects , garbage, or food in the cafeteria or elsewhere, starting a food fight	*	*		
Uniform Violation	*	*		
Vandalism, Graffiti, & Property Damage - Intentional damage or defacement of another's person or School Property (less than \$200) - Intentional damage or defacement of another's person or School Property (\$200-\$500) - Intentional damage or defacement of another's person or School Property (\$500 or more)	*			
		*	*	*
		*	*	*
Vaping/ E-Cigarette Device/ Smoking Possession or Use		*	*	*
Weapon: Possession of a weapon, firearm, knife, explosive or dangerous object that can be used to inflict harm on self or others				*

Considerations when administering Disciplinary Intervention

The behaviors listed above are not all inclusive or exhaustive.

BPS recognizes that each student is a unique individual and that every situation which requires disciplinary intervention has its own set of extenuating circumstances as well as language, cultural and developmental factors. All factors that may have affected the student's behavior will be considered before disciplinary intervention is determined.

For a student with disabilities, all approaches will be aligned with his/her IEP or 504 Student Accommodation Plan and will consider his/her unique needs and abilities

Students previously identified as having a disability under the IDEA and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who engage in behavior that violates any rule of the Student Code of Conduct can be disciplined by suspension, transfer to an appropriate interim alternative education setting or other setting or expulsion as well as report to law enforcement if a crime is committed.

Special Note: *Connecticut State Regulations, Section 10-76d-7(c), requires each school district to promptly refer to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) all students who have been suspended repeatedly or whose behavior, attendance or progress in school is considered unsatisfactory or at a marginal level of acceptance. For students who experience multiple in-school suspensions, a referral must be made to the PPT to consider whether evaluations should be conducted to determine the student's eligibility for special education services*

Suspensions and Expulsions

Disciplinary Absences

Absences resulting from school or district disciplinary response are excluded from these definitions.

1. The Connecticut State Board of Education policy states that "A student is considered to be 'in attendance' if present at his/her assigned school or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent."
2. Such documentation should include a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent/guardian regarding the absence or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional as appropriate. Documentation should explain the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. Separate documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absenteeism. For example: if a student is out sick two (2) consecutive days, that student must submit the appropriate documentation covering both sick days. If a student is out sick two (2) nonconsecutive days, that student must submit the appropriate documentation following each absence. Schools should take steps to allow non-English speaking parents/guardians to submit documentation in their native language.

Suspension

When a student is recommended for suspension, in school or out of school, appropriate notice will be provided to the parent/guardian/ caregiver. If a student is suspended, in or out of school, the student may not be allowed to participate in extracurricular/co-curricular activities/athletics during days of in-school suspension or out of school suspension.

In-School Suspension

“In-Schools Suspension” means an exclusion from regular classroom activity for ***no more than five consecutive school days***, but not exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed.

Suspension

“Suspension” means an exclusion from school privileges or from transportation services only, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension was imposed.

Out of School Suspension

An Out of School Suspension is the removal of a student from school grounds and all related activities for a period ranging from **1-5 days for grades Pre-K-2** and **1-10 school days for grades 3-12**.

Students in preschool to grade 2 can only receive out of school suspension if the administration determines at the suspension hearing the student’s conduct on school grounds is determined to be behavior that causes physical harm.

When the student returns to school, they will receive services that are trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate and align with any behavioral intervention plan, individualized education program or 504 plan.

A meeting may be convened by the school with a planning and placement team for the purposes of conducting an evaluation to determine whether the student requires special education or related services.

Procedures for In-School Suspension (ISS)

1. Unless an emergency exists, the student is given an informal hearing with administration where they will be informed of the reasons for disciplinary action and given the opportunity to explain the situation.
2. The Superintendent or the Designee will be informed of the suspension within 24 hours.
3. Students will be provided with schoolwork and given time to take assessments during the suspension.

Procedures for Out of School Suspension (OSS)

1. Unless an emergency exists, the student is given an informal hearing with administration where they will be informed of the reasons for disciplinary action and given the opportunity to explain the situation.

2. An out of school suspension is implemented if one or both of the following criteria of the actions are met:
 - a. CRITERION 1 – Endangerment to Persons/Property Student poses a danger to persons or property that exposes a pupil or property to damage or injury, peril, risk, hazard or any harmful situation, (e.g., violent crimes, weapons possession and drug distribution) that out-of-school suspension is warranted.
 - b. CRITERION 2 – Serious Disruption Student poses such a serious disruption to the educational process that causes a serious disorder, confusion, interruption, or impediment to the operation of a class, study hall, library, assembly, program, or other gathering involving pupils or staff members that out-of-school suspension is warranted.
3. The Superintendent or the Designee will be informed of the suspension within 24 hours.
4. Students may be provided with the opportunity to attend an Alternative Setting for the Out of School Suspension. In either case, the student will be provided with schoolwork and given time to take assessments during the suspension.

Expulsion

When a student is recommended for expulsion from school, appropriate notice of the expulsion process and hearing, as defined in 10-233d and 4-177 of the Connecticut General Statutes, must be given. Notification shall be in writing and given to the parents or guardian of the student ***at least 5 business days notice of the hearing, not including the day of the hearing, and include:***

1. Information concerning the parent's or guardian's and the pupil's legal rights
2. Information stating that an attorney or other advocate may represent any pupil subject to expulsion proceedings and information concerning legal services that may be available free of charge or at a reduced rate that are available locally and how to access such services.
3. The right that the parent or guardian of the pupil has to have the expulsion hearing postponed for up to one week to allow time to obtain representation.
4. A statement of the time, place, and nature of the hearing, of the legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held, a reference to the particular sections of the statutes and regulations involved and a short and plain statement of the allegation leading to the expulsion hearing.

Procedures for Expulsion

A PPT must be held for all students referred for expulsion

Educational Status Review – CT. St Reg. 10-76d mandates a prompt referral to a PPT for all students who have been suspended repeatedly or whose behavior, attendance, or progress in schools is considered unsatisfactory or at a marginal level of acceptance.

A student may be expelled only after a hearing before the Board of Education or its Hearing Officer. The Superintendent or his/her designee must concur in any referral for expulsion. A student may be excluded from school pending the hearing provided the procedures for a suspension have been followed. However, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, such a suspension may last no more than 5 days for grades Pre-K-2 and 10 school days for grades 3-12.

The Student Handbook establishes that the Board of Education or its Hearing Officer will conduct an expulsion hearing within 10 days after receiving the referral for expulsion. If this schedule is followed, there should rarely be a case where a student who has been suspended pending an expulsion hearing may return to the school before the expulsion hearing is held. For more on the expulsion process, go to: [expulsion_family_guide.pdf \(ct.gov\)](#)

If a decision is made to expel a child, the school district shall immediately follow the State Department of Education's "Standards for Educational Opportunities for Students Who Have Been Expelled" in determining an adequate placement for the student during the period of expulsion which meets the requirements of C.G.S. §§10-74j, 10-74k and §10-233d as amended by Public Act 17-220, developing an individualized education plan and monitoring and reviewing said student placement.

Note: A manifestation determination meeting will need to be held prior to the expulsion hearing for any student who has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 plan.

Mandatory Expulsion: Drug Offenses and Weapons

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes, a student who is in possession of a firearm on school grounds or who uses a dangerous or deadly weapon in the commission of a crime, or offer for sale or distribution, illegal drugs on or off school grounds, is subject to a mandatory referral for expulsion. The Board of Education or Hearing Officer may modify the length of the expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

Firearms include any weapon or part of a weapon that may be capable of expelling a projectile by explosive action including guns, pistols, facsimile weapons, BB guns and any destructive device including explosive or incendiary devices, bombs, grenades, rockets or fireworks. Deadly and dangerous weapons include any device capable of causing death or serious bodily injury and not approved for school use including knives, stun guns, box cutters and martial arts weapons

Appeal Process

As a first step in restoring the community, students and parents are encouraged to contact and restoratively discuss their concerns with the person(s) involved before proceeding with the formal appeal process.

If an agreement or understanding cannot be achieved, the appeal process may be used to address any situation occurring with the operation or normal procedures of the school which causes the student/parent/ guardian/ caregiver to believe wrong has occurred.

A parent/guardian/caregiver or student may initiate the appeal proceedings when either the parent/guardian/caregiver believes that a violation or misapplication of the Student Handbook or Code of Conduct and Responsibilities or BOE policy has occurred.

It is the policy of the BPS that all students and/or parents/guardians/caregivers shall have the right to appeal disciplinary actions arising within their status as a student and parent/guardian/caregiver and are encouraged to exercise this right without fear of recrimination. To ensure swift resolution and prompt attention to each problem, time limits have been established. If parents and students do not meet timelines in the process, the appeal shall be considered settled and no longer open.

Please note that Sex-Based Harassment Appeal follows all state and federal regulations and may be different than disciplinary action appeals.

Step 1: Administrator Conference

1. A written request within 30 days to the building level administrator for a conference to discuss the complaint and seek a resolution.
2. The written request should include a statement describing the complaint, the specific policy, rule, or law believed to be violated.
3. A conference will be held within 5 days following receipt of the written request in which the parent, guardian or someone acting *in loco parentis* may attend or represent the student.
4. The building level administrator will answer in writing his or her position to the parent/guardian/caregiver within 5 school days following the conference
5. The student's placement/program will remain unchanged pending the outcome of the appeal.

Step 2: Appeal to the Superintendent's Designee (Assistant Superintendent or Executive Director)

If the appeal is not resolved at Step 1:

1. The student, or parent/guardian/caregiver may appeal the building level administrator's decision in writing to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent/ Executive Director or Designee.
2. The appeal must be received within 5 school days following receipt of the building administrator's written position from Step 1.
3. The Assistant Superintendent/ Executive Director or Designee will review the appeal within 5 school days following receiving the appeal.
4. A written response will be sent to the student, or parent/guardian/caregiver and the administrator from the Assistant Superintendent/Executive Director or Designee within 10 school days following the Assistant Superintendent/Executive Director or Designee's review.

Step 3: Appeal to the Superintendent of Schools or Deputy Superintendent of Schools

If the appeal is not resolved at Step 2:

1. The student, or parent/guardian/caregiver may appeal the Assistant Superintendent/ Executive Director or Designee's decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools.

2. The appeal must be received within 5 school days following receipt of the Assistant Superintendent/ Executive Director or Designee's written position from Step 2.
3. The Superintendent or Designee shall review the appeal within 5 school days following receiving the appeal.
4. A written response will be sent to the student, or parent/guardian/caregiver and the administrator from the Superintendent or Designee within 10 school days following the Superintendent or Designee's review.

Step 4: Appeal to the Board of Education

If the appeal is not resolved at Step 3:

1. The student, or parent/guardian/caregiver may appeal the Superintendent or Designee's decision in writing to the Board of Education.
2. The appeal must be received within 10 school days following receipt of the Superintendent or Designee's decision from Step 3.
3. The Board of Education's decision shall be determined as final.

Crisis Intervention Team: Student Behavior Causing Disruption or Harm

A teacher may request a Crisis Intervention Team meeting if:

- A student's behavior caused serious disruption to the instruction of other students or
 - Caused self-harm or physical harm to the teacher or another student or staff member in the teacher's classroom
-
1. If a meeting is requested, the principal or other school administrator will notify the parent/guardian/ caregiver within 24 hours of the behavior occurring.
 2. The notification will include minimally the teacher whose classroom the behavior occurred in and that a CIT meeting is requested.
 3. The CIT will notify the parent/guardian/caregiver a written summary of the meeting in their language within 7 days.
 4. The summary of the meeting will include the resources and support identified for the student.

APPENDIX A: Glossary of Terms

For the purpose of understanding and implementing the Code of Conduct & Responsibility, the Student Handbook, policy and administrative regulations the following terms are defined:

Administrator or Designee: an employee of the Board of Education holding an intermediate administrator's certificate. Designee: Any employee of the Board of Education acting in place of an administrator

Arson: Intentional attempt or act of starting a fire or explosion in a school, on school property, or a school bus or BOE vehicle

AUP: Acceptable Use Policy (See Technology Inappropriate Use for more information)

BOE: Board of Education

BPS: Bridgeport Public Schools

Bullying: The repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying directed at another student attending *school* in the same district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district

Cheating and Plagiarism: Any form of cheating or plagiarism is not acceptable. The misrepresenting by students of homework, class work, tests, reports or other assignments, as if they were entirely their own work, shall be considered forms of cheating and/or plagiarism. The consequences of cheating shall be academic in nature unless repeated incidences require disciplinary response.

Check-in/Check-Out (CICO): Check-In/Check-Out provides opportunities for daily communication between a student and the teachers and between the school and parents which supports students who need extra support with their behavior. CICO provides reinforcement and positive attention from adults.

Confiscation: when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a student is in possession of drugs, there is an obligation on the part of school personnel to search for and seize such drugs. Such search and seizure may involve school lockers, cars on school property, clothing, purses, book bags, books and other personal property. Reasonable efforts will be made to secure the student's voluntary agreement to the search and to have the student present at the time of the search. All confiscated drugs will be turned over to the police as soon as possible, certainly within three (3) days in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 10-154 (c).

Controlled Substance: a substance or drug or immediate precursor identified under schedules I to V, inclusive, of the Connecticut controlled substance scheduling regulations pursuant to Section 21a-243 of the Connecticut General Statutes

Dangerous Instrument: any instrument, article or substance, which under the circumstances is used or attempted or threatened to be used, can cause death or serious physical injury and includes a “vehicle” and a dog that has been commanded to attack

Deadly Weapon: any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy club, blackjack, bludgeon or metal knuckles

Disciplinary Response: the result or outcome of a student’s choices and the response of a logical consequence when established expectations, procedures and/or policies have not been met or followed

Distribution: to give possession of a drug to another person whether or not for compensation

Drugs: any alcoholic beverage, controlled substance, illegal substance or prescribed medication for which the student does not have a prescription from a licensed physician or dentist.

Drug Paraphernalia: any object or device used, intended for use or designed for use in ingesting, inhaling, injecting or otherwise introducing controlled substances into the human body, (e.g. razor blades, bongs, pipes, roach clips, tobacco rolling papers) or any object or container used, intended for use or designed for use in storing, concealing or distributing controlled substance

Emergency Suspension: exclusion from school attendance and privileges for as long as the emergency exists, but no more than three (3) consecutive school days. An emergency shall mean a situation where the continued presence of the student in school poses a danger to persons/property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing cannot be effectively held prior to excluding the student from school

Expulsion: exclusion from school attendance and privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. Refer to Bridgeport Public Schools Policy No. 5131

Fighting: Fighting occurs when two or more students are actively engaged in hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping or otherwise attempting to hurt each other. Even though one student may “start the fight,” one or more students may be guilty of fighting if they offer more than passive resistance against the instigator and aggressively attempt to harm the instigator. Students who are attacked by another student can avoid violating this section by retreating or offering only enough resistance to avoid self-injury.

Firearm: any weapon that will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer or any destructive device, including any explosive, incendiary, poisonous gas device, including a bomb, a grenade, a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one quarter (1/4) ounce, a mine or similar device or any weapon that will or may be converted to more than a half inch (1/2") in diameter

Hearing (Administrative): a meeting with a school administrator where charges are made and an opportunity for explanation provided

Hearing before the Board of Education: such a hearing is usually for consideration of a recommendation for expulsion of a student (see Connecticut General Statutes § 10-233d)

High School Social Justice Action Committee: A group of students at the high school level trained in Restorative Practices that would provide peer-to-peer intervention to address low level disciplinary issues and provide alternatives to in school suspensions and other exclusionary practices.

Holding: carrying or storing a prohibited object or substance on or in students' body, clothing, hat, purse, wallet, handbag, carrying case of any type, locker, desk, chair, automobile, bicycle, motorcycle, book, tablet, pen or pencil or in any way or manner whatsoever holding, carrying or storing a prohibited object or substance

In-School Suspension: procedure in which the assigned student spends the full day in a reset area away from the regularly scheduled classes. During this time out of class, students will be properly supervised, provided reflection time about incidents and complete classwork and assignments. Please refer to Public Act 10-111 and General Statute Section 1-233C.

In-School Program: any developed program, as established by the school or the district, to provide restorative practices and counseling to students in need of social, emotional, or behavioral interventions.

Interventions: strategies provided to students intended to produce positive change in behavior

Law Enforcement Authorities: any legally constituted local, state or federal agency authorized to enforce the law of the community, state or federal government

Logical Consequences: are planned in advance and designed to help students learn appropriate prosocial behaviors and succeed at school. The type and severity of the inappropriate or unwanted behavior should match the logic of the consequences.

Martial Arts Weapon: a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or Chinese star

Meta-Moment: a moment or pause to manage an emotional response when triggered.

Mindfulness: the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

Mood-Meter: a tool to increase self and social awareness through reflection and self-reporting of current mood, feelings, or emotions.

Multiple Referrals: When behaviors or disciplinary infraction continue to occur after Tier 1 or Tier 2 interventions, it may be progressively more serious and/or problematic warranting a higher level of intervention. In alignment with progressive discipline and logical consequences, students will receive increasing support and disciplinary responses for infractions even if they are at Tier 1 or Tier 2.

Out-of-School Suspension: exclusion from school attendance and privileges for a definite period not to exceed five (5) days in Pre-K-2 grade and ten (10) consecutive school days in grades 3-12. Each day of suspension shall be considered a full day of excused absence

PBIS: Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a school-wide systems approach to discipline problems that emphasizes prevention, instruction on social skills, and data-based decision-making to reduce problem behavior and improve academic performance. PBIS consists of Scientific Research-Based Interventions. www.pbis.org

Possession: any possession which is unlawful (of a controlled substance, illegal drug or alcohol) under Connecticut State Law, (e.g., holding or having on one's person or belongings the like or any drug or alcoholic beverage, which includes one's automobile, locker, backpack, carry case of any type, in students' body, clothing, hat, purse, wallet, handbag, desk, chair, bicycle, motorcycle, book, tablet, pen or pencil or in any way or manner whatsoever holding, carrying or storing a prohibited object or substance).

Possession with the Intent to Sell: any unauthorized possession of a controlled substance, illegal drug or alcohol is covered under this infraction. Possession alone is a Major Offense and may be subject to expulsion. Administrators may also consider a referral to the Juvenile Review Board (JRB) or community-based organization for drug or alcohol rehabilitation as a diversionary intervention.

Possession of a Dangerous Weapon or Object: any Firearm, Knife, Explosive or Other Dangerous Object Any weapon or dangerous instrument found in a student's possession or brought onto the school's premises, on school buses, at any school- sponsored activity, on or off school premises, will result in an automatic ten (10) day suspension and mandatory referral for expulsion

Principal: also referred to as the administrator who is responsible for the building, staff, students, and/or school related activities

Restitution: Restitution will be sought from anyone for damage or theft of personal or school property. This includes damage to the school facilities, i.e. bathrooms, lockers, desks, etc. – damage or loss of school textbooks materials, and supplies for which student and parents are responsible; or damage to personal property of school employees or students. Such matters may be referred to the police or other legal authority for further action if necessary.

Restorative Practices: a continuum of practices that focus on building positive relationships and repairing harm when harm has been caused.

Restorative Circles: Restorative Circles are a community-based approach to conflict resolution and relationship building. It provides a structured space to build relationships, establish routines and develop resilience for students, staff, and families

Sexual Assault: sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent. Refer to Connecticut state statute sec. 53a70, 53a-71, 52a-72a, and 53a-73a. See Student/Staff Sexual Harassment (Sex-Based Harassment) Policy

Social Service Agencies: local, state or private agencies/providers that provide counseling and other supportive services to individuals

Social Emotional Learning (SEL): SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

Student Success Behavior Contracts: The student may be asked to enter into a Student Success Contract to ensure the student's continued success at the school. In a Student Success Contract,

- Student commits to more positive behavior in the form of a written contract
- Student may be assigned school or community service;
- In classroom, the teacher will design the contract with the student and inform parent.
- At the school level, the principal or designee will determine terms of the contract

Technology Inappropriate Use: Any user violating the AUP and applicable state and federal laws is subject to loss of network privileges and any other District disciplinary options provided by State Statute, Board Policy or Bridgeport Public Schools' Code of Conduct & Responsibility, including, but not limited to: loss of network/Internet privileges, suspension and/or expulsion. Users who intentionally damage equipment, attempt to load or download unauthorized software, access another user's account or school accounts or show disregard for these regulations, shall be subject to disciplinary action. Damage caused to other networks accessed will subject the user to the same disciplinary action as damage to the Bridgeport Network/Internet, as well as any possible criminal charges

Teen Dating Violence: any act of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassment, threats, that occur between students who are currently or previously in dating or in a physical relationship

UEA: unexcused absence. Please refer to Attendance Policy.

Use: to ingest, inject or otherwise cause a drug to reach the bloodstream or digestive tract

Vandalism by an Adult Student: Adult students shall be held personally liable for any damage done to any property, real or personal, belonging to the school district. The students may be subject to disciplinary action

Vandalism by a Minor: The parents/guardians of minor/un-emancipated children, who willfully cut, deface or otherwise injure in any way, any real or personal property belonging to the school district, will be held liable for all such damages up to the maximum amount allowed by state law. The liability provided under Connecticut General Statutes 52-572 does not relieve the minor of personal liability for such damage or injury or relieve the parents/guardians for damages done by minor child and is in addition to any other liability which exists in law. The parents/guardians of minor children will also be held liable for all property belonging to the school system lent to the minor and not returned upon demand of the school district. The minor may also be subject to disciplinary action.

APPENDIX B: Written Verification of Review of Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility

Student Safe School Pledge

I, _____ (print student name) have received, read, and discussed the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility for the Bridgeport Public Schools. I am aware of my rights and responsibilities to create a safe, inclusive, and welcoming school environment for all, students, teachers, and other adults.

I also understand that my actions that disrupt or violate other students' right to learn in a safe space will result in interventions and logical consequences as stated and discussed in the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility.

Student Signature:

Date:

Parent/ Guardian/Caregiver Notification

Dear Parent/Guardian/ Caregiver,

Bridgeport Public Schools believes that those that care for the students should be informed regarding the district and school efforts to create and maintain a safe and secure learning environment for all students. Please read the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility and discuss it with your child.

Please submit this form back to the school by: _____

I am the parent/guardian/caregiver of the above-named student. I have received and read the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility. I understand that by signing this document, I agree to support and promote the goal of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct & Responsibility. I will make every effort to work with the school and district in resolving disciplinary matters.

Parent/Guardian/ Caregiver Signature:

Date

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Appendix C- Challenging Behavior Reporting Form