The Bronx Charter Schools for Better Learning Safety Plan 2026-2027

The Bronx Charter Schools for Better Learning (BBL) provides a safe, nurturing environment so that all students feel safe and are able to focus on learning activities. To continue to foster such an environment we remain clear that the safety of our students and staff is our top priority. Our policies and procedures reflect that priority. Moreover, we maintain an outstanding relationship with our collocated schools such that issues inside and outside the school building are effectively communicated between BBL and our NYCDOE schools to swiftly resolve them. We recognize that both the established policies and consistent communication with our collocated schools are key to protecting our children in the face of threats of violence and threats of natural disasters. As such, preventing any direct harm to our students by way of those threats starts with preparation for them and taking all steps necessary to prevent them. Furthermore, should an emergency occur, we seek to mitigate its effects, stabilize our environment afterward and ultimately restore a safe, learning environment.

Effective Classroom Practices Training for all Staff:
Preventing acts of aggression or violence is of utmost importance in providing a positive school culture. In this prevention effort, during our annual Staff Orientation Week, prior to the start of the school year, staff are required to participate in emergency response training conducted by our administration. Furthermore, all BBL staff are required to participate in workshops and ongoing professional development on Effective Classroom Practices, in building a caring community, we recognize the importance of continuous professional development to implement best practices and address individual situations as they arise. Our teaching staff holds daily morning meetings to make connections with students and to gauge the social/emotional state of each individual student. These meetings have a specific structure and system so that each student participates. If a student reveals information that indicates a problem or challenge, he/she is facing or is aware of, the teacher notifies our guidance staff who then meets with the student to discuss the issue presented.

If the Guidance Counselor determines that administration must be notified, he/she will notify the principal/designee to identify a current or potential violation of the BBL Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct:
A detailed Code of Conduct describes the expected behavior of students, staff and visitors to the school buildings and the disciplinary actions. Expectations will be communicated to all students, staff and parents. The BBL Code of Conduct can be found in our Parent Handbook, located on our website.

In either case, the parent is notified to inform him/her of any penalty and to partner with us to best support the student going forward.

As part of our community-building plans to prevent and correct, if necessary, any instances of bullying or other poor social behavior, we have a biweekly lesson by our guidance staff on varying topics of social/emotional learning. Moreover, we invite organizations to provide assemblies for our students on bullying. Any violation of our code of conduct is approached from a restorative justice lens to encourage students against further transgressions and to provide support for those students who may have been the target of said transgression.

Contacting Parents:
Parents are our first partners in our student's education and all efforts to keep our students feeling safe are done through our partnership with them. In the event of a school emergency, BBL has policies and procedures in place to inform parents/guardians (Parent Handbook). Parents/guardians will be notified, if necessary, via email, phone, and text messaging in the event of an unscheduled early dismissal due to a school emergency. Additionally, BBL has policies and procedures (Parent Handbook) in place to contact parents in the event of an act of violence perpetrated by an individual within our school community.

Through our partnership with our NYCDOE collocated schools, we actively participate in the Building Response Team. The Building Response Teams meet once a month to address current and ongoing issues. Any coordination of schedules or special activities is discussed and planned for at the meetings. More importantly, as it relates to school emergencies, the Building Response Teams discuss any emerging issues of safety with the team to address and curb them.

School Safety Agents:
Each BBL school building has School Safety Agents to log in school visitors and, when necessary, respond to emergencies in the building and on school grounds. The School Safety Agents have an excellent working relationship with the local police precinct and will immediately call them to the school to secure any threats. School Safety Agents are

well-trained by the NYPD and work closely with the BBL administrative team to ensure a safe environment for staff and students.

Training and Drills:

All principals are required to complete mandatory Emergency Readiness training, which is valid for two years. Training is offered online during July and August, and during the school year for new principals who begin their positions after September 1.

All drills are building-wide and are scheduled by our Building Response Team to meet the necessary mandates of the NYCDOE. These drills are thus coordinated between the principals/designees and the School Safety Agents to ensure the safety of all staff and students. The PA system in the building is used to alert all collocated schools of the drill and in the event of an actual emergency. These emergencies include dangerous storms, hazardous material spillages, mass casualty accidents, active shooters, pandemics and other emergencies that threaten the safety and/or health of our staff and students.

Fire Drills: Fire drills are scheduled to train staff and students in emergency evacuation procedures to leave the building in the shortest time possible.
Teachers are trained to:

- Grab the evacuation folder (with attendance sheet and Assembly Cards).
- Lead students to evacuation location as identified on Fire Drill Posters. ALWAYS LISTEN FOR ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS.
- Take attendance and account for students.
- Report injuries, problems, or missing students to school staff and first responders using Assembly Cards.

Soft Lockdown (Shelter-In) Drills: Soft lockdown drills train staff and students to be prepared to remain in classrooms, away from windows, in the event that a threat or some threatening activity comes from outside the school building.
Teachers are trained to:

- Increase situational awareness.
- Conduct business as usual. The Shelter-In directive will remain in effect until hearing the “All Clear” message: “The Shelter-In has been lifted,” followed by specific directions

Hard Lockdown: Hard lockdown drills train staff and students to remove themselves from visibility in the event that an intruder enters the building. Any students not already in a classroom or office will go to the closest one and remain there until the drill is complete. Doors are locked, lights are turned off and all staff and students remain out of sight from the hallway until the lockdown is lifted.

Bus Drills: BBL Staff conducts bus drills, in cooperation with the bus drivers, and with students who take the bus.

As stated above, all emergency procedures are intended to prepare staff and students to remain calm and focused on the safety of themselves and others in the event of an actual emergency. BBL works with our staff and students to prevent threats from members of our community. Additionally, BBL works collaboratively with our collocated schools to ensure that all systems in place work together to secure the building and the people in it. The team conducts a debrief after every drill with school leaders, as well as a multi-agency debrief to assess the effectiveness and identify any areas where corrective action may be required. Our communication is scheduled through the Building Response Team (BRT) and continues throughout the year as different situations present themselves.

Emergency Response Protocols:
Quick and accurate contact with appropriate law enforcement officials is essential in the event of an emergency. These relationships have been established by the participation of members of the BRT. The means to contact law enforcement officials and Department of Education safety officials is documented in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan

For Building-Lever safety Response Plans and protocols, please contact your building administrator.

Emergency Remote Instruction Plan

Bronx Charter Schools for Better Learning Emergency Remote Instruction Plan

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, school districts in New York are required to have a plan for how children will be educated if a school or schools must close under emergency conditions. These Emergency Remote Instruction Plans (ERI Plans) are included as part of the district-wide school safety plan, which is reviewed annually by district and building-level emergency response teams, adopted annually by the Board of Education and submitted to the New York State Education Department.

Communication and Engagement

To help inform our Emergency Remote Instruction Plan, the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning Education Corporation (BBL) completes an annual Student Digital Resources data collection report to better understand the level of access students have to devices (e.g., laptop, Chromebook, cell phone) and the Internet. The survey is sent to new families as they enter the program. Annually, the survey is sent via our mass communication system in the fall to all families with follow-up phone calls and a second mass communication release.

The purpose of this survey is to ensure that, to the extent possible, students can access the Internet and receive remote instruction, if necessary, under emergency conditions. This survey is conducted on an annual basis. Students and families may update their access information at any time by contacting the student's school. It is our goal that this plan is aligned with the information provided by families in the Student Digital Resources data collection.

The district has also developed a plan for communicating all necessary information should a school or schools need to close. The district will use existing internal and external communications channels to notify staff, students, and families/caregivers about remote learning schedules with as much advance notice as possible. This communication will include information about how computing devices (e.g., computers, hot spots, internet provider, etc.) are being disseminated to students and families who need them. Initial communication will be sent via mass communication system if it impacts all classrooms. If it is only a singular or small number of classrooms the principal

contacts families. Following communication by the principal, communication from teachers will be through the means established in each building ex. our school website, PowerSchool, Google Classroom, email, phone calls, etc.

BBL will provide students and their families with multiple ways to contact schools and teachers during remote learning, including our school website, PowerSchool, Google Classroom, email, phone calls, etc.

Device, Internet and Platform Access

To support remote learning, the district will make computer devices available to all students and families who need them. In classrooms where students have their own device, it will go home with them or be delivered.

To the extent possible, the district will also support students and families with accessing the Internet at home. Where that is not possible, the district will work with community partners to secure Wi-Fi access points for students and families so that they may participate in remote learning. The district, based on survey results and parent/ guardian communication, will deliver hot-spots or Wi-Fi through an internet provider to families that are in need of Wi-Fi access.

There will be those students in our community for whom remote learning through digital technology is not appropriate or possible. For these students, the district will assess each student's individual needs and whether in-person learning is an option. Other methods that will be considered include instruction by phone and/or the delivery of hard-copy materials to the student's home. In cases when a student, due to their documented needs, is unable to access instruction through digital technology, teachers will work directly with guardians to determine the best way to deliver instruction, whether it be through packets and phone calls, tele-counseling, individual/small group video conferencing, or in person at a mutually agreed upon public space if no other option is available.

The district will also take steps to ensure that school staff members have the necessary tools, i.e., computing devices and Internet access, to deliver emergency remote instruction from their place of residence. The district provides all teachers and related service providers devices and provides hot-spots as needed.

To ensure high-quality remote learning experiences, the district has standardized the use of a single online learning platforms: SeeSaw for kindergarten through second grade and Google Classroom for grades three through five, to the extent possible, and developed a common, coordinated set of guidelines for teachers to follow when using the platform with students. Along with a cover sheet of expectations, instructional how-to videos are available as needed.

Teaching and Learning

Our schools have developed an emergency remote instruction plan that would support all students. When a remote learning model is necessary, certain groups of students will be prioritized for in-person learning to the greatest extent possible, depending on the nature of the emergency. This includes, but is not limited to, special education students, English language learners, and students with technology or connectivity needs.

Acknowledging that the typical content in each grade level or course may need to be adjusted, content will be prioritized to ensure that students receive instruction for the prioritized learning standards, key understandings, and skills necessary for students' success in future study.

Instruction will focus on "core" subject areas; however, additional courses will continue to be offered in a remote learning environment. All instruction will continue to be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards.

Virtual learning schedules have been developed by grade level. If an emergency requires the district to move to virtual learning, these schedules will be shared with students and families in accordance with the communication strategies outlined earlier in this plan. Students will be given opportunities to engage with teachers and classmates through live instruction, question and answer periods with teachers and group work (i.e., synchronous learning). Teachers will ensure that their students are directly engaged with them and their class peers in experiential learning on a regular basis. Supplementing this time will be self-guided projects, readings and other age-appropriate assignments that can be completed by the students remotely (i.e., asynchronous learning).

Teachers will be trained in best practices for synchronous, blended, and asynchronous instruction. Focus will be on engagement, delivery of content, and assessment.

For brief periods of remote learning a week or less in duration, BBL plans to offer a minimum of 120 minutes of synchronous instruction per day (a one-hour session in the morning and another hourlong session each afternoon), with remaining instructional hours being asynchronous.

For remote learning periods that extend beyond one week, BBL will offer additional synchronous instructional hours in all core subjects, physical education, art, and music.

Support Services

Based on the learning model we have developed, students with disabilities and/or an Individualized Education Plan will continue to receive support services in accordance with their individualized education plans (IEP) should remote learning become necessary. It is the expectation that all service providers (e.g., teachers, paraprofessionals, related service providers) will sign-on to the remote learning platform to support students as needed. This will include large classroom settings in the remote learning environment, as well as the use of breakout rooms or one-on-one virtual meetings as necessary.

Related Services:

- Regular school frequencies will be delivered via live videoconference, with fidelity to the IEP, with specific identified frequencies
- School counselors, in coordination with the teacher, will work to maintain biweekly phone contact with families in support of social/emotional support and home learning initiatives and to identify the need for any other supports

The district will follow its existing engagement and communication protocols with parents regarding the provision of special education services for their child.

- Attendance must be taken daily. Present will be recorded for engagement in assignments, live, or recorded sessions, same as the general education population
- Documentation of parent contact will be in PowerSchool
- Related Services: We will stay the course with remote therapy guidelines that have been developed and are linked above. Documentation will continue in IEP direct related service logs: Medicaid is applicable.
- Please remember that we must implement IEPs as written with a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction.
- If there are individualized variations from the schedule above, the rationale needs to be documented. We need to assure that what we are providing adheres to the IEP and is reasonable, appropriate, and considers the individual and family and FAPE in the remote setting