2026-2027 Family Guidebook



Caring **H**elpful **I**nclusive **R**espectful **P**ositive

BRUNO M. PONTERIO RIDGE STREET SCHOOL
390 North Ridge Street
Rye Brook, New York 10573

MAIN OFFICE: 914-937-3600 x2199
www.blindbrook.org

Tracy Taylor, Principal
Dr. Teresa Letizia, Assistant Principal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Letter ..... page 3
Who's Who in the Blind Brook District? ..... page 4-5
Who's Who at BMP Ridge Street School? ..... page 6-7
Eligibility Requirements for Transportation ..... page 8
School Bus Scheduling and Routing ..... pages 8-9
- Playdates on buses

Emergency School Closings ..... page 9
Religious Observance Policy ..... page 9
Fire Drills ..... page 10
Shelter Drills ..... page 10
Lockdown Drills ..... page 10
School Hours ..... page 11
School Visitors ..... page 11
- Arrival Procedures ..... page 12
- Dismissal Procedures ..... page 13
- Arrival & Dismissal Reminders ..... page 14

School Schedule ..... page 15
Reporting Student Absence ..... page 16
Student Lateness ..... page 16
Change in Dismissal ..... page 16
Messages to Students ..... page 16
Lost and Found ..... page 16
Use of School Lift ..... page 17
Bicycle Rack ..... page 17
Food and Drink – We are a *NUT AWARE* School! ..... page 17
Computer Use ..... page 17
Recycling ..... page 18
Disruptive Devices/Items ..... page 18
Cameras and Recording Devices ..... page 18
Hats and Caps ..... page 18
Phone Use (students)/Cell Phone Usage/Smartwatch ..... page 19
Care of Books ..... page 19
Lost or Damaged Library Materials ..... page 19
BMP Ridge Street School Curriculum Overview ..... pages 20-23
Instructional Support Team (IST) ..... page 23
Academic Intervention Services (AIS) ..... page 23
English as a New Language (ENL)/ English Language Learners (ELL) ..... page 23-24
Parent Teacher Conferences and Report Cards ..... page 24
Standardized Testing Grades 3-5 ..... page 24
Special Education ..... page 24-25
Student Fundraising Opportunities ..... page 26
Opportunities for Parent Involvement ..... page 26
DISTRICT COMPREHENSIVE ATTENDANCE POLICY ..... page 27-32
ABRIDGED CODE OF CONDUCT* ..... page 33-53

**For a complete copy of the Code of Conduct, please go to the District's Website.*

"You're off to great places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so...get on your way!"

— Dr. Seuss, Oh, The Places You'll Go!

Dear BMP Ridge Street Families,

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." – Helen Keller

This powerful reminder from Helen Keller speaks to the heart of what makes the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School such a special place. Our school thrives because we work *together* — as a unified community of educators, staff, students, and families — all focused on one shared goal: putting students first.

We are so proud of our exceptional students, our faculty and staff of dedicated, caring professionals, and our engaged, supportive parent community. We are especially grateful to the Blind Brook PTA for the continued support they provide to enhance our students' experience through unique programs and enrichment activities. Our C.H.I.R.P. Character Education Program continues to grow each year. We strive to ensure that every student lets their Caring, Helpfulness, Inclusivity, Respect, and Positivity shine in every choice they make, both in and out of school. BMPRSS is the proud home of the bluebirds — and bluebirds C.H.I.R.P. wherever they go!

We are gearing up for an exciting 2026-2027 school year.

Tracy Taylor

Tracy Taylor
Principal

Teresa Letizia

Dr. Teresa Letizia
Assistant Principal

I am ready to respect myself.
I am ready to respect others.
I am ready to learn.
I am ready to be mindful and have a great day because ***bluebirds fly high!***

Who's Who in the Blind Brook District?

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEMBERS FOR 2026-2027

Mrs. Correy Stephenson (President)
correystephenson@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2027

Mr. Danny Fung *(Vice President)*
dannyfung@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2029

Mrs. Katherine Hallissy Ayala
katherineayala@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2029

Mr. Jeffrey Mensch
jeffmensch@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2027

Mrs. Samantha Smith
samanthasmith@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2028



Art by Emma O.

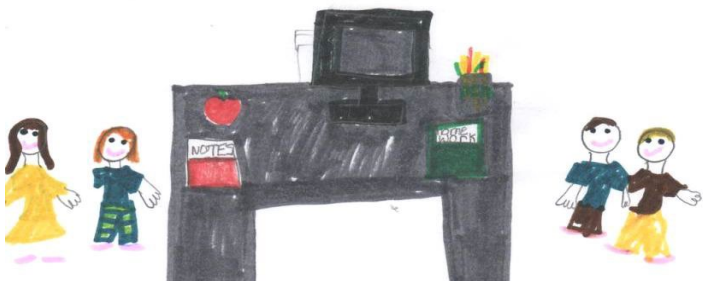
If you would like to contact the entire Board of Education, please email them at:
emailtheboe@blindbrook.org

BOARD MEETINGS

Board Workshop Sessions - The purpose of Board Workshops is to review with the Superintendent, on a regular basis, policy making matters that relate to the district's educational services, finance administration, facilities supervision, and personnel/legal administration. Resolutions and related decisions for the Board's public meeting the following Monday are reviewed and discussed in detail. All Board Workshops are open to the public. Public participation on agenda items is strongly encouraged for all workshop sessions. Only personnel matters and issues related to contracts, negotiations, tax certiorari and those items specifically designated by law will be reserved for executive session and the public will not participate.

Public Board Meetings - Public Board Meetings will include citizens' comments, resolutions and items for discussion in the areas of Educational Services, Finance Administration, Personnel Administration and, where appropriate, an Attorney's Report. A brief educational presentation, highlighting one of the several components of the district's educational program, will be provided on a regular basis. Meetings are usually held once or twice a month at 7:30 p.m. in the Monroe E. Hass IMC (BBHS Library), unless otherwise noted.

Board of Education Policy
1510 Adopted 10-20-08



Who's Who in the Blind Brook District? (continued)

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The *Superintendent of Schools in the Blind Brook-Rye UFSD* is Dr. Brian Alm. He is responsible for the effective operation of the District; general administration of all instructional, business or other operations of the District; and for advising and making recommendations to the Board of Education with respect to such activities. If you are interested in making an appointment with the Superintendent, please contact Dr. Alm's secretary, Vivian Groccia, at ext. 1001.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

The *Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment* in the Blind Brook-Rye UFSD is Mr. Seth Horowitz. He is responsible for advancing a collaborative program of review, evaluation, development, and implementation of the K-12 curriculum, and associated assessments and instructional practices; fostering the articulation and alignment of the instructional program; nurturing a comprehensive program of professional development aimed at continuous instructional and programmatic improvement. If you are interested in making an appointment with Mr. Horowitz, you may reach him at ext. 1004 or shorowitz@blindbrook.org

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR FINANCE & FACILITIES

The Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Facilities is Ms. Laurie Baum. She is responsible for the business office and has the responsibility for all financial and facilities management operations. The Department's primary functions include: the preparation and management of the District's annual budget, accounting and auditing services, facilities management and capital construction, employee payroll and benefits administration, pupil transportation, and school food service. Ms. Baum can be reached at ext. 1003.

- If you have any questions or concerns about ***transportation***, please contact our Head of Transportation, Mr. Juan Zhindon, at ext. 2441.
- If you have any questions or concerns about ***facilities***, please contact our Director of Facilities, Mr. Luis Rodriguez, at ext. 4450.
- If you have any questions or concerns about ***finance***, please contact our Treasurer, Ms. Tiana Truong, at ext. 1012.

DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY

The *Director of Technology* is Mr. Charles Von Hollen. He is responsible for all computer and audio-visual technology in the district. Southern Westchester BOCES provides engineering support. Mr. Von Hollen chairs the Technology Committee, a Board-appointed committee consisting of administrators, teachers, community members and a board representative. They meet monthly to construct the district technology plan, establish goals and evaluate the District's progress in meeting those goals. If you wish to contact Mr. Von Hollen, you may reach him at ext. 1005.

PUPIL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The *Director of Pupil Services*, Alexandra Lafontaine-Casabona, is responsible for all programs for students with disabilities and health services in the school district. Ms. Lafontaine-Casabona can be reached at ext. 1008 or email at acasabona@blindbrook.org.

The *Assistant Director of Pupil Services*, Jennifer Castelli, assists Mrs. Lafontaine-Casabona. Mrs. Castelli can be reached at ext. 4504. You may contact her assistant, Tracey Parsehian, at ext. 4503, or email tparsehian@blindbrook.org with any questions.

DIRECTOR OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION, HEALTH AND INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Mr. Gregory Warren is responsible for all aspects of the District's Physical Education, Health Education and Interscholastic Athletics programs including developing and evaluating the department's academic program and budget, program management, hiring and evaluation of coaches, team scheduling, and student selection and discipline. Mr. Warren can be reached at ext. 4500 or gwarren@blindbrook.org.

DISTRICT REGISTRATION

District Registration is handled online. Please visit our website for further information or click HERE.

Who's Who at BMP Ridge Street School?

PRINCIPAL

The *Principal*, Tracy Taylor, is responsible for all aspects of the BMP Ridge Street School including curriculum, personnel, and student and parent affairs. Parents may make appointments by contacting Ms. Taylor's secretary, Mrs. Patricia Shaw, at ext. 2098. You may also contact the Main Office at ext. 2199 or ridgestreetmainoffice@blindbrook.org.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

The *Assistant Principal*, Dr. Teresa Letizia, will provide additional supervision in the building and assist the principal with administrative responsibilities. Parents may make appointments by contacting the Main Office at ext. 2199 or ridgestreetmainoffice@blindbrook.org.

SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELORS

The *Guidance Counselor*, Katarina Pumarejo, is responsible for all aspects of the guidance program in grades K-5. The counselor's function is to assist students with academic and personal concerns. The goal is to help students realize their academic potential and make informed decisions regarding their studies. Another goal is to help students explore options available to resolve personal and social issues. Parents may make appointments to discuss any concerns they may have by calling Ms. Pumarejo's office at ext. 2510 or kpumarejo@blindbrook.org.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Our *School Psychologists* are Nicole Hirschler and Tania Insinga. They work closely with the guidance counselor to assist students with their academic and personal needs and are responsible for all individual psychological testing. The school psychologists also provide confidential counseling for students experiencing personal problems, such as drug and alcohol issues or interpersonal difficulties at school or elsewhere. They are available to provide individual or group counseling, to refer students to outside agencies or to provide parent consultations. Mrs. Hirschler can be reached at ext. 2518 or nhirschler@blindbrook.org and Mrs. Insinga can be reached at ext. 2311 or tinsinga@blindbrook.org.

SCHOOL NURSE

The *School Nurse* is responsible for all matters relating to individual student health issues, including verifying medical excuses, monitoring individual student health matters, emergency intervention, and special programs related to student health. We are fortunate to have two nurses at our school to help throughout the week – Nurse Frannie, Nurse Tara, and Nurse Adora. You may reach the nurses in the health office at ext. 2217 or rssnurse@blindbrook.org.

HEAD CUSTODIAN AT BMP RIDGE STREET SCHOOL

Luis Marin-Martinez is the Head Custodian at BMP Ridge Street School. The PTA will need to contact the BMPRSS Maintenance Staff if anything needs to be set up for events or work requests at our facility. Requests may be made via email rssmaintenance@blindbrook.org.

2026-27 FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS

KINDERGARTEN
Anna Fagan
Geri Fisher
Karen Johnson
Christina Mangiaracina & Jessica Yablow
Stephanie Taylor

GRADE 1
Keri Fischer & Susan Marvin
Michelle Forzaglia
Hannah Kline
Shannon LaRoche
Christine Rickard

GRADE 2
Amy Blumstein
Kerri James
Lisa Krouskoff
Lisa Mecca
Nicol Pirrazzi & Cara Deegan



GRADE 3
Stephen DeFabbia
Kristie Fon
Kirsten McCorry
Dan Sottile
Michele Wickman & Laura Hollis

GRADE 4
Penny Litchfield
Brittany Martins & Daniela Petrino
Chrissie Onofrio
Monique Pedersen
Marc Pisani

GRADE 5
Sue Anne Fava (ELA/SS)
Tina Fernandez (Math/Science)
Joe Mancuso (ELA/SS)
Kristin Napolitano (Math/Science) & Brigit Hurley

SPECIAL EDUCATION
Heather DiPaola
Danielle Manich
Colleen McLaughlin

SPECIALS TEACHERS
Steve Forzaglia (Physical Education & Grade 5 Health)
Lynzy Quinlan (Physical Education)
Asley Venuto (Physical Education & Mindfulness)
Greg DiMiceli (General Music)
Melissa Quartararo (Gr. 4 & 5 Instrumental Band)
Amanda Eckert (Young Engineers)
Betsy Murphy (Art)
Tracy Asencio (Computer)
Celine Zatarga (Library)
Jasminne Paulino (FLES-Spanish)

AIS & ENRICHMENT
Kerry Walker (AIS ELA Gr. K-5; ELA Enrichment K-5)
Collen McLaughlin (AIS ELA Gr. K-5)
TBD (AIS Math Gr. K-5; Math Enrichment K-5)

ENL
Ingrid Merli (ENL)

SPECIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS
Katarina Pumarejo (Guidance Counselor)
Nicole Hirschler (School Psychologist)
Tania Insinga (School Psychologist)
Heidi Hansen (Speech-Language Pathologist)
Colleen Morgan (Speech-Language Pathologist)
Melysa Diament (Occupational Therapist)
Melissa Infantino (Occupational Therapist)
Joe Kiefer (Occupational Therapist)
Lacey Straub (Occupational Therapist)

OFFICE STAFF
Patricia Shaw (Secretary to the Principal)
Tara Troxler-Thomas (Sr. Office Assistant)
Matthias Fried (Main Office Assistant)

SCHOOL MONITORS
Charles Fierro (Afternoon/Evening)
Jeff Krivinskas (Daytime)
Mark Taub (Daytime)

MAINTENANCE/BUS DRIVERS
Luis Marin-Martinez (Maintenance Foreman)
Lorenzo Carcamo (Custodian/Bus Driver)
Wagner Hidalgo (Custodian/Bus Driver)
Steve Mecca (Custodian/Bus Driver)
Javier Medina (Night Custodian)
Israel Olvera (Custodian/Bus Driver)
Giovanny Restrepo-Angulo (Custodian/Bus Driver)
Juan Zhindon (Transportation Director)

You may contact any of our faculty by email using the first initial of his/her first name and his/her entire last name @blindbrook.org

For example: John Smith would be jsmith@blindbrook.org

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSPORTATION



Art by Jack R.
Kindergarten

Transportation will be provided for all resident children who legally attend public, private or parochial school from 0.75 to 15 miles from their homes, as required by State Education Law. Any student in kindergarten through 5th grade will be eligible if he or she lives more than 0.75 miles from the school and a student in grades 6-12 will be eligible if he or she lives more than 1.5 miles from the school. The measurement is made from the home driveway to the school driveway along the shortest route. Any resident, now living in the district, who applies on or before April 1 of each year will be provided with transportation if they meet the above mileage criteria; the District will accept late applications if a reasonable explanation is provided, as required by law. New residents will need certified proof of the date of residence and will be provided transportation only if applications are filed within 30 days after moving into the district, and in accordance with Chapter 3635 of the New York State Education Law.

Board of Education Policy 5720
Adopted 10-20-08

SCHOOL BUS SCHEDULING AND ROUTING

School Bus Scheduling and Routing: Bus routes will be established under the direction of the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Facilities in cooperation with the District transportation facilitator.

1. **Authorized bus stops:** These will be located at convenient intervals in places where students may board and disembark, cross roadways, and await the arrival of buses with the utmost safety allowed by road conditions.
2. **Fixed Stops:** Fixed bus stops will be established using the following guidelines: a. Numbers of students at bus stops will be varied according to the concentration of riders in an area, the degree of traffic, and bus turn-around requirements. b. An effort will be made to minimize crossing of the road by students.
3. **Private Roads:** Transportation will not be provided on roadways that have not been dedicated and/or maintained by town, county, and/or state highway departments.
4. **Turn Arounds:** Turn arounds will not be established unless adequate space is available, and this space is properly maintained. No turnaround will be permitted if it requires the bus to be backed up to make the turn.
5. **District Map:** Maps will be used in determining the transportation requirements necessary to satisfy the needs established by state law, Board policy and voter mandate. This map will clearly show student location, loading and unloading locations, and routes traveled. The map will be reviewed annually.

Board of Education Policy 5720
Adopted 10-20-08

PLAYDATES ON BUSES

Playdates are allowed on buses during full days of school. *You must provide a note for your child on the morning of the specific day your child will be riding the bus with his/her friend.* Under no circumstances is the note to go directly to the bus driver. The note MUST be brought into school, and it will be checked by your child's teacher. The note will be returned to your child at the end of the day so that your child gives it to the bus driver when he/she gets on the bus in the afternoon.

Playdates are not allowed on buses on half-days of school or early dismissal days.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The Superintendent of Schools may close the schools or dismiss students/staff early when hazardous weather or other emergencies threaten health or safety. Parents are requested to avoid calling schools on days of poor weather. It is important to keep school phone lines open. **Parents will be notified regarding emergency closings through our Emergency Response System, *School Messenger*.** Parents will be contacted by phone and/or email. School closings and delayed starting times will be announced over local radio stations, as well as posted on the district web site, www.blindbrook.org, and district television stations. The following radio stations will carry information regarding emergency closings:

WFAS - AM 1230kh WGCH - AM 1490kh WHUD - FM 100.7mh

If no report is heard, it can be assumed the schools are opening/closing on time.



RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

The Board of Education recognizes that school will occasionally be in session on days during which students and their families must be absent to practice their religious beliefs. Accordingly, the Board of Education directs the faculty and staff to make every effort to facilitate the exercise of students' religious beliefs without placing them in a compromising position relative to school based academic and other expectations.

When a student and/or his/her family notifies the school that a student will be absent for religious reasons, the school will make accommodations in testing and test review procedures on a case-by-case basis. These accommodations may include re-scheduling a specific test for an individual student, providing notes or tape recordings of review sessions, providing make-up review sessions, and the like.

Board of Education Policy 7110
Adopted 10-19-09

SAFETY DRILLS

FIRE DRILLS

The Principal or his/her designee is responsible for conducting fire drills in order to instruct students and staff in exiting the school building during an emergency in the shortest time possible and without confusion and panic. Fire drills will include instructions on fire drill exits and fire alarm boxes, as well as fire drill procedures. Schools are required to conduct drills every year. Most are unannounced in order to provide meaningful practice.

All students are expected to cooperate with staff members during fire drills, and to leave the buildings in a quiet and orderly manner. The exit route is posted in each room. Students must stay with their teacher. Distracting behavior will be subject to either teacher or administrative disciplinary action, according to the Discipline Code.

HOLD-IN-PLACE DRILLS

Hold in place drills are conducted throughout the school year. Hold in place drills prepare students and faculty for situations in which they need to find shelter away from windows and glass. The students are well-informed of these drills and are expected to cooperate with staff members. Distracting behavior will be subject to either teacher or administrative disciplinary action, according to the Discipline Code.

SEURE LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Secure lockdown drills are conducted during the school year. These drills prepare students and faculty for situations in which the school needs to be secured due to an intruder in the building. All classrooms are locked and secured while faculty and students remain in the classrooms. The students are well-informed of these drills and are expected to cooperate with staff members. Distracting behavior will be subject to either teacher or administrative disciplinary action, according to the Discipline Code.

SCHOOL HOURS

The regular school day at BMP Ridge Street School is from 8:30am - 3:10pm Our instructional day starts promptly at 8:30am. Please make sure that children arrive prior to 8:30am to give them time to get settled in to start their day. This will help avoid unnecessary anxiety.



Children can be dropped off starting at 7:45am They will be supervised by our early arrival staff until 8:10am. At 8:10am, all students will be directed to their classrooms:

Any student who arrives after 8:35am must sign in at the front desk and will be marked tardy.

*If you need any further arrival information, please go to the section marked **ARRIVAL PROCEDURES** for more information.*

Students are dismissed from class at 3:10pm.

*If you need to pick up your child early, please go to the section marked **DISMISSAL PROCEDURES** for more information.*

SCHOOL VISITORS

In our effort to maintain a safe and secure environment, all school visitors must enter through the school's main entrance, sign in at the security desk, and wear an ORANGE VISITOR BADGE LANYARD with PHOTO ID STICKER while they are in the building.

All visitors must use the Main Entrance to enter and exit the building and must keep their Visitor Badge Lanyard visible at all times. This lanyard will help visitors keep their badge visible throughout their visit and make it easier for students, faculty, staff, and administrators to recognize approved visitors.

Before leaving the building through the Main Entrance, all visitors must return the ORANGE VISITOR BADGE LANYARD with PHOTO ID STICKER to the School Monitor Office.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and secure environment for everyone in our school.

2026-2027 ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

BUS:

School buses will run on the first day of school. All bus stops information and bus stop times will be posted on the Parent Portal. If you have any questions about bus stops or pick-up/drop-off times, please email Mr. Juan Zhindon, our Head of Transportation, at jzhindon@blindbrook.org

Buses will arrive in the Bus Circle Lot. Students will come off the bus and head into the door next to the Main Entrance to enter the building. Staff members will be inside the building and will help the children get to their classrooms.

DROP-OFF (CARS AND VEHICLES)

Our instructional day starts promptly at 8:30 AM. Morning drop-off will be at the front of our school. Please make sure that children arrive prior to 8:30AM to give them time to get settled in to start their day. This will avoid unnecessary anxiety. *The earliest a child can be dropped off is 7:45 AM.*

Please note:

- Please drive slowly and cautiously while on school grounds and arrange for children to depart from vehicles on the passenger side.
- Drivers should NOT get out of their vehicles.
- One of our staff members will help your child out of your vehicle.
- Please make sure that children have their belongings before they exit the vehicle – This helps speed up the arrival process.
- Do not pass the vehicles in front of you at any time.
- Please stay in line and wait your turn.
- Once the car directly in front of you moves, please proceed ahead. After you have dropped off your child, please exit with EXTREME CAUTION and watch for signals from traffic monitors.
- ***Vehicles (excluding buses) will ONLY be allowed to turn right when exiting the campus.***

Children will enter the building in one of these two entrances:

Grade Levels	Entrances
Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, & Grade 3	Old Gym Entrance
Grade 4 and Grade 5	Side Door near the 4th/5th Grade Wing

WALKING AND BIKING TO SCHOOL

Children will enter the building in one of these three entrances:

Grade Levels	Entrances
Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, & Grade 3	Old Gym Entrance
Grade 4 and Grade 5	Side Door near the 4th/5th Grade Wing
Kindergarten, Grades 1-5	Sleepy Hollow Rd. Gate – Door near K/1 Wing

There is a bike rack at the front of the school near the Old Gym Entrance. If your child bikes to school, they will need a bike lock. They can leave their bike there and proceed to their grade-level entrance.

2026-2027 DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Our instructional day ends at 3:10 PM.

If there are ANY CHANGES to your child's dismissal your child MUST have a note written by a parent/guardian. If there is NO NOTE, the change will NOT be honored, and your child will go home as usual.

Please go to our school website for the Change of Dismissal form. You may access it here.

BUS:

When buses arrive, students will be escorted by our staff to their appropriate buses, which are lined up in the lower lot. If no one is home, your child will be brought back to school.

N.B.S.: (Non-Eligible Bus Students)

These procedures are ONLY for families who are NOT eligible to use our bus service (as per Board of Education Policy 8410 Adopted 09-26-88, Amended 05-18-04.)

Non-bus eligible families will receive a N.B.S. tag. Only vehicles with tags will be allowed in the N.B.S. Lanes in the front lanes of our school. Please display your tag on your rearview mirror so the Traffic Monitor can easily see it. At the N.B.S. location, you can remain in your car and your child is brought out to you. Please refer to the chart below for N.B.S. pick-up locations. ***NOTE: Vehicles (excluding buses) will ONLY be allowed to turn right when exiting the campus.***

PICK UP:

If you need to pick up your child at dismissal time (i.e.: you are bus eligible, but you have decided that your child will not be riding the bus), we are asking that you arrive shortly before 3:10 pm.

Pick-up will be on the blacktop for children in grades K-5. The only way to access the blacktop is via the Sleepy Hollow path on Sleepy Hollow Road. There is limited parking on campus, but if you decide to park your car on campus you will need to walk around the block on Sleepy Hollow Road to access the blacktop via the Sleepy Hollow path. You may choose to park your car on the side streets, but you must adhere to traffic/parking rules. Do not park in neighbors' driveways, do not block any driveways, and do not double park. Rye Brook Police is aware of the additional vehicles and walkers around this area. *Do not park your vehicle in the Bus Circle Parking Lot and walk to pick up your child. This lot is for staff parking only*. ***NOTE: Vehicles (excluding buses) will ONLY be allowed to turn right when exiting the campus.***

If you are picking up your child any time during the school day PRIOR to dismissal time, please park in the designated parking areas and go to the Main Entrance to sign them out early.

WALKING AND BIKING FROM SCHOOL

Children in Grades 4 and 5 will be able to walk home or bike home as a parent has given permission by completing the permission form. "Walkers" may use the door by the 4th/5th grade wing (North Ridge Street) or the path by the Sleepy Hollow gate. Students who are younger than 4th grade should not be walking home by himself/herself.

Please look on our school website for the walking and biking permission forms. You may access them HERE. These forms need to be completed and returned to your child's teacher.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL
REMINDERS FOR EVERYONE!

ARRIVAL:

- Please drive slowly and cautiously while on school grounds and arrange for children to depart from vehicles on the passenger side.
- Drivers should NOT get out of their vehicles.
- One of our staff members will help your child out of your vehicle.
- Please make sure that children have their belongings before they exit the vehicle – This helps speed up the arrival process.
- Do not pass the vehicles in front of you at any time.
- Please stay in line and wait your turn.
- Once the car directly in front of you moves, please proceed ahead. After you have dropped off your child, please exit with EXTREME CAUTION and watch for signals from traffic monitors.
- ***Vehicles (excluding buses) will ONLY be allowed to turn right when exiting the campus.***

DISMISSAL:

- ***If there are ANY CHANGES to your child's dismissal your child MUST have a note written by a parent/guardian. If there is NO NOTE, the change will NOT be honored, and your child will go home as usual.***
  Please go to our school website for the Change of Dismissal form. You may access it here.
- Pick-Up: ***Do not park your vehicle in the Bus Circle Parking Lot and walk to pick up your child. This lot is for staff parking only.*** If you decide to park your car on campus in one of the visitor parking spots, you will need to walk around the block through the Sleepy Hollow Road gate to access the blacktop via the Sleepy Hollow path. You may choose to park your car on the side streets, but you must adhere to traffic/parking rules.
- ***Vehicles (excluding buses) will ONLY be allowed to turn right when exiting the campus.***

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Our school runs on a six-day cycle – A B C D E F – which allows our students to take advantage of our different specials programs (Physical Education, Library, Art, Music, Computer, and Young Engineers.)

All classes have an **HRE** period – **H**ome**r**oom **E**nrichment. This is a designated time during the day when students leave the classroom for special programs or services (e.g.: Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, Academic Intervention Services (AIS) instruction, IMPACT). The students who remain in the classroom will be with their teacher for small group instruction.

All classes are scheduled for "Specials" each day. These Specials classes are: Physical Education, Art, Music, Library, Computer (Grades 1-5 only), Young Engineers, and Health (Grade 5 only). Some classes are scheduled for more than one special day.

We have a 4th grade and 5th grade Instrumental Band Program. Students will choose their instrument and attend lessons/band practice at designated times during the day.

Our K-4 classes are self-contained which means that one teacher teaches several content areas. These content areas include: **E**nglish **L**anguage **A**rts (ELA), Math, Social Studies, and Science.

Our 5th grade is departmentalized. The students will have one teacher for ELA & Social Studies, and another teacher for Math & Science. The following is the 5th grade schedule:

Grade 5 Schedule

Arrival	8:30
ELA & SS or Math & Science	8:40 – 10:40
Special	10:45 – 11:25
Lunch and Recess	11:25 – 12:25
ELA & SS or Math & Science	12:25 – 2:25
HRE	2:25 – 3:05
Dismissal	3:10

KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE

There will be an adjusted schedule for the first day of Kindergarten on Tuesday, September 2nd. The Kindergarten students will arrive at school at 9:30am., one hour later than usual. This allows our students to enter our school without the other students. Our Kindergarten students will be dismissed at 3:10pm.



REPORTING STUDENT ABSENCE

Parents/Guardians are required to contact the following offices if their child is absent from school:

1. Health Office/School Nurse - 937-3600 ext. 2217 OR rssnurse@blindbrook.org
2. BMPRSS Attendance Office - rssattendance@blindbrook.org
3. Child's teacher via email

Please try to schedule all appointments outside the school day so students do not miss instructional time.

STUDENT LATENESS

Students who enter the school building after 8:35am must sign in at the security desk in the main lobby. If students do not sign in when they are late, they will be marked absent. Parents are asked, if possible, to please try to schedule all appointments outside the school day so students do not miss instructional time.

CHANGE IN DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Change of Dismissal Form: If you are making a change to your child's regular dismissal routine, please use the CHANGE OF DISMISSAL FORM. This form should be sent in with your child so that he/she can give it to the classroom teacher. Please do not send an email to the Main Office or your child's teacher, as this may result in the notification not getting to your child or the teacher. Making plans the day before will ensure a smooth dismissal and ease any anxiety with your child.

CLICK HERE FOR THE CHANGE OF DISMISSAL FORM *NOTE: If large group after school activities are cancelled (i.e.: PTA ASA, Rye Brook Recreation After School Program, or Rye Brook Recreation Youth Sport Activities), your child will go home according to his/her regular dismissal routine. For example, if your child's after school soccer team practice is cancelled and he/she normally takes the bus home, then he/she will go home on the bus.*

MESSAGES TO STUDENTS

We ask that parents minimize the number of messages they leave for students. Anything important that students need to know for the day should be discussed before coming to school in the morning. Of course, if there is an ***urgent need*** to relay a message to a student, parents may call the Main Office at ext. 2199.

LOST AND FOUND

Any student who loses articles should go to the Lost and Found area in front of the Cafetorium. Anyone who finds articles should check to see if there is a name inside. If there is a name on the item, please bring the item to the Main Office. If there is no name, please bring it to the Lost and Found bin.

USE OF SCHOOL LIFT

The school lift is only available to students and teachers by prior arrangement and for special circumstances.

BICYCLE RACK

There is a bike rack at the front of the school near North Ridge Street by the Old Gym entrance. If your child bikes to school, they will need a bike lock. They can leave their bike there and proceed to their grade-level entrance. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles.

FOOD SERVICES

The Blind Brook School District takes the health and nutrition of its students very seriously. A nutrition committee comprised of faculty, staff, and students reviews the food services in Blind Brook, makes recommendations to the Board of Education and creates the district's Wellness Policy. To learn more about our Nutrition Committee, the Wellness Policy and our award-winning food service vendor--Aramark—please contact the Aramark's representative aramark@blindbrook.org.

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink may be consumed at lunchtime in the cafetorium. Food and drinks are not permitted in the computer lab. Students should bring a water bottle with their name on it to be used at our refillable water stations throughout the building.



WE ARE A NUT AWARE SCHOOL! *NUT ALLERGIES: Students should not bring peanuts, peanut butter or any other nut products to school or school events. If there is a situation or possibility where nuts are brought into the school, please contact the school nurse immediately.*

Students are members of the school community and have a role in maintaining the facilities. Students are expected to work cooperatively to leave a clean area at the end of lunch.

COMPUTER USE

Students, teachers, staff and administration must abide by the district's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) at all times. Computers are to be used for educational purposes. Students whose teacher has reserved the library for research have priority in using computers as the class requires. As available, computers are open to students for drop-in use.

RECYCLING



There are recycling containers in every classroom, in the lunchroom, and at various locations around the school building. We strongly encourage you to speak with your children about the importance of recycling and continue to make them aware of materials that can be recycled.

DISRUPTIVE DEVICES/ITEMS

Any equipment/item that interferes with the educational environment or is deemed unsafe is not permitted in the school building or on the school grounds at any time.

The following items are specifically not permitted:

- Skateboards or rollerblades
- Backpacks with rolling wheels
- Rollers on shoes
- Hand-held video games (i.e.: Gameboy, etc.)
- Cell phones or Smartwatches (i.e.: Watch that receives messages, can communicate outside of school, etc.)
- Clickers
- Personal iPod/ iTouch/iPad/Kindles etc.
- Any item (toys, etc.) that resembles a weapon of any kind
- Toys and collectibles (Silly Banz, trading cards, Pokeman cards, any popular/trendy item, etc.) - These items should be left at home and are especially not to be brought to school unless authorized by a member of the BMPRSS administration, faculty, or staff. Trading of these items is also not permitted.

NOTE:
This list is not exclusive and any other item that is unsafe or disruptive to the educational process will be prohibited.

CAMERAS AND RECORDING DEVICES

Cameras and recording devices may be used in class only with prior approval of the teacher. We understand that there are a lot of phones and devices that have the capability to take photos or videos. Students are not permitted to take photos or videos of other students in school, are not permitted to record anything in the classroom, on school property, or on the school bus. If a student is witnessed doing this, the device may be confiscated.

HATS/CAPS

Hats are not permitted to be worn inside the school building.

CELL PHONE USE

In alignment with New York State's Distraction-Free Schools Law (NY Education Law § 2803), ***"Students cannot use devices like smartphones, tablets, and smartwatches (or any device accessing the internet) on school grounds from the start of the school day until the end, including all instructional and non-instructional time."*** This applies even if the internet or WiFi is turned off. These items must remain off and out of sight during school hours.

Students are not allowed to use their cell phones during the school day. The cell phone must be OFF and OUT OF SIGHT during the school day, which includes lunch and recess. We do not encourage students to use their phone to make dismissal plans which alter their current dismissal plan. Any changes in dismissal must be made, and communicated, through the main office. Cell phones or other hand-held devices are not to be used by students to take photos of students, faculty, or staff – whether in school, on the school bus, or at the school bus stop. Cell phones that are visible, audible or otherwise in use during the school day will be confiscated for parent pick-up. The school is NOT responsible for lost or stolen cell phones.

SMARTWATCHES

Students are not allowed to use their Smartwatch during the school day. The Smartwatch must be OFF and OUT OF SIGHT during the school day, which includes lunch and recess. Smartwatches that are visible, audible or otherwise in use during the school day will be confiscated for parent pick-up. The school is NOT responsible for lost or stolen smartwatches.

CARE OF BOOKS

Students are held strictly accountable for the care of books issued to them and are charged the full replacement value for damage or loss.

LOST OR DAMAGED LIBRARY MATERIALS

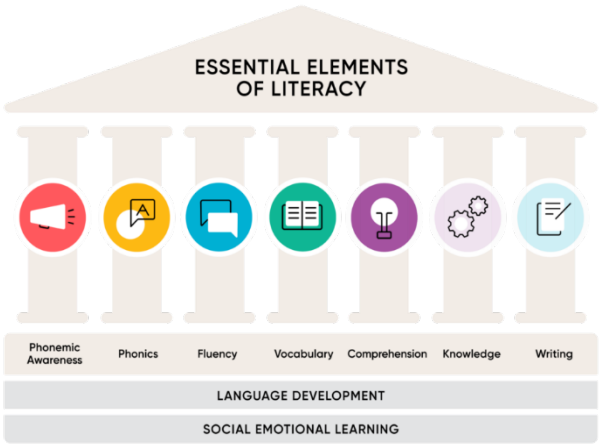
Students must reimburse the school district for lost or damaged library materials. Any student who does not clear his/her library account jeopardizes the receipt of his/her final report card.



BMP Ridge Street School Curriculum Overview

HMH Into Reading Program

The Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School has adopted HMH's *Into Reading* Program in 2023. The *Into Reading* curriculum is built from the ground up, using the latest literacy research to ensure every student learns to read and write with confidence. The curriculum is based on research in the essential elements of literacy. Through HMH *Into Reading*, students have access to award-winning and high interest texts to help build background knowledge. Teachers access to *Into Reading*'s robust assessment data gives them the information they need to differentiate reading instruction and monitor student progress toward literacy goals.



HMH programs build on the five pillars of literacy—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Reflecting the latest research, our programs also integrate background knowledge, writing, language development, and SEL (Social-Emotional Learning.) It builds foundational reading skills and comprehension, moving from simple to complex through a systematic scope and sequence.

Achieve the Core defines foundational reading skills as:

- **Print concepts**: includes letter recognition, features and organization of print, and one-to-one correspondence of words
- **Phonological awareness**: is entirely oral, focuses on the sounds of the spoken language, and includes phonemic awareness
- **Phonics and word recognition**: refers to learning sound and spelling patterns needed to recognize, decode (read), and encode (spell) words
- **Fluency**: in reading is the ability to read accurately, at an appropriate rate, and with expression

Texts at the heart of *Into Reading's* instruction emphasize cross-curricular content throughout a student's literacy journey, building background knowledge and vocabulary across topics and grade levels. Background knowledge is a key aspect of reading, as students will more readily derive meaning from a text if they already have a general sense about the topic at hand. The more they read and the more information they encounter in the course of their lives, whether at home or in school, the more they will know. For more information on the elements of reading and literature, please click here.

The HMH *Into Reading* Writing Workshop focuses on the writing process and the use of mentor texts, emphasizing student ownership of their own writing. Grammar is most effectively taught in the context of writing instruction. The revising and editing stages of the writing process present the best opportunities for students to master the grammar skills needed to write strong, clear sentences.

Curated, authentic literature combines with the *Into Reading myBook* to spark students' imaginations, inspire reflection, and facilitate point-of-use annotation. As students learn to dig deeper, ask the essential questions, and make connections between the texts they're reading and the world around them, they internalize productive learning habits—and start to develop a lifelong love of reading

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS – WILSON READING PROGRAMS

The *Wilson Reading System* explicitly and systematically teaches students how to fluently and accurately decode and spell. Unlike traditional phonics programs, Wilson instruction is very interactive and multisensory.

Wilson Fundations is implemented in Kindergarten. It is a supplemental phonics/spelling program delivered to all students in 25-30 minute daily lessons. *Wilson Fundations* is used with our existing literature-based reading instruction to provide a comprehensive language arts program. The program addresses each of the five essential components for reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.) Students in grades 1 and 2 receive phonics instruction through the *Into Reading* Program as well as follow-up *Fundations* lessons.

MATHEMATICS – enVisionMATH Program

enVisionMATH is directly aligned to the New York State Learning Standards. A focused and coherent mathematics program like *enVisionMATH* provides in-depth instruction on of important categories, giving students a better understanding of mathematics content. It extends focus and coherence by making explicit the *Big Ideas* in mathematics that students need to know and by showing how these ideas are related. A *Big Idea* in mathematics is a statement of an idea that is central to learning mathematics; it links numerous smaller ideas into a coherent whole. *Big Ideas* run across critical areas and grades in the *enVisionMATH* Program; they connect across content topics, and this is one reason they are "big." To convey the power of *Big Ideas* to students, they are translated into student-friendly Essential Questions presented at the beginning of each topic. Essential Questions focus students' attention on what they will be able to do and understand at the end of a topic.

Research says that for all content areas, conceptual understanding, computational fluency, and problem-solving skills are each essential and mutually reinforcing, influencing performance on such varied tasks as estimation, word problems, and computation (National Mathematics Advisory Panel). *enVisionMATH* provides problem solving skills and strategies taught in problem-solving lessons, the problem solving process, problem-based interactive learning, and a variety of problem-solving exercises.

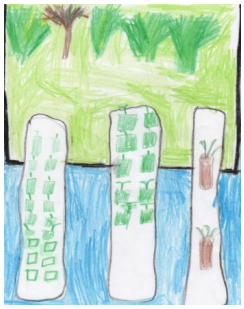
enVisionMATH provides frequent assessment opportunities – at the start of a year, at the start of a topic, during a lesson, at the end of a lesson, at the end of the topic, and at the end of the year. It also provides solid and effective intervention and differentiation that makes it easy for us to respond to students' individual needs.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) Education encourages a curriculum that is built around active engagement of students in problem solving.

enVisionMATH offers our students the opportunities to use mathematics to solve real-life problems in science. These opportunities are highlighted so teachers can easily find them throughout the units of study and can share them with our students.

"...Students have different abilities, needs, and interests, yet everyone needs to be able to use mathematics in his or her personal life, in the workplace, and in further study. All students deserve an opportunity to understand the power and beauty of mathematics. Students need to learn a new set of mathematics basics that enable them to compute fluently and to solve problems creatively and resourcefully..." NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.) Our goal at Ridge Street is that our students leave us with a deeper understanding of mathematics, not just an understanding of mathematics on the surface level.

SCIENCE



Art by Emma S.

Our teachers are using a hands-on, investigative science kit - *Science 21* - in our classrooms.

SCIENCE 21 is an integrated K-6 science curriculum developed locally and regionally at the Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES. It is a science program designed by teachers for teachers. It is linked to the *New York State Learning Standards for Mathematics, Science and Technology*. The program's major emphasis is on investigations that are student directed and relevant to students' everyday lives. The program's main focus is on hands-on, inquiry-based science, and math, language arts and technology are integrated at points where they fit naturally. SCIENCE 21 achieves a balance between process and content and is supported by kits and staff development.

Some of our teachers have implemented a hands-on, interactive science program called *Mystery Science*. Mystery Science is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Each lesson is aligned to a topic, performance expectations, science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts. Each grade level explores Life Science, Earth and Space, and Physical Science.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Our teachers are using the Integrated Social Studies/English Language Arts Curriculum through the Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES Curriculum Council. The New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies and English Language Arts, and the New York State Education Department Social Studies Scope and Sequence Content Understandings were used as a framework for unit development. The curriculum is based on child-centered learning experiences and connected to the local, regional, and state communities. The curriculum includes models at the primary level of the types of questions found on the past New York State Fifth Grade Assessments: Multiple Choice Questions, Constructed Response Questions and Document Based Questions. All of the skills identified by the New York State Education Department in Social Studies and English Language Arts that a child in the primary grades should possess are also incorporated into the lessons. These include: encouraging higher order thinking skills, involving collaborative learning, using information sources that could not be found elsewhere, or are not as rich, engaging the research spirit, utilizing real-time data, and having real world connections.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT TEAM (MTSS)

The Multi-Tiered System of Support Team (MTSS) is comprised of administrators, teachers, and student support providers (e.g.: school psychologists, guidance counselors, AIS teachers, Occupational Therapists, etc.) The members of MTSS will support teachers for the purpose of implementing strategies in the classroom for any student who needs additional help, whether it is academic support or behavioral support. The classroom teacher will inform the student's family if he/she decides to seek help from the MTSS.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES (AIS)

What are Academic Intervention Services? Academic Intervention Services (otherwise known as AIS) have been mandated by the state to help students achieve the state learning standards in English language arts and mathematics in grades K-12. The services include additional instruction that supplements the general curriculum and provides students with the skills that they need to be successful in school. The intensity of such services will vary depending on the needs of the individual student. The services are designed to respond to student needs as indicated through the results on State assessments and/or the district approved criteria at each grade level. Additional instruction means the provision of extra time for focused instruction, and, for some students, increased student-teacher instructional contact time designed to help students achieve state learning standards. Academic Intervention Services shall be made available to students with disabilities on the same basis as non-disabled students, provided, however, that such services shall be made available to the extent consistent with the students' individualized education plans.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION - English Language Arts

Students who score below the designated performance levels on state and NCLB assessments in English Language Arts, and those at risk of not meeting State standards as indicated through district-adopted criteria which will include multiple assessments/sources of evidence are eligible for participation in the program. Students will end their participation in the program when the level of their knowledge and skill meets the exit criteria set for them at entry.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION – Mathematics

Students who score below the designated performance levels on state and NCLB assessments in mathematics, and those at risk of not meeting State standards as indicated through district-adopted criteria which will include multiple assessments/sources of evidence are eligible for participation in the program. Students will end their participation in the program when the level of their knowledge and skill meets the exit criteria set for them at entry.

ENL/ELL

English as a New Language (ENL) is a specially designed program for students who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Any student whose first language is not English and who has not yet developed the English language proficiency needed for social and academic success in our school is eligible for the program. Proficiency is determined by an evaluative process approved by the State Education Department. Our ENL teacher is Ingrid Merli. You can contact her at imerli@blindbrook.org.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES AND REPORT CARDS

There are four reporting periods where you will be given feedback on your child's progress:

November/December	–	Parent-Teacher Conferences
February	–	Report Card
April/May	–	Parent-Teacher Conferences
June	–	Report Card

Families will sign up ONLINE for Parent-Teacher Conferences. Your child's teacher will let you know how and when to sign up. Any families interested in meeting with the 5th grade teachers should contact Katarina Pumarejo, our school's guidance counselor, at kpumarejo@blindbrook.org.

STANDARDIZED TESTING*

As part of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal legislation, Blind Brook participates in the comprehensive state testing program.

1. The English Language Arts Assessment and the Mathematics Assessment will be administered to students Grades 3-5 in the Spring of 2026.
2. The Science Assessment is expected to be administered to students in Grade 5 in Spring of 2026.

**The results of these tests are important to individual students and may determine placement in Academic Intervention Services. Data is also used to analyze the effectiveness of the district's programs in meeting state learning standards.*

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Board of Education of the Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District (the District), as a part of a long-standing commitment to excellence in education for all students, supports the provision of special education and related services for students with disabilities, offered in the least restrictive placement appropriate, to meet the needs of its students under the auspices of the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education.

In support of State and Federal laws pertaining to students with disabilities, the Board of Education supports a full continuum of services in the District to enable it to meet, within District, the needs of the majority of its identified students.

These programs and services are designed:

- To afford each student with the appropriate level of support necessary to meet New York State Standards
- To provide each student with those special educational services necessary to enable the student to meet his/her annual goals
- To afford each identified student with the opportunity to participate to the greatest extent appropriate in all programs and activities offered by the district
- To give each identified student genuine opportunities to develop those skills and make those connections necessary to meet post–secondary

(Blind Brook-Rye UFSD Special Education Plan)

For further specific information on Blind Brook Special Education procedures and programming please refer to The Blind Brook-Rye Committee on Special Education and Section 504 Handbook at: click here

Child Find Notice

"Child Find" requires all public-school districts to have in place a system to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities who reside in the district, including children who are homeless or in foster care, and students whose parents choose to enroll them in nonpublic schools located within the district. In order to meet our Child Find obligations, our District pursues multiple avenues, including publication on our website regarding the referral process and ongoing training for staff regarding our obligations.

If a parent or guardian suspects that his/her child may have a disability that adversely affects the student's education or access to school, the parent or guardian may initiate a referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or the §504 Committee by sending a letter requesting an evaluation either to the child's building principal or to the Director of Pupil Services.

School professionals, in cooperation with the building level Instructional Support Team (IST), also refer students suspected of having a disability to the CSE or §504 Committee, as applicable. Building principals and chairpersons of both the CSE and the §504 Team are authorized to initiate such referrals directly. In addition, school personnel, a child's physician and judicial officers may request a referral to the CSE. In cases where a request is denied, the CSE must notify the child's parent, in writing, of the right to initiate a referral directly.

Regardless of the source of a referral, a parent must provide written consent to enable the District to conduct an initial evaluation. Upon receipt of the parents' written consent, the District has 60 calendar days to complete the evaluation process and to convene a meeting of the CSE or the §504 Team, where applicable.

The CSE has 60 school days from the date of written consent to conduct an evaluation to implement an IEP, in those cases where the CSE recommends that the student be classified as a child with a disability and recommends placement in the public schools.

STUDENT FUND-RAISING OPPORTUNITIES

Fund-raising projects, in which students canvass the public, off school grounds, in connection with school events and school-connected money-raising activities, will be kept to a minimum. Students may solicit funds for school-sponsored charitable, non-profit, non-political organizations with prior approval of the Activity Program Advisor, the Building Principal and the Superintendent of Schools. However, fund-raising for non-school purposes is not permitted on school grounds. Additionally, students may solicit funds for school-sponsored clubs and organizations that are raising funds for curriculum-related purposes or to support the activities of the club or organization in school buildings only with prior approval of the principals of such buildings. All monies collected must be accounted for in strict accordance with procedures established by the State Education Department.

Fund raising by community or adult groups for school-related purposes may be permitted on school grounds only with the express permission of the building principal and the Superintendent of Schools.

Legal Reference: Education Law 207, 8 NYCRR, 172.1 et seq.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

BLIND BROOK PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The Blind Brook Parent Association encourages the involvement of all parents with students in grades K-12. Meetings of the PTA are held monthly and are listed on the district calendar. The PTA provides a wide variety of services to the schools, including funds to support various educational programs, a periodic newsletter, an after school supervision program for younger students, special programs for parents, and other worthwhile activities. The fund-raising efforts of the PTA provide important curricular enrichment activities, seed money for new programs, and equipment that enhances the educational program for all students.

PARENT BLUEBIRD CHATS

The Principal and Assistant Principal meets with parents of students in grades K-5 to explore issues of mutual interest in the operation of the school with the aim to improve the overall quality of education. All parents are welcome to attend. Please consult the district calendar for actual dates.

COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

The CSE/CPSE Chairperson is responsible for chairing the Committee on Special Education, which determines a student's need for special services and the nature of the services provided. The Committee has parent representation. Parents interested in serving on this important committee should contact the Chairperson at ext. 3020.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS

The school, frequently in cooperation with the PTA, offers periodic opportunities for parents to be provided information useful in guiding their children's education. These are announced as they are developed. Examples of the topics of these ongoing programs are: substance abuse, Internet safety, parent/child relationships, and issues in adolescent development.

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

DISTRICT ATTENDANCE POLICY

The School District believes that a student's regular attendance in class is critical and is directly related to academic success. To ensure that all parents/persons in parental relation and students are fully informed of the District's attendance policy and the implementation of the intervention strategies to be employed once a student with poor attendance is identified, the District shall ensure that:

- Copies of the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy are provided to parents/persons in parental relation at the time of enrollment in the District.
- Copies of the Attendance Policy are included in parent/student guidebook.
- Copies of this policy are made available to any community member, upon request, and posted on the District web site.

To support this philosophy, and in accordance with Education Law, Section 3205 and Commissioner's Regulations Section 104.1, the Blind Brook-Rye Board of Education has developed and adopted the following attendance policy in order to improve student attendance.

DEFINITION OF ATTENDANCE TERMS

All absences will be recorded daily by classroom teachers. Absences will be defined as excused or unexcused. All excused absences require the presentation of appropriate documentation to the nurse or the attendance office within 24 hours of the absence.

Additionally at the high school level, the term absences shall also refer to the following circumstances:

(1) a student's failure to attend any or all of his or her scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities for the full duration of said period(s) of instruction or activity;

(2) a student's late arrival of more than ten (10) minutes to any of his or her scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities during the course of a school day; and/or

(3) a student's departure from and failure to return to any of his or her scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities prior to the official dismissal of said period of instruction or activity.

CLASSIFYING ABSENCES

- <u>Excused Absences</u> are those absences attributable to:
  - Sickness
  - Sickness or death in family
  - Military obligations
  - Religious holidays
  - Required attendance in court
  - Dental/medical appointments
  - Visits to colleges (Beyond 4 for Junior Year and 4 for Senior Year)

Supporting documentation must be presented for each of the above listed types of absences to be considered excused, e.g., doctor, court officer or parent, etc. Failure to provide such documentation within 24 hours of the absence will result in the absence being designated as unexcused. In order for a student illness to be considered excused after a student has been absent for any reason 9 times in a full year course or 5 times in a half year course a doctor's note must be provided for subsequent illnesses. In order for a student illness to be considered excused after a student has been absent 4 or more consecutive days a doctor's note is required.

- Unexcused Absences are undocumented absences and all other absences such as: truancy, family vacation, babysitting, oversleeping or missing a bus. These are considered cuts. At the high school level, students who are deemed to be cutting will be required to attend detention after the third such instance and for each unexcused absence thereafter. Missing a detention will result in the student's being assigned a double detention.
- School Related Functions are events that are considered part of school and include but are not limited to: field trips, band or music lessons, assembly programs, scheduled sports, the nurse's office, guidance, school psychologist or other school offices, special testing, etc. In addition, high school students may also avail themselves of up to four college visits in their junior year and four college visits in their senior year and, with documentation from the college or a parent presented within 24 hours of the visit, this too is considered a school related function.

Note:

- Failure to report to a double detention will result in a one day in-school suspension.
- Teachers are not obligated to provide make-up tests or accept homework or other assignments for students who have missed class due to cutting or unexcused absence.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance is part of a student's permanent record and is one of the most vital components of a successful academic career. Included in the absence record are excused and unexcused absences.

Final grades will not be recorded for classes in which no credit is earned, and students will not be permitted to take the final examination. Teachers and school counselors will work in concert with the school attendance office to help students maintain good attendance and improve upon poor attendance.* (See Intervention Strategies)

LATENESS TO CLASS

If a student is late to class in the middle school or high school without a signed note from a teacher, counselor, nurse or administrator, classroom teachers will use their discretion in assigning penalties. These penalties will be discussed by the classroom teacher at the beginning of the year.

LOSS OF CREDIT

Students will receive credit for courses only when their class absences have not exceeded 18 absences for full credit courses, 9 absences for half credit courses and 5 absences in a .25 credit course or 10% of the total number of days the class meets. Included in the class absence record are excused and unexcused absences.

EXCEPTIONS

The only missed classes which will not count toward the 18, 9 or 5 absences rule are those due to medical excuses and school related functions, provided the work is made up as described in Make-Up Provisions For Grades.

PARENT AND STUDENT NOTIFICATION PROCESS

- Parents/persons in parental relationship will receive a telephone call from the District on the date that the student is absent or departs early without proper excuse, informing the parent of the student's absence or early departure.
- Parents/persons in parental relationship will be notified if there is a pattern of tardiness to school or a particular class(es).
- Parents/persons in parental relationship shall be notified of absences, whether excused or unexcused, as set forth on page 5 under "Intervention Strategies."

THE APPEAL PROCESS

- Students will automatically be denied credit when they have exceeded the 9th or 18th absence limit in .50 and 1.0 credit courses, respectively (10% of class meeting time).
- Students wishing to have this denial of credit reviewed must notify their school counselor using the official absence appeal form. An appointment for the appeal will then be arranged.
- Appeals will not be heard by the appeals committee until the middle of the final quarter of the class.
- The appeals committee is comprised of the building principal, the student's counselor and the teacher of record.

REPORTING SCHOOL ABSENCES

If a student is going to be absent from school, his or her parents or guardian is required to notify the school by calling the school nurse to document the reason for the absence. If this has not been done, students are expected to bring a note signed from their parents explaining the absence.

At the elementary school level parents are asked to call the school at the beginning of the school day to report their children absent for the day. The school will make phone calls to the homes of the parents of absent children who have not notified the school of their children's absences. The building administrator will send a letter home if a pattern of excessive or unusual absences occurs.

Middle school/high school parents may also call the respective school attendance office.

At the high school level, if the parent does not notify the school within 24 hours, the absence will be considered a cut, and the student will be required to attend detention.

If it is known before the student comes to school that he/she will need to leave early or miss a class period that day, he/she should bring a note from parents or guardians giving the reason for and the exact time of the desired early dismissal. Excuses must be submitted to the attendance or nurse's office at the beginning of the school day the student wishes to be excused. **Excuses will not be accepted after the fact.** Students who are excused from school during the day (for medical, dental or college appointments, etc.) must sign in and sign out in the attendance or nurse's office. Parents

are asked, if possible, to please try to schedule all appointments outside the school day so students do not miss instructional time.

If a student feels ill or wishes to be excused, he/she must report to the nurse's office for permission to leave school. If the nurse is not in her office, students should report to the assistant principal to get the appropriate permission. Under no circumstances should a student leave school without following this procedure. If for any other reason a student wishes to leave the school building, he/she must go to the attendance office or the assistant principal's office for permission. If a student does not return from lunch because of illness, the student's parent/guardian is required to contact the school, otherwise the student is considered to be cutting.

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

In an effort to identify those students who demonstrate poor attendance, District personnel shall review student attendance on a regular basis, as previously outlined. The following intervention strategies will be implemented upon identifying a student with poor attendance.

- At the high school level, teachers will notify the student's counselors and the principal or assistant principal when the student reaches the 5th, 10th and 15th absences in one credit courses and the 5th absence in a one half credit course. The student's parent/person in parental relation shall be likewise notified by the District of such absences by registered mail. A conference between the student, teacher and counselor shall be held upon the student's 5th absence in a one credit course to discuss the reasons behind such absences and the possible consequences of same, up to and including the denial of course credit. A conference between the student, parent/person in parental relation, counselor and an administrator shall be held upon the student's 10th and 15th absences in a one credit course and/or upon the 5th absence in a one half credit course to discuss the reasons behind such absences and the possible consequences of same, up to and including the denial of course credit.
- In addition to the above, teachers will also notify the student's counselor and the principal or assistant principal when the student reaches four (4) or more absences per quarter. The student's parent/person in parental relation shall be likewise notified by the District of such absences by registered mail. Any student with more than four (4) absences in a quarter may be required to bring a parent into school for a conference with school officials.
- At all levels, students' attendance will be actively monitored and parents will be notified by the school if a pattern of poor attendance appears to be emerging.

INTERVENTION STRATEGY PROCESS

- The District-wide Instructional Study Team shall review the District's attendance policy on an annual basis, including its then current intervention strategies, and provide the Board of Education any recommendations and alternatives thereto designed to improve student attendance and reduce unexcused absences.
- During the course of the school year, if the District-wide Instructional Study Team identifies a pattern of unexcused absences among the District's students, it shall identify the common themes/elements of the pattern (e.g., grade level, building, time frame, type of unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures), contact the District staff in the best position to intervene, discuss intervention strategies to reduce such unexcused absences and end the pattern, recommend intervention to the Board and/or Superintendent if it relates to change in

District policy or procedure, implement changes, as approved, and monitor and report on the effect of the implemented changes.

- The following individuals in each school building are responsible for reviewing student attendance records and initiating appropriate action to address unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures that are consistent with this policy.
  (1) Building Principal(s)
  (2) Attendance Officer and any other building designees
- The Instructional Study Team from each building and any Superintendent designees will comprise the District-wide Instructional Study Team.

LATE POLICY

When students are late to school in the morning, they must first report to the attendance office for a late pass. Students who are late for their first period class are considered unexcused unless a note from parents is presented to the attendance office. Students who are more than 10 minutes late to a class will be considered cutting. Students, who are detained by a teacher and therefore late for the next class, should secure a late pass that will admit them to their next class from the dismissing teacher.

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR LEARNING CENTER

Attendance in the learning center will be handled in the same manner as all other classes. In addition, if a student accumulates five unexcused absences for the learning center, a parent and student conference with the learning center teacher, the director of pupil personnel services and the assistant principal will be required. If further unexcused absences occur, a subcommittee of the CSE will convene to review the case and make recommendations.

ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES

In order to encourage student attendance, the District will develop and implement grade-appropriate/building level strategies and programs including, but not limited to:

- Classroom acknowledgement of the importance of good attendance (e.g., individual certificates, recognition chart, bulletin boards)
- Acknowledgements in school newsletters and community publications (with parent/person in parental relation consent)

GRADES AND COURSE ATTENDANCE

The Blind Brook Public Schools recognize the important relationship between class attendance and student performance. A class participation grade will be determined for each student in every class. No participation grade can be recorded if a student is absent. Therefore, it is to the student's advantage to have as many participation grades on record as possible**.** Consequently, for each marking period a certain percentage of a student's grade will be based on classroom participation. This will be discussed by the classroom teacher at the beginning of the year and outlined in the teacher's grading policy.

MAKE-UP PROVISIONS FOR GRADES

Participation Grades
Students who are unable to attend a class on a given day/period due to their participation in a school related function and who arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed, shall, upon the completion of any make-up work assigned, be given credit for class participation for the day/class missed. This also applies to any student who is absent from school due to illness who either receives home instruction from the district or makes arrangements with the teacher to makeup the work missed.

Any student who misses a class is expected immediately upon his or her return to identify the material covered. If the absence is excused, the student may earn his/her classroom participation grade by arranging for an assignment with the teacher to cover the work missed.

Performance Grades
Only those students with excused absences will be given the opportunity to make up a test and/or turn in a late assignment for inclusion in the calculation of the performance portion of their final grade. Make-up opportunities must be completed by a date specified by the student's teacher for the class in question.

BLIND BROOK ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

CODE OF CONDUCT
(Abridged Version)

I. INTRODUCTION

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal. The district has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity.

Under Project S.A.V.E. and in Board policy, the Board of Education recognizes the need to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, to identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline when necessary is administered promptly and fairly. To this end, the Board adopts this code of conduct. Unless otherwise indicated, this code applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors when on school property or attending a school function.

II. STUDENT DRESS CODE

Individual students and their parents have the responsibility for student dress and general appearance. Students are required to attend school in appropriate dress that meets health and safety standards and does not interfere with their own education, distract others, or interfere with the overall educational process. The type of clothing one may wear to a social function is not always appropriate to wear to school. We ask parents and students to exercise discretion in this regard. Students may be asked to wear appropriate protective gear in certain classes (i.e. home economics, shop, PE). Clothing and attire which have expressions (phrase, design, word or words) or insignia (picture, symbol, patch or pin) which are obscene or libelous (that is, which contain objectionable language, including insults, whether directed to themselves or others), or which advocate racial or religious prejudice are prohibited. High school students may not wear hats in the building during classes. Footwear must be worn at all times in all schools. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed. A student's dress, grooming and appearance (including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails) shall not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions, i.e. undergarments such as bra straps and boxer shorts must not be visible, and ones abdomen must be covered at all times. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

Each building principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year. Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replace it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to disciplinary action. The parent/guardian will be notified of such action and students will be responsible for any

work missed as a result of having to leave and return to school. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further disciplinary action.

III. STUDENT CONDUCT AND SELF-DISCIPLINE

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment. The best discipline is self-directed and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior

Students who do not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

A student's behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and can make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. Since the classroom teacher is responsible for the overall atmosphere of the classroom, insuring opportunity for all to learn, they moderate the classroom by using good classroom management techniques. These techniques may include practices that involve the teacher directing a student to briefly leave the classroom to give the student an opportunity to regain his/her composure and self-control in an alternative setting. Such practices may include, but are not limited to: (1) short-term "time out" in the classroom or in an administrator's office; (2) sending a student into the hallway briefly; (3) sending a student to the principal's office for the remainder of the class time only; or (4) sending a student to a guidance counselor or other district staff member for counseling. Time-honored classroom management techniques such as these do not constitute disciplinary removals for purposes of this code.

IV. TEACHER PROCEDURES FOR REMOVAL OF DISRUPTIVE/VIOLENT STUDENTS (S.A.V.E. Legislation)

On occasion, a student's behavior may become disruptive. For purposes of this code of conduct, a disruptive student is a student who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom. A substantial disruption of the educational process or substantial interference with a teacher's authority occurs when a student demonstrates a persistent unwillingness to comply with the teacher's instructions or repeatedly violates the teacher's classroom behavior rules.

If the disruptive student does not pose a danger or on-going threat of disruption to the academic process, the teacher must provide the student with an explanation for why he or she is being removed. Only after the informal discussion may a teacher remove a student from class. It has been the practice and policy of district teachers to handle discipline in their classrooms and to use good judgment and discretion. High school students who pose a danger or on-going threat of disruption, may be removed immediately by the teacher for a period of up to two days. The teacher must, however, explain to the student why he/she was removed from the classroom (during the principal or principal's designee's review) and give the student a chance to present his/her version of the relevant events within 24 hours.

The teacher must complete a district-established disciplinary removal form (see appendix) and meet with the principal or his/her designee as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day, to explain the circumstances of the removal and to present the removal form. If the principal or designee is not available by the end of the same school day, the teacher must leave the form with the secretary and meet with the principal or designee on the next school day.

Within 24 hours after the student's removal, the principal or another district administrator designated by the principal must notify the student's parents that the student has been removed from class and why. Notification must also inform the parent that he or she has the right, upon request, to meet informally with the principal or the principal's designee to discuss the reasons for removal.

If parents request an informal conference, the principal may require the teacher who ordered the removal to attend. If at the informal meeting the student denies the charges, the principal or the principal's designee must explain why the student was removed and give the student and the student's parents a chance to present the student's version of the relevant events. The informal meeting must be held within 48 hours of the student's removal. The timing of the informal meeting may be extended by mutual agreement of the parent and principal.

The principal or the principal's designee may overturn the removal of the student from class if the principal determines the charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.

The principal or his/her designee may overturn a removal at any point between receiving the referral form issued by the teacher and the close of business on the day following the 48-hour period for the informal conference if a conference is requested. No student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher will be permitted to return to the classroom until the principal makes a final determination, or the period of removal expires, whichever is less. Any disruptive student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher shall be offered continued educational programming and activities until he or she is permitted to return to the classroom (see Alternative Instruction, Section V below). Each teacher must keep a log of referrals for cases of removal of students from his or her class. The principal must keep a log of all removals of students from class.

V. ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION

When a student of any age is removed from class by a teacher, the district will provide alternative means of instruction. The classroom teacher who asked for removal of the student will provide either materials or assignments for the student.

VI. REPORTING VIOLATIONS

All students are encouraged to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, the building principal or his or her designee. Any student observing another student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function should report this information immediately to a staff member, a school administrator or designee or the superintendent. All district staff who are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. District staff who are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to their administrator, who shall in turn impose an appropriate disciplinary sanction, if so authorized, or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to impose an appropriate sanction.

VII. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES, REFERRALS AND PENALTIES

A. Procedures

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the problem at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that students view as fair and impartial. As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. In all instances, "due process" will be enacted.

B. Referrals

1. A discipline referral form must be completed by any staff member who is reporting an infraction of the student discipline code. The staff member describes the event and indicates previous actions taken to address the issue. The referral is forwarded to an administrator (the Assistant Principal in most instances). The administrator reviews the description of the incident, conferences with the student, and determines the appropriate consequence following the guidelines of the School Discipline Code.
Administrative actions are indicated on the referral accompanied by written response. Copies of the referral are sent to the parent(s), the referring teacher, the guidance department and a copy is maintained in the student's discipline file.
2. PINS Petition – The district may file a PINS (Person In Need of Supervision) petition in Family Court on any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates that he or she requires supervision and treatment by:
    a. being habitually truant and not attending school as required by part one of Article 65 of the Education Law
    b. engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school
    c. knowingly and unlawfully possesses marijuana in violation of Penal Law 221.05. A single violation of 221.05 will be a sufficient basis for filing a PINS petition.

C. Penalties

The degree of due process a student is entitled to receive before a penalty is imposed depends on the penalty being imposed. In all cases, regardless of the penalty imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.

1. Detention – Teachers, principals and the superintendent may use detention as a penalty for student misconduct in situations where removal from the classroom or suspension would be inappropriate.
2. Suspension from transportation – If a student does not conduct himself/herself properly while awaiting the arrival of or departing from a school bus or while riding on said bus, the bus driver is expected to bring such misconduct to the building principal's attention. Students who become a serious disciplinary problem may have their riding privileges suspended by the building principal or the superintendent or their designees. In such cases, the student's parent will become responsible for seeing that his or her child gets to and from school safely. Should the suspension from transportation amount to a suspension from attendance, the district will make appropriate arrangements to provide for the student's education. A student subjected to a suspension from transportation is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law 3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the building principal or the principal's designee to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved. A suspension from transportation may constitute a "change in placement" for a student who has been classified as disabled, if the student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) specifies that transportation must be provided. In such cases, transportation suspensions for misconduct related to a disability are limited to the same extent as suspensions from school under similar circumstances.
3. Suspension from athletic participation, co-curricular activities and other privileges – A student subjected to a suspension from athletic participation, co-curricular activities or other

privileges is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law 3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the district official imposing the suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

4. In-school Suspension – The Board recognizes the school must balance the need of students to attend school and the need for order in the classroom to establish an environment conducive to learning. As such, the Board authorizes building principals and the superintendent to place students who would otherwise be suspended from school as the result of a code of conduct violation in "in-school suspension". Whenever possible, the in-school suspension teacher will be a certified teacher. A student subjected to an in-school suspension is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law 3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the district official imposing the in-school suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.
5. Suspension - a student may be suspended by the Building Principal, Superintendent, or the Board of Education when:
    a. A minor is insubordinate or disorderly or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others;
    b. A minor whose physical or mental condition endangers the health, safety or morals of himself/herself or of other minors.

    A student may be suspended for up to five days. The student must be given oral and written notice of the charges and be provided with an opportunity to present his/her perception of the incident(s). Any suspension beyond five days requires a Superintendent's hearing at which the student and the person in parental relation have the right to be represented by an attorney, the right to present witnesses and other evidence on their behalf, and the right to cross-examine witnesses against them.
6. Teacher Disciplinary Removal of Disruptive/Violent Students (see Board Policy)
7. Prohibition of Corporal Punishment
    No employee or agent of the Blind Brook-Rye U.F.S.D. shall use corporal punishment against a pupil. Corporal punishment means any act of physical force upon a pupil for the purpose of punishing that pupil. However, the use of reasonable physical force for the following purposes is permitted:
    a. to protect oneself from physical injury
    b. to protect another pupil or teacher or any other person from physical injury
    c. to protect the property of the school or others
    d. to restrain or remove a pupil whose behavior is interfering with the orderly exercise and performance of school district functions, if that pupil has refused to comply with a request to refrain from further disruptive acts.

BLIND BROOK STUDENT DISCIPLINE SYSTEM MISCONDUCT/RESPONSE STRUCTURE

1. Level I - Misbehaviors classified in this level represent relatively minor infractions of established procedures that regulate the orderly operation of the school and its educational process. The frequency of their occurrence shall determine the appropriate disciplinary response and their reclassification at a higher level.

Infraction	Procedures	Optional Responses
Littering	The supervising staff member or observer immediately intervenes and applies the most appropriate disciplinary option	Verbal reprimand
Neglecting to return required forms		Analytic discourse
Violating general rules and regulations as outlined in the Student Handbook	Since the frequency of occurrence determines subsequent responses to the same behavior, staff member should retain a record of offenses and action taken	Supervised study to be assigned at teacher's discretion
Failure to be prepared with class materials and supplies		Conflict resolution
Non-defiant failure to complete assignments, carry out teacher directions	In cases of repetitive misbehavior, the staff member shall confer with the principal, assistant principal and/or counselor	Counseling
Disruptive behavior in school (minor horseplay), on campus, or on the school bus		Parental notification (orally or in writing)
Use of profanity or obscenity		Clean-up after school and/or payment/repair of damage
Eating food in non-designated areas or times		Interim Reports
		Temporary removal from activity/sport
		Detention

2. Level II - In this level are included misbehaviors whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school and to affect seriously the student's own education. Some of these infractions may be the result of a continuation of misbehaviors that remain unmodified by disciplinary actions under Level I.

Infraction	Procedures	Optional Responses
Unmodified or more severe Level I misbehavior	The teacher or observer reports the behavior or refers the student to the Principal and/or Assistant Principal, using the Conduct Referral Form	Continuation of Level I Options
Defacing school property (graffiti)		Conflict Resolution
Minor theft		Sustained counseling
Truancy	The Principal and/or Assistant Principal and /or Dignity Coordinator (DAC) meets with the student and/or teacher to investigate the incident and determine the most appropriate disciplinary response.	Parental conference
Insubordination		Removal from certain privileges, activities or sports
Cheating, Plagiarism, Lying		
Gambling		Send to principal or assistant principal's office
Leaving school grounds without permission	The administrator records the infraction and the disciplinary response on the Conduct Referral Form and sends copies of the form to the referring staff member, the Counselor, and parents. Parents will be notified by telephone in certain cases.	Suspension of school bus transportation (on bus offense)
Class cutting, Tardiness		In-school suspension
Verbal abuse and harassment of students and staff		Out-of-school suspension
Inappropriate use of the Internet	A monthly report of all disciplinary referrals is sent to the Superintendent, the Principal and the Counselors	Full restitution of damages

3. Level III - These acts are more serious because their consequences may have a lasting effect on the individual or may pose a threat to the health and safety of others in the school. In some cases, outside agencies may have to be contacted or notified.

Infraction	Procedures	Optional Responses
Unmodified or more severe Level II misbehavior	The infraction reported or detected, the Principal investigates further and confers with staff members	Continuation of appropriate Level II Options
Physically threatening other students or staff; Severe taunting, bullying	The Principal and/or Assistant Principal and /or Bullying Prevention Coordinator meets with the student and/or teacher to investigate the incident and determine the most appropriate disciplinary response.	Full withdrawal of participation in school activities/sports
Physical harassment		School community service
Stealing		Referral to outside agency
Horseplay that endangers others		Mandatory long-term in-school counseling
Fighting	The principal meets with the student and confers with the parent about the misbehavior, the extent of its consequences, and the subsequent disciplinary action	In-school suspension and notification to the Superintendent.
Vandalism		
Gambling		Full suspension (1-5 days) depending upon the offense and notification to the Superintendent
Verbal abuse and harassment of teachers		
Sexual harassment, Lewdness	If he deems it necessary, the principal contacts outside agencies	Initiate a Superintendent's Hearing
Pernicious use of The Internet	The principal records the infraction and the disciplinary response in cumulative record	School official contacts proper authorities
Possession of drug paraphenalia; possessing, using or being under the influence of unauthorized substances on school property or at school-sponsored activities		

4. Level IV - Represented in this level are acts that are very serious. Included are those which present a direct and immediate threat to the welfare of others or may result in violence to persons or property. So serious are they that in most cases they require administrative action that calls for the immediate removal of the student from school and the intervention of the police.

Infraction	Procedures	Optional Responses
Unmodified or more severe Level III behaviors	Having verified the offense, the Principal meets with all those involved	Continuation of appropriate Level III Options
Severe and/or repeated taunting, bullying	The Principal initiates procedures according to established policy for excluding the student from school and notifies the parents immediately	Full restitution of damages
Possession and/or sale of stolen property		Full suspension/Full suspension from activities or sports
Coercion of others	The Principal informs the Superintendent	Alternative Schools
Tampering with the fire alarm, pulling fire alarm	The Principal submits a complete and accurate report to the Superintendent	School official contacts proper authorities and assists in prosecuting the offender
Bomb threats or other threats to school property or personnel		
Possession and/or use of firecrackers or explosives		
Arson		
Sexual assault		
Possession of a weapon *(see VIII. Dangerous Weapons in School)*		
Providing, selling or using illegal chemical substances and/or alcohol on school property or at school sponsored activities		

Discipline of Students with Disabilities
The Board of Education recognizes that it may be necessary to suspend, remove or otherwise discipline students with disabilities to address disruptive or problem behavior. The board is committed to ensuring that the procedures followed for suspending, removing or otherwise disciplining students with disabilities are consistent with the procedural safeguards required by applicable laws and regulations. This code of conduct affords students with disabilities subject to disciplinary action no greater or lesser rights than those expressly afforded by applicable federal and state law and regulations.

Discipline of 504 Eligible Students
34 CFR 104.35 requires a school district to conduct an evaluation and review of a student's placement prior to any significant change in placement. According to the OCR, a student suspension of more than 10 days is a "significant change in placement" under 504. In addition, as must be determined on a case-by-case basis, short-term suspensions which result in a pattern of exclusions equivalent to ten consecutive days or more may also constitute a significant change in placement. Whether a series of short-term suspensions will constitute a significant change in placement will depend upon a number of factors including the length of each suspension, the proximity in time of the suspensions to each other, and the overall time of the suspensions. Accordingly, school districts should establish procedures to govern the discipline of 504-eligible students, and procedures to trigger automatic reviews of cumulative suspensions approaching ten days for 504-eligible students to determine whether those suspensions constitute a significant change in placement.

VIII. DANGEROUS WEAPONS IN SCHOOL

The Blind Brook Union Free School District is committed to providing a safe environment for students and staff. Therefore, no person shall have in his or her possession upon school premises any dangerous weapon, including but not limited to a rifle, shotgun, pistol, revolver, other firearm, knives, dangerous chemicals, explosives, laser pointers, or any object which is not necessary for school activities and which could be used as a weapon. A weapon is defined as any instrument capable of firing a projectile, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, firearm muffler or silencer, any explosive device, or any other instrument capable of inflicting bodily harm.

In accordance with Goals 2000: Education America Act (Gun-free Schools Act of 1994), any student who, after a hearing held pursuant to Education Law #3214, is found guilty of bringing a dangerous weapon or firearm, as defined in federal law, onto school property will be subject to at least a one-year suspension from school. However, in determining an appropriate penalty, the Superintendent will review the penalty and may modify such suspension on a case-by-case basis. If the Superintendent believes a one-year suspension penalty to be excessive, the penalty may be modified based on criteria including but not limited to:

1. The age of the student;
2. The student's grade in school;
3. The student's prior disciplinary record;
4. The Superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be effective;
5. Input from parents, teachers and/or others; and
6. Other extenuating circumstances.

In the case of a student who is classified as disabled under the Individual with Disabilities Act and Part 200 of the Commissioner's Regulations, or as handicapped under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its accompanying regulations, such student shall not be suspended in excess of 10 days unless such student is extended additional procedural protections required by IDEA in connection with a change of placement. An interim alternative placement for up to 45 days may be necessary while these procedural protections are underway.

New York State Peace Officers and Police Officers are the only people permitted to have a weapon in their possession on school property.

Reference: Goals 2000: Education American Act P.L. 103-227 (Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994) 18, USC 921

IX. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

A. Intent of Policy

The intent of this policy is to prevent the abuse through use, possession or sale of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other substances by students in the Blind Brook Public Schools.

The term "drugs, alcohol and other substances" shall be construed throughout this policy to refer to the use of all substances including, but not limited to alcohol, tobacco, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, and any of those substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs" and any other controlled substances as defined by the New York State Penal Code, as well as the inappropriate use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs. This policy describes the philosophy of the District and the program elements the District will use to promote healthy life styles for its students and to inhibit the use/abuse of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other substances.

B. Philosophy

The District will use the following principles as guides for the development of its substance abuse prevention and intervention efforts and for any disciplinary measures related to drug, alcohol and other substance abuse.

1. Primary Prevention Activities
   The intent of primary prevention programming within the curriculum is to prevent the onset of drug, alcohol, tobacco and other substance use by students.
2. Intervention
   The intent of intervention programming is to eliminate any existing use/abuse of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other substances, and to identify and provide supportive services to kindergarten through 12th grade students at high risk for such use/abuse.

C. Prohibitions and Penalties

No person may use, possess, sell or distribute drugs, alcohol or other substances or use or possess drug paraphernalia on school grounds or at school-sponsored events that occur on or off school property. Exceptions are drugs prescribed by a physician, which may only be dispensed and handled during school hours or at school activities by the school nurse. The inappropriate use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs shall also be prohibited.

Any person exhibiting behavior, conduct, or personal or physical characteristics indicative of having used or consumed drugs, alcohol, and/or other substances, or any person school personnel have reasonable grounds to suspect has used or has possession of drugs, alcohol and/or other substances shall, following questioning by school authorities and, if the individual is an enrolled student in the school, reasonable attempts to contact the individual's parent or guardian, be excluded from school grounds or school-sponsored events.

Any faculty or staff member observing the sale, possession or use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco or other substances by students shall report the incident immediately to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee (normally the building principal). The Superintendent or his/her designee shall then take immediate action. Any substances found shall be confiscated immediately, followed by notification of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student(s) involved and the appropriate disciplinary action taken, up to and including permanent suspension and referral for prosecution. In its efforts to maintain a substance-free environment, the District shall cooperate to the fullest extent possible with local, state and/or federal law enforcement agencies.

When confiscation of controlled substances is contemplated, the following guidelines apply: A member of the school administration may search a student's locker, clothing and/or possessions if an administrator, faculty or staff member has observed the student in possession of drugs or alcohol, or engaging in a transaction that involved controlled substances. If no direct observation has occurred, or in cases where a faculty or staff member suspects a student has engaged in activities prohibited by this policy, based on the student's demeanor, the presence of a suspicious odor, or a contact or transaction occurring outside the direct observation of the faculty or staff member, the student may be questioned and his/her locker searched, but no other search may take place absent the student's consent. If the student refuses to consent, any further requests for consent should be made in the presence of the student's parent or guardian, if possible. At such time, if the student continues to refuse to consent to the search, he/she may be advised that continued refusal may lead to discipline for insubordination.

When a student is observed or suspected of engaging in activities prohibited by this policy, the school principal may at his/her discretion require the student to undergo urinalysis for the purposes of drug or alcohol detection upon receipt of a written request or with the written consent of the parent or guardian, in accordance with Education Law Section 912-a.

The Board of Education recognizes the need for administrative discretion and flexibility in addressing violations of this policy. Nevertheless, it provides the administration with the following guidelines to ensure that clear and serious consequences flow from violations, and that an appropriate balance is struck between providing punishment and support. The Board of Education recognizes that students have due process rights before certain penalties can be administered.

- While tobacco possession and use by adults is lawful, and tobacco products are widely (though illegally) available to youth, tobacco is a serious health hazard. Consequences for possession and/or use must balance actions that may deter or punish with actions that encourage cessation of use. Punishment may include detention or suspension; deterrence may include required attendance at smoking cessation programs.
- A student who is found to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other substances while on school grounds or at any school activity, regardless of quantity, will be suspended from school and prohibited for a specified time from participation in all extra-curricular activities, including sports.
- A student who is found to be in possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol or other substances while on school grounds or at any school activity, regardless of the quantity involved, will be suspended from school, prohibited for a specified time from participation in all extra-curricular activities, including sports, and reported to local law enforcement authorities.
- A student who is found to be selling drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol or other substances while on school grounds or at any school activity, regardless of the quantity involved, will be suspended from school for a minimum of five days, prohibited indefinitely from participation in all extra-curricular activities, including sports, and reported to local law enforcement authorities. Since the Board of Education considers selling to be the most egregious offence, a repeated violation will be dealt with severely. The student will be afforded due process but the penalties considered will be the severest available under the education law.
- Any student who is found to be under the influence of, in possession of, or selling drugs, alcohol or other substances while on school grounds or at any school sponsored activity will be provided with appropriate support and assistance by school personnel. The student and his/her family may also be referred to community human resource personnel for additional assistance at their expense.
- Repeated violations of these guidelines will result in increasingly severe consequences, culminating in penalties that the severest available under the education law.
- A student who is involved in substance abuse and who voluntarily seeks assistance for him/herself or his/her family or peers will receive appropriate assistance from school human resource personnel. The student and his/her family may also be referred to community human resource personnel for additional assistance at

their expense. The student will not be punished for the disclosure. Nothing stated herein precludes disciplinary action against a student based on activities that occurred prior to the request for assistance.

D. Implementation, Dissemination and Monitoring

The Board of Education charges the Superintendent to collaborate with District administration, faculty, staff, parents, students, community members, local law enforcement and human resource personnel in developing specific programs and strategies necessary to implement this policy.

E. Staff Development

The Board of Education recognizes that if the administration, faculty and staff are to be responsible for implementing and modeling this policy, they must be provided training about the components of an effective drug, alcohol, tobacco and other substance use/abuse prevention program. The Board of Education will provide resources for such a program.

X. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR STUDENT USE OF THE INTERNET AND DISTRICT NETWORK

Introduction

The Blind Brook-Rye School District is pleased to offer its students, faculty and staff access to the Internet. The internet, a global electronic information infrastructure, is a connection of networks used by educators, business, government, military and other organizations. The Board of Education strongly believes in the value of telecommunications and recognizes the potential of such to support our curriculum, students, faculty and staff.

The Internet is a fluid environment. In general, electronic traffic passes freely in a trusting atmosphere. But with such access comes the availability of material that may not be appropriate in a school setting. It is our goal to provide users with the understanding and skills needed to discriminate among information sources, to identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels, and to evaluate and use information to meet their educational objectives.

This policy is designed to facilitate and set guidelines for exploring and using the Internet and district network applications and web-based instructions and research tools, in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. Of necessity, it places the primary responsibility for proper conduct on the user. Use of the School District's local network and Internet facilities in contravention of the following guidelines will result in cancellation of the user's account as determined by a building administrator and possible legal intervention when applicable.

Terms and Conditions for Student Use

A. I understand and agree to abide by the following Rules and Code of Ethics regarding Internet, District Network and Internet web-based instructional and research use:

1. The use of a user's account must be for research in support of education, consistent with the objectives of the Blind Brook-Rye School District.
2. Network accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for authorized purposes. Using or sharing another user's login name and password is prohibited.
3. Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.

4. No use of the network shall serve to disrupt the use of the network by others; hardware or software shall not be destroyed, modified, copied, damaged, or abused in any way. Nor shall the network be used in any way that intends to disrupt operation of the network or use of the network by others.
5. Malicious use of the Internet or the network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computer system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computer system (e.g. create viruses) is prohibited.
6. Hate mail, harassment, profanity, obscenity, discriminatory remarks, misrepresentation, impersonation, and/or other similar behavior are prohibited on the Internet and the network.
7. Intentional uses of the Internet or the network to access or process pornographic material, text files unrelated to course work or academic research, materials for use in illegal activities, or files dangerous to the operating integrity of the network and its users are prohibited.
8. Exemplary behavior is expected on "virtual" field trips, as the user is representing the Blind Brook-Rye School District when visiting locations on the Internet.
9. Users shall not reveal anything that would enable others to locate or exploit them (e.g. last name, home address, credit card, photos of themselves/others or social security number). Similarly, users shall not reveal information about others over the Internet.
10. Students without parental permission to use the Internet are prohibited from teaming up with those who have permission to use the Internet.
11. Use of the Internet, network or district web-based e-mail tool to hack into other users accounts is prohibited.
12. Use of the Internet or the network for commercial or for-profit purposes is prohibited.
13. Use of the Internet or the network for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
14. Each user is responsible for his/her own actions while using the Internet or the network.
15. The use of Cell Phone text messaging during an exam or during instructional time is prohibited.
16. The use of a Pager text messaging during an exam or during instructional time is prohibited.
17. If a graphing calculator must be used, students shall show the instructor that they have reset their calculator prior to the start of an exam.
18. PDA/PC's shall be turned off during exams.

B. I recognize and agree to abide by the following Rules and Code of Ethics regarding protected intellectual property rights, including copyrighted material:
   1. I recognize that material received via the Internet or a computer network is owned by the author or the person holding the copyright and/or other intellectual property rights, and I will give full credit for all materials received electronically.
   2. I recognize that software is protected by copyright laws; therefore, I will not make copies of software found on school computers either by copying them onto my own diskettes, CD's or onto other computers through electronic mail or bulletin boards; and I will not give, lend, or sell copies of software to others unless I have the written permission of the copyright owner or unless the original software is clearly identified as shareware or in the public domain. Attributions of authorship will follow the same copyright rules for material obtained via the network.
   3. I recognize that electronic copyrighted text is protected by copyright laws; therefore, I will not cut and paste or photograph electronically with my cell phone this copyrighted text into my reports, take home exams, or school related documents without correctly referencing the copyrighted source. Attributions of authorship will follow the same copyright rules for material obtained via the network.

C. I understand and agree that any violation of the above will have serious consequences. Any violation of District policy and rules may result in loss of District-provided access to the Internet and network access. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language and behavior. Legal intervention may occur

when applicable, including, but not limited to cases of network tampering, hacking and intentional equipment theft or damage.
Adopted 6/9/97 Revised 6/21/04

XI. SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY (STUDENT)

The Board of Education affirms its commitment to non-discrimination and recognizes its responsibility to provide for all District students an environment that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a violation of law and stands in direct opposition to the District policy. Therefore, the Board prohibits sexual harassment by a student, employee, officer, volunteer or any member of the public on School District property. Sexual harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature imposed upon a student by another student, an employee, officer, volunteer or member of the public on school district property, which is unwelcome, hostile, inappropriate, or intimidating when among other things:

a. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance or participation in an educational or extracurricular activity, or
b. Such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

XII. THE DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

The intent of the Dignity for All Students Act (Dignity Act) is to provide all public school students with an environment free from discrimination and harassment, as well as to foster civility in public schools. The Dignity Act also focuses on prevention of harassment and discriminatory behaviors through the promotion of educational measures meant to positively impact school culture and climate.

Harassment

Harassment has been defined in various ways in federal and state law and regulation. The Board recognizes that these definitions are important standards, but the Board's goal is to prevent misbehavior from escalating in order to promote a positive school environment and to limit liability. The Dignity for All Students Act (§§10-18 of Education Law) defines harassment as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. The harassing behavior may be based on any characteristic, including but not limited to a person's actual or perceived:

- race,
- color,
- weight,
- national origin,
- ethnic group,
- religion,
- religious practice,
- disability,
- sex,
- sexual orientation, or
- gender (including gender identity and expression).

In some instances, bullying or harassment may constitute a violation of an individual's civil rights. The district is mindful of its responsibilities under the law and in accordance with district policy regarding civil rights protections**.**

The Dignity Act applies to incidents on school property (in a school building, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, and school bus). The Dignity also applies to public school functions, including extra-curricular events and activities.

Bullying Prevention Coordinator (BPC)

The Board of Education will annually designate a staff member, who has been thoroughly trained in human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression), and sex, as the Bullying Prevention Coordinator (BPC), accountable for implementation of this policy. The BPC will be responsible for coordinating and enforcing this policy and regulation in each school building.

Disciplinary Consequences/Remediation

While the focus of this policy is on prevention, bullying acts may still occur. In these cases, offenders will be given the clear message that their actions are wrong and the behavior must improve. Student offenders will receive in-school guidance in making positive choices in their relationships with others. If appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken by the administration in accordance with the district's Code of Conduct, as applicable. If the behavior rises to the level of criminal activity, law enforcement will be contacted.

Consequences for a student who commits an act of bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors, and must be consistent with the district's Code of Conduct.

XIII. ACADEMIC STUDENT BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

A. <u>Philosophy</u>

Academic integrity is a standard which all students are expected to maintain and will be held accountable. An ethic against cheating, like all values, may be formed primarily at home; still, the school clearly has an interest in students' becoming honest, and honestly devoted to doing their own best work. The health of the school community and the integrity of each student's sense of self and accomplishment depend upon this ethic.

In school, cheating is wrong for several reasons. Cheating…

- Distorts educational priorities.
  Cheating is based upon the idea that competing for a grade, not mastering material or skills, is what really matters; nonetheless, cheating at the same time destroys the basis and meaning of competition, giving the cheater an unfair advantage over those who are honest about their achievements.
- Interferes with assessment and instruction.
  Cheating makes it harder for a teacher to identify students' real strengths and weaknesses, their real depth of knowledge and understanding; as a result, teachers are also less able to identify when and how to help their students master information and develop skills.
- Destroys educational experience.
  Cheating helps a student avoid real challenges – real learning and growth – thus defeating the whole purpose of schooling.

- Threatens an atmosphere of trust.
  Cheating undercuts the trust and openness that underlie the thoughtful collaboration and sincere debate, which are the bases of true education.

While Blind Brook recognizes that cultural forces and academic pressures tempt or even encourage students to cheat, it is our goal to develop students who earnestly embrace an academic ethic. As we strive to reinforce ethical value and practices, the Blind Brook faculty will not tolerate cheating, and to this end will minimize opportunities for students to cheat and will enforce serious consequences on students who are caught cheating or assist others in the act of cheating.

B. What is Cheating?

Cheating includes but is not limited to, among other things: copying homework, having parents write papers, plagiarizing, copying answers on a test, using crib notes for a test, using illegal information stored on calculators/computers during a test, passing information during a test, forging notes from parents, having parents lie in excuse notes, re-using past papers for a new course, lying to teachers, including substitutes, leaving a test paper exposed to others' view, doing others' assignments for them.
"Forms of plagiarism include the failure to give appropriate acknowledgement when repeating another's working or particularly apt phrase, paraphrasing another's argument, and presenting another's line of thinking. You may certainly use another person's words and thoughts, but the borrowed material must not appear to be your creation." Joseph Gibaldi MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing (New York: The Modern Language Association of America) 151. Teachers may adapt this operational definition with specific directions that fit a particular assignment and grade level.

C. Preventing Cheating

The faculty commits itself to the following measures to reduce or eliminate the opportunity to cheat:
- Students will be provided education about all forms of cheating, especially plagiarism.
- Testing environments will be secure, with minimum opportunities to cheat.
- Proctors will be diligent in providing test supervision.
- No tests or quizzes will be administered by substitute teachers except with prior permission of the Principal
- Finals and Regents will be administered in large group settings with uniform procedures and adequate supervision.
- Multiple versions of the same test may be available if the same test is to be given at different times during the day.
- Tests may be revised and modified yearly.
- Programmable calculators may be used on tests and quizzes only with the permission of the teacher and may never be shared with other students.

D. Consequences

In grades three through eight the first instance of plagiarism will result in a requirement that the piece by rewritten and receive a reduced grade. A second instance of plagiarism will result in a "0" grade. All other instances of cheating will result in a "0" grade for the test, quiz, or assignment.

In grades nine and ten, all instances of cheating and plagiarism will result in a "0" grade for the test, quiz, assignment or paper. In grades eleven and twelve, in addition to a "0" grade, any instance of egregious cheating will also be recorded on the student's permanent record and college transcript.

If a pattern of cheating or plagiarism develops or if there is a particularly egregious* instance, more serious consequences, such as suspension, will occur. In such instances, the student may also be referred for special counseling either in or out of school.

*Egregious cheating is premeditated cheating. Examples of such cheating include, among other things…

- Copying of other's work.
- Buying papers written by others.
- Bringing crib notes to a quiz or test.
- Taking test material from a teacher's files.
- Using papers or tests kept on file by students who already completed the course.
- Using calculators with stored information on an exam without permission of teachers.

In every instance in which the teacher ascertains that cheating or plagiarism has occurred or believes that there was intent to cheat or plagiarize, a discipline referral must be completed by the teacher and forwarded to the administration and guidance offices. The student's parents will be informed immediately of the incident and the consequences.

E. Procedures for Investigation

If a teacher believes but cannot prove that cheating or plagiarism has occurred, the teacher will inform the school administration in writing and the administration will conduct an appropriate investigation. The suspect student's parents will be immediately informed and may be present during any interrogation. Other students may be interrogated about the incident as well but can always, upon request, have a parent present during their interrogation. Should cheating be proved, the student and his/her parents will be informed immediately of the consequences.

In some instances where it appears to the teacher reasonable but unprovable that several students may have cheated, the teacher may exercise the option of retesting a whole class.

F. Appeals

A student has the right to appeal any disciplinary action taken regarding cheating or plagiarism to the Principal, or in the case where the Principal has made the original determination that cheating took place, to the Superintendent of Schools, who will hear and investigate the appeal and render a decision affirming or altering the action taken. In conducting such an investigation, the Principal or the Superintendent of Schools may call witnesses and review all relevant records.

XIV. VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

A. General

Unauthorized persons will not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. Administrators are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such individuals from entering buildings and from loitering on grounds. Trespassing individuals will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. To insure that no unauthorized persons enter buildings with wrongful intent or for inappropriate reasons, all school visitors must report to the principal's office when entering and receive prior authorization including a visitor's pass before visiting elsewhere in the building. For parents and other adults attending CSE meetings, a prior invitation to a site specific meeting relieves them of the need to check into the principal's office. (This procedure does not apply when persons have received a prior invitation to a classroom or special event or are attending previously scheduled meetings, seminars, etc.)

B. Parents

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in the educational process through such activities as PTA committee membership and volunteer opportunities. They are also encouraged to meet as needed with their child's teacher to facilitate the learning process. Visits for such purposes are encouraged and valued but must be scheduled so as not to impede the educational process.

Parents wishing to visit classes during the school day must receive prior authorization from the principal who will consult with the teacher before granting such authorization. Parents must understand that it is not possible during such a visit to converse at any length with the teacher. If a teacher conference is desired, it will be scheduled at a time when the teacher is not actively engaged in instruction. The routine presence of parents in classrooms and corridors is disruptive to the educational process. Accordingly, parents dropping off or picking up children at the beginning and end of the school day will do so only in areas designated by the school administration. Also, parents seeking to obtain homework assignments, drop off personal items such as lunch money, or schedule an appointment may do so only at the school office, not by stopping by classrooms.

C. Students

As a general rule, students are discouraged from inviting guests to accompany them to school. In special circumstances, however, such requests may be accommodated providing the following procedures have been adhered to:

1. Such requests must be made by a student and the student's parent at least one day (24 hours) in advance of the proposed visits.
2. A visitor's pass is obtained from the Elementary School, Middle School or High School Office, depending on the grade he/she will visit. This must be signed by the appropriate administrator.
3. The host student accepts full responsibility for his or her guest and the guest agrees to conduct himself/herself according to the rules governing our student body. The guest agrees to remain with his/her host at all times. The right to visit may be terminated at any time at the option of the administration.
4. No visitors are permitted during examination periods or when area schools are closed and our school remains open.
5. Student guests are limited to one visit during each academic year.

D. Other Visitors

Others may, for a variety of legitimate reasons, wish to visit the schools and observe portions of the educational program. In such cases the person wishing to visit must explain his or her purpose in visiting and obtain prior permission from the building principal. The Superintendent of Schools is authorized to establish the procedures in each building necessary to implement this policy.

XV. PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions. For purposes of this section of the code, "public" shall mean all persons when on school property or participating in or attending a school function including students, teachers and district personnel.

The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this code are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. The district recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the district. The purpose of this code is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

A. Prohibited Conduct: No person, either alone or with others, shall:

- Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
- Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
- Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
- Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
- Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
- Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
- Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
- Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
- Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
- Loiter on or about school property.
- Gamble on school property or at school functions.
- Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
- Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
- Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

B. Penalties – Persons who violate this code shall be subject to the following penalties:

- Visitors – their authorization, if any, to remain on school grounds or at the school function shall be withdrawn and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection.
- Students – they shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant, in accordance with the due process requirements.
- Tenured faculty members – they shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law 3020A or any other legal rights that they may have.
- Staff members in the classified service of the civil service entitled to the protection of Civil Service Law 75. Employee discipline will be consistent with the terms of any applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- Staff members other than those described in subdivisions above. They shall be subject to warning, reprimand, suspension or dismissal as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

C. Enforcement

The building principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this code. When the building principal or his/her designee sees an individual engaged in prohibited conduct, which in his or her judgement does not pose any immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or his/her designee shall tell the individual that the conduct is prohibited and attempt to persuade the individual to stop. The principal or his/her designee shall also warn the individual of the consequences for failing to stop. The principal or his/her designee shall also warn the individual of the consequences for failing to stop. If the person refuses to stop engaging in the prohibited conduct, or if the person's conduct poses and immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or his/her designee shall have the individual removed immediately from school property or the school function. If necessary, local law enforcement authorities will be contacted to assist in removing the person.

The district shall initiate disciplinary action against any student or staff member, as appropriate, with the "Penalties" section above. In addition, the district reserves its right to pursue a civil or criminal legal action against any person violating the code.

XVI. STUDENT SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring an atmosphere on school property and at school functions that is safe and orderly. To achieve this kind of environment, any school official authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty on a student may question a student about an alleged violation of law or the district code of conduct.

A. Student lockers, desks and other school storage places

The rules in this code of conduct regarding searches of students and their belongings do not apply to student lockers, desks and other school storage places. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to these places and school officials retain complete control over them. This means that student lockers, desks and other school storage places may be subject to search at any time by school officials, without prior notice to students and without their consent.

B. Police involvement in searches and interrogations of students

District officials are committed to cooperating with police officials and other law enforcement authorities to maintain a safe school environment. Police officials, however, have limited authority to interview or search students in schools or at school functions, or to use school facilities in connection with police work. Police officials may enter school property or a school function to question or search a student or to conduct a formal investigation

C. Child Protective Services Investigations

Consistent with the district's commitment to keep students safe from harm and the obligation of school officials to report to Child Protective Services when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been abused or maltreated, the district will cooperate with local child protective services workers who wish to conduct interview of students on school property relating to allegations of suspected child abuse and/or neglect or custody investigations.

XVI. DISSEMINATION & REVIEW

The Board will work to ensure that the community is aware of this code of conduct and will sponsor an in-service education program for all district staff members to ensure the effective implementation of the code of conduct. The Board of Education will also review this code of conduct every year and update it as necessary.