



Bridge Preparatory Charter School

**Student & Family Handbook
2019-2020 School Year**

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School/Family Contract

COMMITMENT TO OUR BRIDGE BUILDERS AND FAMILIES

Welcome to Bridge Preparatory Charter School! We are committed to providing our students with a safe, structured and welcoming school environment where they learn to enjoy learning and develop their social emotional skills as they grow into responsible and caring young people. We view families as critical partners in the success of our students and ask your support in helping to deliver our mission and vision by signing and agreeing to the following key items included in this handbook:

ATTENDANCE

- I will ensure that my student comes to school every day on time, ready to begin school at 8:00 a.m.
- I understand that if my student is absent more than 10 days within the school year, they may have to repeat their current grade.
- I understand that an absence is excused only if I have contacted the school and written a detailed note regarding student illnesses with a doctor's note, family emergency or religious observance.
- I understand that the school day ends at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday, and my child is required to remain in school for the entire day.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- I agree to promote and support the rules of behavior as outlined in the Student & Family Handbook and accept responsibility as a partner in my student's learning.
- I understand and accept the School's various infraction levels and related consequences.
- I understand that while my student is in school they are not permitted to use, or have out in plain sight, cell phones, iPods, music players, video game players, or other electronic devices.
- I understand that the School has a **zero** tolerance for bullying and that if my student bullies another student, they will be disciplined accordingly which may result in loss of school privileges, detention and/or suspension from school.
- I understand that verbal and physical aggression will not be tolerated and that if my student demonstrates verbal or physical aggression toward classmates and/or school staff, they will be disciplined accordingly, which may result in loss of school privileges, detention, and/or suspension from school.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE/UNIFORM

- The student dress code is subject to the School's Code of Conduct.
- I will ensure that my student comes to school in uniform each day.
- I understand that if my student comes to school out of uniform, that I will be contacted by the School to discuss the specific reason.

FAMILY SUPPORT

- I agree to support my student's academic work by communicating regularly with his or her teacher.
- I understand that my student's report card will be backpacked home with them,

- several days prior to Family-Teacher conferences.
- I agree to attend Family-Teacher conferences, family meetings and other school-sponsored events on a regular basis.
 - I agree not to send soda, candy or gum, or glass or metal containers of any kind to school with my student.
 - I agree to respond to phone calls from school staff members promptly.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Student Name

(Print)_____

Parent/Guardian Signature_____

Date_____

****Please note, the Student & Family Handbook is subject to change at any time. Any additions, changes or attachments will be provided to families immediately and will be included as part of all future versions of the Student & Family Handbook.****

General Information

Bridge Preparatory Charter School	
Address	715 Ocean Terrace, Building E Staten Island, NY 10301
Main Office Phone Number	718-274-3437
Regular Hours of School Operation	Monday-Friday: 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Instructional Day Hours	Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: 8 a.m.- 4 p.m. Wednesday and Friday: 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
Administration Contact Information	Mr. Timothy Castanza Executive Director tim@bridgeprepcharter.org Ms. Jesse Ann Pirraglia Director of Teaching and Learning jesseann@bridgeprepcharter.org Ms. Faron Ebanks Dean of Specialized Instruction faron@bridgeprepcharter.org Mrs. RoseMarie Illuzzi Family and Community Engagement Coordinator rosemarie@bridgeprepcharter.org

Communication Protocols

How you can communicate with the School

We are committed to establishing and maintaining open and respectful communications between families and our School staff, and encourage families to be in regular communication with teachers and staff. Each staff member has his or her own dedicated school email address that begins with the staff members name and end with @bridgeprepcharter.org. For example: RoseMarie Illuzzi's email is rosemarie@bridgeprepcharter.org.

Families are encouraged to request conferences or meetings with teachers with advance notice. If you wish to contact a staff member for a more immediate need or question, you may do so in the following ways:

- You may call the school directly during regular school hours of operation and leave a message with the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator for the specific staff member. The Family and Community Engagement Coordinator will take a message and pass the message along to the appropriate staff member for follow up.
- You may email the staff member directly at their designated school email address with your question and any requested follow up.

While we will not interrupt teachers during the school day, teachers will return phone

calls, emails and requests in writing to meet the expectation of open lines of communication. Should the need arise to schedule follow up calls or meetings, staff will work with the parent or guardian to do so at a mutually agreeable time.

How the School will communicate with you

Bridge Prep will communicate with families in multiple ways, but the primary way for contacting a student's parent or guardian will be via phone at the number provided to the school at enrollment. In many cases, the School will also reach out to families via email at the email address provided to the School upon enrollment. Additionally, Bridge Prep asks that families download the *Remind* App on their Android or IOS device. *Remind* is a free text messaging app that helps teachers, students, and parents communicate quickly and efficiently. Once the app is downloaded, a parent or guardian will need to create an account and join the Bridge Prep specific page by entering class code **@3cfaf6**. In order to sign up for text messages directly from Remind, text the class code **@3cfaf6** to the phone number 81010 and reply to any text messages from the Remind team. Any questions about accessing Remind should be directed to the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator.

Each week teachers will send home a subject specific weekly one-page topic review sheet, so families can be made aware of what their student is learning in class, as well as engage with them in the content and check for understanding.

Each month the School will send home a monthly newsletter, which will provide families with important dates, information, events and happenings. Additionally, the School's website, www.bridgeprepcharter.org, and Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts (@BridgePrepSI) will be updated often with happenings and communications so please be sure to follow our social media accounts for the most up to date events.

School Closing Due to Emergency or Weather

In the event of an emergency or poor weather conditions such as heavy snow, Bridge Prep will communicate school closing decisions regarding with families via:

- Remind App Notification;
- Social Media; and
- Automated Phone Call Message.

In addition to monitoring the School's social media accounts and website, please check your local television or radio stations for relevant information regarding school cancellation. If New York City public schools are closed for emergency or weather, so is Bridge Prep.

Chain of Command

The Executive Director is in charge of the School and building at all times. In the absence of the Executive Director, the Director of Teaching and Learning is in charge of the School and building. In the absence of the Executive Director and the Director of Teaching and Learning, the Dean of Specialized Instruction is in charge of the School and building.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Bridge Prep does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with the Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA). In addition, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to Bridge Prep on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of students' education records. FERPA gives families certain rights with respect to their children's education records. Those rights are as follows:

- Families or eligible students have the right to inspect and review all of the student's education records maintained by Bridge Prep. For records including information on more than one student, families are limited only to information pertaining to their child. Bridge Prep is not required to provide copies of materials in education records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for families and/or eligible students to inspect the records. Bridge Prep may charge a fee for copies.
- At Bridge Prep, student records or other identifiable information are locked and maintained in a secure location to ensure confidentiality. Records that are no longer required or need to be disposed of are done so in a manner that ensures confidentiality and security.
- Families or eligible students have the right to request that Bridge Prep correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If Bridge Prep decides not to amend the record, the parent/guardian or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if Bridge Prep still decides not to amend the record, the parent/guardian and/or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record, commenting on the contested information in the record.
- Bridge Prep must have written permission from the parent/guardian or eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties:
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of Bridge Prep;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - Judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies;

- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Court Orders or Subpoenas

In the case of a valid court order or lawfully issued subpoena, the school will immediately notify the parent in writing of the information that is requested (unless the subpoena states otherwise). Police officers and other law enforcement agencies must also present valid court orders or lawfully issued subpoenas when requesting student information.

Child Protective Services

Child Protective Service workers may request to see a student's school records at any time and the school must comply.

Procedure for Accessing Student Records

1. A parent or guardian may request to review their child's student file. Any person requesting to review a student file must submit a request in writing to Bridge Prep, to the attention of the Executive Director.
2. Bridge Prep will review the request and determine whether to release the information to the requester. If the requester is not a parent/guardian, a *Consent for Release of Student Information* letter will be sent to the parent/guardian for permission.
3. Once permission is granted to review a student's file, the requester must sign a *Record of Access* form. If a student has an IEP, the requester must also sign a *Confidential File Access Log* form in the student folder.

Procedure to Amend or Appeal Student Records

1. If a parent or guardian believes the education records relating to the student contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right to privacy, they may ask that the record be amended. A parent or guardian may express the appeal in writing to Bridge Prep, sent to the attention of the Executive Director and must include the following:
 - Information that is claimed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights;
 - Records in which the parent or guardian believes the information is contained;
 - Basis for the claim (i.e., why they believe the information is inaccurate, etc.);
 - The parent's or guardian's proposed change.
2. The Executive Director will review the request and make a determination within 14 calendar days of receiving the letter. Bridge Prep will provide the parent/guardian with a written response to the request and explain the reason for the decision. If the action is warranted, Bridge Prep may decide to remove, modify, or expunge the information in the record. Removing, modifying, or expunging an entry is not an admission that the entry was improper or that any person acted improperly by including the entry on the record.
3. If the request is denied or no ruling is made in the allotted time, the parent or guardian has the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees within 20 school days from the adverse ruling or failure to rule.

4. The Board of Trustees will appoint a hearing officer. A hearing will be held within 21 calendar days after the parent/guardian files the request with the Board of Trustees and the parent/guardian will be given notice of date, place, and time of the hearing with sufficient advance notice.

5. A parent or guardian will be given the opportunity to present the appeal and may be assisted or represented by individuals of their choice or own expense. The hearing officer's decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.

6. A written report containing a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision will be issued 14 calendar days from the conclusion of the hearing. If necessary, the hearing officer will direct the Executive Director to amend the records accordingly and inform the parent or guardian in writing. The hearing officer's decision will be final. If the parent or guardian does not agree with the decision, the parent or guardian has the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information or stating why they disagree with the decision of the hearing officer, or both.

Missing Property and Lost and Found

Bridge Prep will make every effort to collect and return any lost clothing items or other student property. Families can assist the School by labeling all items brought into the building. In the event that a student's personal property is lost or damaged on school grounds or at a School event, the School reserves the right to investigate whether or not the loss or damage was caused by an action or inaction of a School staff member. If it is determined that a School staff did not cause the loss or damage, the School will not provide reimbursement for the lost or damaged personal property.

The School will hold all unclaimed property in the Lost and Found storage space in the Main Office, until the last Friday of each month. Please be sure to check before the end of the month if your child is missing something and communicate that information to the School. After the last Friday of each month, Bridge Prep reserves the right to discard or donate unclaimed property to a local organization.

McKinney- Vento Act

New York's Education for Homeless Children and Youth program provides support to ensure that homeless children and youth who live in temporary housing have equal access to the same free, appropriate, public education - including public preschool - provided to other New York children, with the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content and student performance standards. Some examples of temporary housing include:

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship or other similar reason,
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds,
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters,
- Abandoned in hospitals,
- Living in a public or private place not designed for sleeping,
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, etc.
- Migratory living in circumstances described above.

Every school district, BOCES and charter school is required to have an LEA liaison

whose duties include the removal of barriers to the enrollment, attendance and success of homeless children and youth in school. At Bridge Prep the McKinney-Vento liaison is the School's social worker.

School Environment

Classroom Visits

We value families as our partners in this work, and we encourage family attendance and participation in the academic experience of their Bridge Builder. In addition to the multiple ways that families can get involved with the School, a student's **parent or guardian** will be provided the opportunity to visit their classroom once per trimester. Specific dates and times available for visits will be distributed to families at the beginning of each trimester and all classroom visits must be scheduled the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator. Upon approval from the Executive Director and Director of Teaching and Learning, the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator will confirm the scheduled visit time with the student's parent or guardian. Parents and guardians will need to follow the School's standard procedures for entering the building, and are not permitted to walk around the building without signing in and registering with the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator on the scheduled date and time of their visit.

Connect Saturdays

Once per trimester (3 times per year) Bridge Builders will attend school for an abbreviated school day known as a Connect Saturday. These dates for the 2019-2020 school year, are listed on the official school calendar that was provided to families and is listed on the School website. Connect Saturdays are considered school days and as such, all policies and procedures regarding attendance, lateness and the Code of Conduct apply.

As shared with parents upon enrollment, busing is not available for students on Connect Saturdays, and the parent or guardian is responsible for assuring that their Bridge Builder gets to school on time. Connect Saturdays run from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Should you anticipate a problem with getting your Bridge Builder to school on any of the designated Connect Saturday sessions, please reach out directly to the Director of Teaching and Learning to discuss the situation further. All students will be provided with a snack on Connect Saturday, however a parent or guardian is welcome to send their student with a meal/snack from home instead. The same policies regarding food that apply during the regular school day, apply on Connect Saturdays.

Generally, Connect Saturday programming is divided into two segments:

- Theme-based academic intervention or enrichment; and
- An organized Project Based Learning celebration, centered on students' project-based studies and accomplishments.

Families are invited and encouraged to participate in Connect Saturday activities whenever possible, though it is not mandatory. Information regarding the schedule and programming for each Connect Saturday will be provided to families in advance. The

School reserves the right to modify the schedule and specific daily programming for Connect Saturdays and will keep families informed of any changes and important information.

Bridge Building Days and Whole School Events

A key element of our School design is a focus on outside learning experiences and meaningful learning connections. During these activities - which are a privilege and not a right - it is important for all students to be responsible for their behavior since the site of the activity or event is a temporary extension of the School. A permission slip that allows students to leave the building on field trips will be sent at the beginning of each school year. This slip must be signed and returned or students will not be permitted to leave the building. Bridge Building Days are listed on the School calendar, but families will be provided with reminders and any trip specific information before a field trip.

In the event that parents, guardians or other volunteers assist with any trips or whole-school events, students must afford these chaperones the same respect they would provide to School staff. The School's Code of Conduct must be followed when attending all School-sponsored events, and riding on School- provided transportation. The use of portable electronic devices is prohibited on Bridge Building Days, unless the staff chaperones indicate otherwise.

Bridge Prep requires adult supervision of all students by a parent, guardian or designated family member at any special meetings or school-wide events that take place outside of the regularly scheduled school day or program. As such, a student may not be dropped off and left unsupervised for these types of events, and prior to any such event parents or guardians will be made aware of this requirement.

Birthdays and Other Celebrations

Bridge Prep recognizes that often times students and families want to celebrate special milestones or moments in their lives, such as birthdays. If you would like to send something for your student to enjoy with her or his classmates on their birthday or any other special milestone day, we ask that you please send non-food items for the class to enjoy. Some examples could include, but are not limited to:

- A game for the classroom
- A classroom book (Try having your student pick it out, sign it, and date it!)
- A classroom set of items for each student to keep (pencils, pens, erasers, markers, etc.)

Please note, invitations to outside parties may be distributed in the classroom only when all students in the class are invited to attend.

Family Association

The Family Association is an opportunity to work with other family members to get involved with ways to support Bridge Prep's development as well as a great opportunity to voice your suggestions or concerns and to help other families solve problems. The Family Association will hold monthly meetings and work on special projects and all parents and guardians are automatically members of the Family Association. Some ways to get involved with the Family Association are as follows:

- **Run for an elected position:** The school will announce when elections will take place a few weeks in advance. Elected positions include: President, Treasurer and Secretary.
 - **Additionally,** a seat on the School’s Board of Trustees has been reserved for a representative of the Family Association, which will be decided upon by the Family Association at their first annual meeting.
- **Attend a Family Association meeting:** Meetings are usually held after school and sometimes on Saturdays. A schedule will be distributed at the beginning of the school year.
- **Volunteer to help with an event or project:** Reach out to the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator for a schedule of meetings for the year and to find out how you can get involved with specific projects or events.

Academics

At Bridge Prep, we are committed to the academic achievement of all Bridge Builders as well as each Bridge Builder’s social and emotional growth. To ensure that we are all successful, we expect that **all learners:**

- Try their best everyday;
- Treat others the way they want to be treated;
- Be accepting of others’ differences, including thoughts and opinions; and
- Make mistakes and learn from them.

Attendance Policy

It should go without saying that Bridge Builders can only be successful if they are present and prepared to learn in school every day. While we understand that circumstances arise that may cause a Bridge Builder to miss days of school, excessive unexcused absences will not be tolerated. Being absent will mean that students are missing valuable time in the classroom, and as a result may fall behind academically and miss important instructional time. If a Bridge Builder is absent without an excuse for more than 10 days of the school year, including mandatory Connect Saturdays, the Bridge Builder may have to repeat their current grade or attend a specially designed summer school sessions immediately following the end of the school year.

A parent or guardian is expected to call the School as early as possible, but no later than 7:30 a.m., if their student will not be attending school for any reason. Earlier, written permission is both welcomed and appreciated. Calls should be made as far in advance as possible and can be left on the School’s voicemail if necessary. In phone calls, voice mails, and notes, please leave or list the student’s name, your relationship to the student, the day(s) on which the student will be absent, and the reason for the absence. If a student is not in class and the School has not been notified, their parent or guardian will be called at home and/or work.

All questions regarding student attendance and attendance records should be directed to the School’s main office.

A student is considered absent with excuse when the student’s parent or guardian has contacted the School regarding student illness, family emergency or religious observance. All other absences will be considered unexcused, including but not limited to: family

vacation, participation at sports tournaments and recreational activities, attendance at entertainment events, or when the parent or guardian has not contacted the School with a satisfactory reason.

Work will not be provided in advance of unexcused absences. The student's parent or guardian will be responsible for working with the student's teacher to identify any class work or materials missed during all absences.

If notification of the reason for an absence has not been provided in advance, a student returning from an absence is required to bring, on the day of their return or immediately afterwards, a signed note from their parent or guardian explaining in detail the reason for the absence. If the student made a medical visit, a note from their doctor is required.

Since repeated absence means missing instructional time, and missing instructional time affects academic achievement, excessive absences will result in lower grades. Therefore, it is imperative that students are at school, on time, every day.

If a student is absent for the first 5 days of school, the School will reach out to the parent or guardian listed on the student's enrollment documentation to schedule an in-person conference to discuss the student's enrollment status. If a student is absent for 5 consecutive days or more during the school year, the School will contact the student's parent or guardian via phone and email to set up an in-person conference, to discuss the attendance concern.

In accordance with NYS Education Law, any enrolled student over the compulsory attendance age in their school district shall not be dropped from enrollment at Bridge Prep unless they have been absent twenty (20) consecutive school days and the School follows the procedures outlined in NYS Education Law Section 3201.1(a).

Family Engagement

We believe in transparency and keeping our families very much involved in the educational process. Family Engagement events are opportunities for our families and teachers to come together to support the progress and achievement of the student. Some events may look like traditional conferences and others may not. These events will take place several times during the year. Attendance is mandatory. If families are unable to attend an event, they can speak with the teacher to arrange a time convenient for both the family and the school. The Family Engagement schedule will be communicated to families at the beginning of every school year.

Homework

At Bridge Prep, our focus is making sure that we develop happy and healthy students and believe in maximizing the time during the school day for student learning and assessment. We also believe that supporting and involving families in their student's academic experience is critical to student growth. While we do not assign traditional homework to students on a daily basis, families will be provided a subject by subject overview, on a weekly basis, to describe what is happening and expected of students in the classroom within each content area. Teachers will also provide conversation starters and questions for families to use with their Bridge Builder, so that there can be thoughtful

and authentic conversations around what is happening at school. It is expected that families talk to their students on a daily basis and help them reflect on their progress. Throughout the year, there may be various, take home activities for students, based on their growth and ability levels, to work on for a given content area.

Assessments

Assessment data will help us measure academic progress and determine which strategies work, to effectively implement change, improve teaching and learning and student achievement. We utilize multiple measures, including periodic MAP assessments, periodic writing assessments, teacher-created assessments, curriculum-aligned assessments, and daily Orton-Gillingham skill assessments to measure academic progress, set goals, and determine next steps in all subject areas. Assessments that inform teaching and learning are done within the daily lessons. Information regarding assessments that evaluate student learning will be communicated to families.

Family Engagement

We believe in transparency and keeping our families very much involved in the educational process. Family Engagement events are opportunities for our families and teachers to come together to support the progress and achievement of the student. Some events may look like traditional conferences and others may not. These events will take place several times during the year. Attendance is mandatory. If families are unable to attend an event, they can speak with the teacher to arrange a time convenient for both the family and the school. The Family Engagement schedule will be communicated to families at the beginning of every school year.

Report Cards

Report cards will reflect the student’s progress toward mastery of grade level skills and measure student learning. Subjects will be broken down into learning targets that reflect a teachable concept or skill. Throughout the trimester, students engage in activities aligned to the learning targets and teachers assess the student output toward mastery of the learning target. The scale, ranging from 1-4, reflects the students’ increase in skill. Each time a new concept or skill is introduced, it may be the case that the student will have minimal prior knowledge of the skill and will thus begin at 1, which reflects that the student cannot demonstrate the skill without assistance. As we move through the year, students will learn more and their work and understanding will increase, which may result in the achievement of a 2, which reflects partial mastery or understanding. Our goal for all students is that by the end of the academic year, their work will achieve a 3, thus meeting the expectation of the learning targets. Once students meet the target, we work toward exceeding the target, which is reflected by a 4. Teachers will routinely communicate each student’s progress toward mastering the learning target with families in a variety of ways.

Grading Scale

Indicator	Description
4	The student performs above the expectations of the learning target.
3	The student meets the expectations of the learning target.
2	The student is approaching the expectations of the learning target –

	demonstrates partial understanding or performs with assistance.
1	The student is a beginner in regards to the learning target – cannot demonstrate mastery with assistance.

Behavior and Classroom Expectations

Bridge Prep seeks to develop reflective leaders who are curious, critical thinkers. Our goal is to build our community of leaders and foster a love of learning by creating a safe environment where all learners are inspired to flourish, grow, and find their voice. All students will be taught the following habits, aimed to empower them with the leadership and life skills needed for long-term academic and personal success:

Habit 1: **Be Proactive.** *You're in charge of you.*

Habit 2: **Begin with the End in Mind.** *Make a plan and set goals.*

Habit 3: **Put First Things First.** *Get important tasks done first.*

Habit 4: **Think Win-Win.** *Everyone can be happy.*

Habit 5: **Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood.** *Actively listen to others first, then communicate ideas clearly.*

Habit 6: **Synergize.** *Teamwork makes the dream work.*

Habit 7: **Sharpen the Saw.** *Balance is best.*

All students will be taught the expected behaviors. If students' actions are not aligned to the behaviors and expectations of the school, it should be expected that there will be consequences as well as an opportunity for students to learn from their actions.

There are certain necessary behaviors that must be in place in order for effective learning to take place. These include:

- **Active Positive Participation:** All students are expected to listen and encouraged positively to contribute in the classroom so that learning can occur.
- **Eating:** Eating is only permitted during snack time and/or lunch. In an effort to promote nutritional awareness, soda, and candy are not permitted in school.
- **Gum Chewing:** Gum chewing is not allowed in school.
- **Bathroom Procedures:** Students are permitted to use the restroom during breakfast, lunch and breaks. Students are expected to communicate when they need to use the restrooms with teachers and/or staff. If students have an emergency they will always be permitted to leave the classroom to use the restroom.

Special Education and Related Services

Overview

For purposes of special education, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) is the LEA for students attending charter schools located in New York City, and charter schools are considered to be “schools of the LEA.” The DOE, in partnership with charter schools must offer eligible students with disabilities in charter schools a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE), with their general education peers to the greatest extent possible, while receiving appropriate supports.

The same criteria for eligibility for special education are used for a student attending a

charter school as any other New York City-resident student. As the LEA, the DOE is responsible for evaluation and identification of charter school students for special education eligibility, and for the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). If it is determined that a student is eligible for special education, an IEP team — through a process of collaborative decision-making, including the parent, staff from the responsible CSE, and staff from the School— will develop an IEP and determine the type and intensity of services needed and the type of setting in which the services will be provided. A student who is ineligible for special education services may still be eligible for accommodations under Section 504. Charter schools are expected to work with parents to develop Section 504 plans independent of the CSE and all 504 plans must be reviewed on an annual basis.

When a student with an IEP enrolls at Bridge Prep, the School will review the student’s existing IEP in advance of the start of the school year, if possible. The School will plan on implementing the IEP developed by the CSE for each student with a disability and will collaborate with the CSE and the student parent or guardian to ensure that all services recommended in the IEP are provided to the student.

Referrals for special education

Under state regulations, charter schools are not able to make an initial referral for special education on their own. However, if a charter school suspects that a student may have a disability, the charter school may and should submit a written request for the CSE to refer the student for an initial evaluation. A parent may also make an initial referral for special education services by submitting a written request for evaluation (a “referral document”) to the student’s charter school or CSE. If a charter school receives a written referral from a parent, the charter school must immediately forward the parent’s initial referral to the CSE, indicating the date that the referral was received. If a parent or guardian makes an oral request to a charter school (by phone or in person), Bridge Prep will assist the parent in creating an initial referral document that states the request for evaluation and, if communicated by the parent, the reason(s) for the request and any specific assessment(s) being requested. The School will then forward the parent or guardian’s initial referral to the CSE as noted above.

Specialized Instruction at Bridge Prep

Bridge Prep provides specialized instruction to meet the academic and social emotional needs of all students. Our multisensory instructional approach, programming and overall school design is rooted in fully integrating students with special needs within the general education curriculum. It is our belief that all students, regardless of background or disability, can succeed academically within an inclusive school environment designed to meet their needs. All students will experience daily learning in small classes with a teacher and an associate teacher for at least 60% of the normal school week. Our class structure and instructional programming encourage instructional grouping within our classrooms, which allow our staff to continuously assess and monitor student progress, growth and areas of needed improvement. Students who require modified curriculum and related services such as Speech-Language therapy, Physical Therapy or Occupational Therapy, will receive them within the classroom whenever appropriate and in accordance with their IEPs. In addition to our curriculum, which will be modified to meet the needs of all students, students at Bridge Prep will receive:

- Multiple arts- based enrichment classes, that provide students the opportunity to express themselves and build on their existing strengths;
- Reading instruction and interventions via the Orton-Gillingham approach, a structured literacy approach with proven results for increasing reading achievement for all students;
- Daily time for key Executive Functioning skill building; and
- Specially designed Creative Learning Extensions, project-based learning experiences that provide the opportunity for individualized application of academic content.

Students with disabilities at Bridge Prep will have the opportunity to fully participate and progress in the general education curriculum and will participate in state and district-wide assessments in accordance with his or her IEP. Under the supervision of the Director of Teaching and Learning, the Dean of Specialized Instruction and student's teacher(s) will work with the CSE to develop, implement, review and ensure compliance of all IEPs throughout the school year.

For more information or specific questions regarding special education processes, protocols and procedures or with a question that is specific to your student, please contact the Dean of Specialized Instruction directly.

Response to Intervention (RtI)

For any student at risk of not meeting their academic goals, Bridge Prep will implement Response to Intervention (RtI) as a framework for direct intervention instruction. RtI is used as a three-tiered, increasingly intense intervention tool that prevents inappropriate or premature referrals to special education and as an identification and pre- evaluation process for students with disabilities. The common goal of RtI is to help all students achieve high standards.

Prior to referring a student to the CSE for further testing and evaluation for a special educational recommendation, the School will consider multiple classroom-level and RtI interventions, including: techniques to reduce distractions; exploration with families of possible student health issues (hearing, vision, medical); scaffolding of all content; behavioral supports and various interventions provided by the Instructional team.

Rendering an instructionally sound academic program is at our fundamental core and is the Tier 1 level of RtI. This occurs right in the classroom with existing staff in small, differentiated groups in all content areas. As students are screened utilizing diagnostic tools to obtain baseline and formative data and are determined to be at risk for not meeting standards, they will be provided with increasingly supportive instruction and programs of intervention. Regular progress monitoring is required so that school staff can determine if levels should intensify or be lessened. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students and parents or guardians will be completely informed of their student's progress.

Social Work and Counseling

Bridge Prep is fortunate to have an experienced and talented school social worker on staff. Our social worker provides individualized support and attention to students and families, and is available to find resources for our families in the local community.

Bridge Prep supports the social, emotional, and behavioral well being of our students by providing individual counseling, small group counseling, workshops, in-class presentations, and family outreach. If the School thinks that a family could benefit from the support of a counselor, we may ask the social worker to contact the family directly, or direct the family to reach out to the social worker via the School's Communication protocols.

Programming for Multilingual Learners (MLLs)

Upon registration, parents are asked to fill out a Home Language Identification Survey. Students who speak a language other than English take an exam called the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) prior to the start of school. The score on the NYSITELL determines whether or not a student is entitled to receive ESL services. At Bridge Prep, our ESL services will offered through push-in and/or a pull- out and will include the development of strategies through daily reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. These strategies include the development of oral language, teaching of grammar, syntax and structure in the English language and the development of academic language and vocabulary. Each spring, our emergent bilingual students are required to take the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) to evaluate English proficiency. The student continues to take the NYSESLAT until he or she is considered proficient. Once a student reaches proficiency determined by the NYSESLAT, he or she can still receive ESL supports for an additional two years.

Student Discipline and the Code of Conduct

Bridge Preparatory Charter School (the "School", "Bridge Prep") is committed to providing a safe, orderly and nurturing environment in which students can achieve academic excellence and flourish socially and emotionally. Having a firm, clear and consistent Code of Conduct and approach to student discipline allows students and teachers to maximize class time to promote student learning.

We will use positive re-enforcements to encourage good behavior in our students. However, students whose behavior does not meet the School community's clearly defined standards will not be permitted to disrupt the educational experience of others. Therefore, infractions of School standards will have consequences.

Definitions

For purposes of the Code of Conduct, the following definitions apply:

- 1- "School" or "Bridge Prep" is Bridge Preparatory Charter School.
- 2- "Bridge Builder" means student.
- 3- "Parent" means parent, guardian, or person in parental relation to the student.
- 4- "NYC DOE" means the New York City Department of Education
- 5- "School premises" means on or within any building, structure, athletic playing field or playground used by the School.
- 6- "School property" means property belonging to or leased by the school.
- 7- "School function" means any school-sponsored extra-curricular or in-school event or activity.
- 8- "Violent student" means a student who:

- a. Commits an act of violence or uncontrolled behavior upon a school employee or attempts or threatens to do so.
 - b. Commits, while on school premises or at a school function, an act of violence or uncontrolled behavior upon another student or any other person lawfully on school premises or at a school function, or attempts or threatens to do so.
 - c. Possesses a weapon while on school premises or at a school function.
 - d. Displays what appears to be a weapon while on school premises or at a school function.
 - e. Threatens to use a weapon or replica of a weapon while on school property or at a school function off campus.
 - f. Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys school property.
 - g. Physically intimidates, threatens, or bullies others while on school property or at a school function.
- 9- "Weapons" includes but is not limited to:
- a. A firearm, razor, air gun, mock gun, knife, box cutter, sling- shot, martial arts instruments, deadly or hazardous chemicals, mace, pepper spray.
 - b. Any other type of deadly or dangerous instrument.

Prohibited Student Conduct

Bridge Prep holds all Bridge Builders accountable for their behavior. Infractions are grouped into three levels based on the severity of the infraction. Each level of infraction provides a set of **possible** disciplinary responses that may be imposed by the School and multiple incidents within each infraction may result in disciplinary responses from a higher infraction level .

Infraction Levels

- Level 1 - Engaging in Insubordinate and/or Disorderly Conduct
- Level 2 - Engaging in Conduct that Endangers the: Safety, Morals, Health, or Welfare of Self or Others
- Level 3 - Engaging in Violent, Disruptive, and/or Threatening Conduct

Examples of Level 1 Infractions

Repeated violation of the Dress Code	Gambling
Repeated late arrivals to school	Using abusive or profane language or treatment
Being disrespectful toward another student	Making unreasonable noises or sounds in the school environment
Misbehaving on school-provided transportation	Defamation
Misbehaving inside or outside of class	Using or possessing inappropriate or obscene property and/or material
Disrupting class or exhibiting behavior that prevents teaching and learning	Being disrespectful toward a staff member or their designee
Gum, food and beverages during unauthorized times	Failing to comply with the directive of a staff member
Cheating, plagiarism, copying someone else's work, or allowing others to copy work	Forgery

Possible Disciplinary Responses/Consequences

Oral warning	Written notification to parent (s) or guardian(s)
Restorative Conversation/Intervention	Phone-call with parent(s) or guardian(s)
Confiscation	Exclusion and/or removal from a particular classroom activity or school event
Suspension from transportation	

Examples of Level 2 Infractions

Theft, loss, or destruction of personal or School property	Violating the civil rights of others
Mistreatment or inappropriate use of technology or School property	Harassment, bullying and discrimination
Play Fighting	Engaging in sexual activity or inappropriate touching
Lewd behavior	Hazing
Gang membership	Leaving the classroom or school building through any exit without prior approval from a School staff member.
Using or possessing drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products	

Possible Disciplinary Responses/Consequences

In Person conference or meeting with parent(s) or guardian(s)	Restorative Conversation/ Intervention
After- School Detention	Exclusion and/or removal from a

	particular classroom activity or event
Short Term In-School suspension	Short term Out-of-School Suspension

Examples of Level 3 Infractions	
Committing a physical or emotional act of violence on others	Fighting or unwanted physical contact
Threatening, bullying, and/or intimidating	Possessing, displaying, using, or threatening to use a weapon or dangerous object
Committing arson	Setting off a false alarm or making a threat
Sexual Harassment	

Possible Disciplinary Responses/Consequences	
In person meeting or conference with parent(s) or guardian(s)	Confiscation
Exclusion and/or removal from a particular classroom activity or event)	Restorative Conversation/Intervention
Short term Out-of-School Suspension	Long term Out-of School Suspension
After School Detention	Expulsion

Where and When the Code of Conduct Applies

The standards set forth in the Code of Conduct apply to behavior(s):

- In school, during school hours;
- Before and after school, while on school property;
- While traveling on vehicles funded by the NYC DOE;
- At all school-sponsored events on or off campus;
- On other-than-school property when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the educational process or to endanger the health, safety, morals, or welfare of the School.

When misbehavior involves communication, gestures, or expressive behavior, the infraction applies to oral, written or electronic communications, including but not limited to texting, emailing, and social networking.

Discipline Responses/Consequences

Any student who is found to have violated the Code of Conduct may be subject to the following consequences, either alone or in combination with another:

Immediate In-School Responses/ Consequences

When a student engages in behavior which is substantially disruptive to the educational process or substantially interferes with a teacher’s ability to lead their classroom and the ability for other students to learn, the student may be subject to any of the following disciplinary actions:

- Oral warning from the teacher/staff member to the student;
- Written notification from the School to the parent(s) or guardian(s);
- Confiscation
- Exclusion and/or removal of the student from a particular classroom or school activity or event;

- Restorative Conversations/Intervention

Restorative Conversations

One of the most powerful behavioral interventions and that teachers and school leaders can use with students is a Restorative Conversation. Restorative Conversations allow staff to:

- Build positive relationships with students;
- Model understanding and provide compassion for students;
- Teach students how to resolve conflict; and
- Allow students to have, understand and develop voice.

Restorative Conversations at Bridge Prep will be focused on understanding the student's behavior and how the behavior impacts the larger learning community and overall culture of achievement. This form of intervention presents an opportunity for the student to express his or her feelings and explain his or her behavior. It also allows the staff member to set high expectations, understand and identify ways to support the student and explain the impact of the student's behavior on the learning community.

While each conversation is unique, all Restorative Conversations at Bridge Prep:

- Send a strong message of care and understanding to the student.
- Provide the student with a space for reflection and for their voice to be heard;
- Reiterate the School's expectations and core values; and
- Create a plan together that sets both the staff member and student up for success.

Suspension from Transportation

Bridge Prep's Code of Conduct will apply to events occurring on the school bus (yellow bus) or on officially sponsored School trip and students who do not follow the Code of Conduct on School provided transportation may have their riding privileges suspended temporarily or permanently by the Executive Director or his or her designee. In such cases, the student's parent or guardian will become responsible for seeing that their student gets to and from school safely.

Bridge Prep is aware that there may be students who receive Special Education Transportation (yellow bus) service in accordance with his or her IEP. In the event that a student receiving Special Education Transportation service violates the Code of Conduct while on Transportation, the School will be mindful of this plan and will involve the CSE as appropriate in addressing the situation.

Short Term In-School Suspension: 10 Days or Less

Because we believe that students benefit from instruction in a school setting, even when suspension is an appropriate disciplinary response, we provide alternative instruction for suspended students within the school setting, unless the severity of the conduct leading to the suspension makes immediate return to school inappropriate or the School does not have adequate facilities or staff to provide a supervised alternative program. To the extent possible, the alternative in-school instructional program will be hosted at a location on-site and will provide similar academic curriculum that students would receive if attending regular classes. In addition to the instruction provided to a student receiving an In-School Suspension, the student will also be provided with a Restorative

Conversation/Intervention.

Short Term Out-of-School Suspension: 10 Days or Less

If the School does not have adequate facilities for in-school alternative instruction, or if for any other reason the student's presence in the school building causes a risk of continuing disruption or a risk of danger to the student or others, the Executive Director may direct that the alternative instruction be provided off-site.

Long Term Suspension: 10 Days or More

As with short-term suspension, alternative instruction may be provided in-school or outside of school, depending on the availability of space within the school facility, the severity of the conduct which led to the disciplinary proceeding and whether return to school can be safely accomplished without continuing disruption or danger to the student or others.

Expulsion

Expulsion is reserved for extraordinary circumstances, including but not limited to circumstances where a student's conduct posed or continues to pose a danger to the safety and well-being of other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property, attending a school function, or on school-provided transportation. The procedure for expulsion shall be the same procedure and due process set forth for long-term suspension.

Please note that before a student is returned to class, the parent or guardian will be required to attend a post-suspension conference with the Executive Director or his or her designee.

Appealing a Disciplinary Response/Consequence

Should a parent or guardian wish to appeal a response to a violation of the Code of Conduct, they should begin by reaching out directly to the staff member that initially assigned the disciplinary action, in accordance with the School's communication protocols. In the event that the parent or guardian is not satisfied with the response provided to the appeal, they should appeal to the Director of Teaching and Learning. If the appeal is not resolved by the Director of Teaching and Learning, the parent or guardian should appeal directly to the Executive Director for resolution.

In the event that the School is unable to resolve the appeal with the parent or guardian, the parent or guardian may directly appeal to the Board of Trustees, in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy. Finally, in the event that appeal not be resolved by the Board of Trustees, the parent or guardian may appeal to the School's Authorizer, the New York State Education Department, in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

Procedures and Due Process for Short Term Suspension

The Executive Director may impose a short-term suspension and shall follow due process procedures consistent with federal case law pursuant to *Goss v. Lopez* (419 U.S. 565). Before imposing a short-term suspension, or other, less serious discipline, the Executive Director shall provide the student notice of the charges against them, and if the student denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence against them. The student will also be provided a chance to present their version of the events.

Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Executive Director shall immediately notify the student's parent or guardian in writing that the student may be suspended from school. Written notice of the decision to impose suspension shall be provided by personal delivery or express mail delivery within 24 hours at the last known address(es) of the student's parent or guardian. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone. Such notice shall provide a description of the incident(s) for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parents or guardian of their right to request an immediate informal conference with the Executive Director. Such notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parent or guardian. The parent or guardian of the student, and the student shall have the opportunity to present the student's version of the incident.

Such notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place prior to the suspension of the student unless the student's presence in the school building poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, in which case the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon as possible after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

The Executive Director's decision to impose a short-term suspension may be challenged by the student's parent or guardian in accordance with the School's Complaint policy.

Procedures and Due Process for Long Term Suspension

The Executive Director may impose a long-term suspension. Such a suspension may be imposed only after the student has been found guilty at a formal suspension hearing. In extreme circumstances, the Executive Director may expel the student from school. Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the Executive Director shall verbally inform the student that they are being suspended and is being considered for a long-term suspension (or expulsion) and state the reasons for such actions. The Executive Director also shall immediately notify the student's parent or guardian in writing. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 24 hours of suspension at the last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent or guardian. Such notice shall provide a description of the incident or incidents that resulted in the suspension and shall indicate that a formal hearing will be held on the matter that may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent or guardian. At the formal hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, question witnesses, and present evidence.

If the Executive Director initiates the suspension proceeding, he or she shall personally conduct the proceeding or may, in his or her discretion, designate a third-party hearing officer to conduct the proceeding. The designated third party hearing officer's report shall be advisory only and the Executive Director may accept or reject all or part of it. The Executive Director's decision to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion may be challenged by the parent or guardian through the appeal process described above. In any instance where the Executive Director is

directly involved in the instance(s) at issue for a suspension or expulsion, the Board of Trustees shall handle any investigation, hearing and determination.

Firearm Violations

Federal and New York law require the expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year of a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to the School building or to a School function, or to have possessed a firearm at school, except that the Executive Director may modify such expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis, if such modification is in writing, in accordance with the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (as amended). “Weapon,” as used in this law means a “firearm,” as defined by 18 USC § 921, and includes firearms and explosives. (New York Education Law §3214 effectuates this federal law.) The following are included within this definition:

- Any device, instrument, material, or substance that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury. Knives with a blade of two and one half inches or more in length fall within this definition;
- Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
- The frame or receiver of any weapon described above;
- Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
- Any destructible device, which is defined as any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, such as a bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, or other similar device.

The Executive Director shall refer a student under the age of sixteen who has been determined to have brought a weapon or firearm to school to a presentment agency for a juvenile delinquency proceeding consistent with Article 3 of the Family Court Act except a student fourteen or fifteen years of age who qualifies for juvenile offender status under Criminal Procedure Law § 1.20(42).

Provision of Instruction During Removal

Bridge Prep will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a student who has been suspended or removed to help that student progress in the school’s academic program. For a student who has been suspended, alternative instruction will be provided to the extent required by applicable law. For a student who has been expelled, alternative instruction will be provided in like manner as a suspended student, until the student enrolls in another school for a reasonable period thereafter or until the end of the school year.

Alternative instruction will be provided to students suspended or expelled in a way that best suits the needs of the student. Instruction for such students shall be sufficient to enable the student to make adequate academic progress, and shall provide them the opportunity to complete the assignments, learn the curriculum and participate in assessments. Instruction will take place in a designated room on-site. During any removal for drug or weapon offenses, additional services shall include strategies designed to prevent such behavior from recurring. Instruction will be provided by School staff, who shall be certified or qualified in accordance with § 2854(3)(a-1) of the Education Law and the federal Every Student Succeeds

Act (ESSA) .

Freedom of Expression

Bridge Builders are entitled to express their personal opinions verbally, in writing, or by symbolic speech. The expression of such opinions, however, shall not interfere with the freedom of others to express themselves, and written expression of opinion must be signed by the author. Any form of expression, including print, verbal or personal apparel that involves libel, slander, the use of obscenity, or personal attacks, or that otherwise disrupts the educational experience of any student is prohibited. All forms of expression, must be in compliance with school policies and consequences resulting from any infractions will be addressed in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Student participation in the publication of any school-sponsored student newsletters, yearbooks, literary magazines and similar publications is encouraged as a learning and educational experience. The publication and content of all student-developed publications shall be supervised and reviewed by a qualified staff advisor(s) at the School.

No person shall distribute any printed or written materials on school property without the prior permission of the Executive Director. The Executive Director may regulate the content of materials to be distributed on school property to the extent necessary to avoid material and substantial interference with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the School. The Executive Director may also regulate the time, place, manner and duration of such distribution.

Off-Campus Events

Bridge Builders at school-sponsored off-campus events shall be governed by all the guidelines of the School and are subject to the authority of school officials. Failure to obey the instructions or directions of School officials shall result in a loss of eligibility to attend School-sponsored off-campus events and may result in additional disciplinary measures in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Student Records

The School will maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions including the name of the student a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons. Bridge Prep will comply with NYSED's VADIR data collection requirements and disciplinary data and submit that information to NYSED by required deadlines.

The School is subject to the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) that requires a school to protect a student's privacy and will not disclose any information from a student's permanent record(s) except as authorized pursuant to FERPA, or in response to a subpoena, as required by law. The parent or guardian of a student under 18 years of age is entitled to access to the student's school records by submitting a written request to the Executive Director. Further information concerning the disclosure of student information and limitations on such disclosure may be found in FERPA and the school's FERPA policy.

Discipline of Students with Special Needs

In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, Bridge Prep shall implement the following disciplinary policy and procedures with respect to students with disabilities.

- A student not specifically identified as having a disability, but whose school district of residence or charter school, prior to the behavior which is the subject of the disciplinary response, has a basis of knowledge—in accordance with 34 CFR 300.527(b)—that a disability exists may request to be disciplined in accordance with these provisions. Bridge Prep shall comply with sections 300.519- 300.529 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and the following procedures, except that in the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern.
- If a student violates the Code of Conduct and is being considered for a suspension or removal, the School must ensure the following due process protections are provided to the student and the student’s parent or guardian in addition to those set forth in the school Code of Conduct:
 - For suspensions of five school days or less, the student’s parent or guardian must be provided with a written notice, and a follow up telephone call if possible, within 24 hours of the incident leading up to the suspension which describes the basis for the suspension and explains that the parent or guardian has the right to request an informal conference with the Executive Director and appropriate staff to discuss the incident and question any complaining witness against the student.
 - For suspensions in excess of five consecutive school days, the student’s parent or guardian must be provided with a written notice which indicates that the district proposes to suspend the student from school in excess of five consecutive school days, describes the basis for the proposed suspension, explains that the student has an opportunity for a fair hearing conducted by the Executive Director or his or her designee at which the student will have a right to question any witnesses accusing him/her of committing the misconduct charge and to present witnesses on their behalf. Where possible, notification must also be provided by telephone.
 - In addition, the School must provide alternative education to the student during the suspension as set forth below, including any special services required by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) prepared by the Committee on Special Education (CSE). The final determination on a suspension or removal of a student, following due process, shall be made by the Executive Director.

Bridge Prep shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with a disability including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

Bridge Prep will ensure that the Dean of Specialized Instruction and/or the student’s teacher will attend all meetings regarding their students initiated by the CSE. These meetings could be relating to the development and implementation of behavioral

intervention plans, initial referrals, change in service, or annual reviews, MDR's, among other things.

Students for whom the IEP includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the student or others if the BIP is followed with respect to the infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the CSE for consideration of a change in the guidelines.

If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of 8 days, such student will immediately be referred to the CSE for reconsideration of the student's educational placement. Such a student shall not be suspended for a total of more than 10 days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE where the school is located prior to the eleventh day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement. In considering the placement of students referred because of disciplinary problems, the CSE is expected to follow its ordinary policies with respect to parental notification and involvement.

Bridge Prep shall work with the district to ensure that the CSE meets within 7 days of notification of any of the following:

- The commission of an infraction by a student with a disability who has previously been suspended for the maximum allowable number of days;
- The commission of any infraction resulting from the student's disability;
- The commission of any infraction by a disabled student, regardless of whether the student has previously been suspended during the school year if, had such an infraction been committed by a non-disabled student, the Executive Director would seek to impose a suspension in excess of 5 days.

Also, Bridge Prep will ensure that when the suspension or removal of a student with a disability will constitute a disciplinary change of placement, the CSE will be immediately notified so that the CSE can meet its required obligations to:

- Convene a CSE meeting within 10 school days to make a manifestation determination.
- Convene a CSE meeting within 10 business days to develop a plan to conduct a functional behavioral assessment or review an existing functional behavioral assessment or behavioral intervention plan.
- Provide the student's parent with a copy of their procedural due process rights.
- Work closely with the CSE in determining education services or the interim alternative educational setting consistent with the FAPE requirements.

Students with a 504 Plan and "Deemed to Know" Students

With regard to disciplinary consequences, including suspension or expulsion, the Section 504 rights of charter school students with disabilities are the same as other students with disabilities. When addressing discipline for students with disabilities, including students with 504 plans or those who are "presumed to have a disability," Bridge Prep will comply with applicable legal requirements governing the discipline of a student for misconduct. .

Provision of Services During Removal

Any student removed for a period less than 10 days will receive all classroom materials and a schedule to complete any needed assignments during the time of their suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of such suspension. The School also shall provide additional alternative instruction with the reasonable promptness and by appropriate means to assist the student, so that the student is given full opportunity to complete assignments and master curriculum, including additional instructions, phone assistance, computer instruction and/or home visits and one-on-one tutoring.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals, equals 10 or more school days during the school year, but does not constitute a change in placement, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the student to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of their IEP. In these cases, the Dean of Specialized Instruction, in consultation with the Director of Teaching and Learning and the student's teacher, shall make the service determination.

During any removal for weapon, drug or infliction of serious bodily injury-related offenses pursuant to 34 CFR §300.530(g)(1), (2) and (3), respectively, services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of their IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE where the school is located. The School will place students in interim alternative educational settings as appropriate and mandated by the IDEA.

During any subsequent removal that does constitute a change in placement, but where the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the services must be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of their IEP. The CSE will make the service determination.

Before a student is returned to school after a disciplinary removal, the parent or guardian will be required to attend a post-suspension conference with the Executive Director or his or her designee

CSE Meetings

Meetings of the CSE where the school is located to either develop a behavioral assessment plan or, if the student has one, to review such plan, are required when the student is first removed from their current placement for more than 10 school days in a school year and when commencing a removal which constitutes a change in placement. The Dean of Specialized Instruction, along with the student's teacher will attend all meetings regarding the student initiated by the CSE where the school is located.

Subsequently, if other removals occur which do not constitute a change in placement, the School will work with the CSE where the school is located to review the student's assessment plan and its implementation to determine if modifications are necessary. If one or more members of the CSE where the school is located believe that modifications are needed, then the CSE is expected to meet to modify the plan and/or its implementation.

Due Process

Any discipline that would constitute a change in placement for a student must take the

following steps no later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made:

- The parent or guardian of the student with a disability shall be notified of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504 and, immediately, if possible, but in no case later than ten school days after the date on which such decision is made.
 - Immediately, if possible, but in no case later than ten school days after the date on which such decision is made, the CSE where the school is located and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action.
- If, upon review, it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of their disability, then the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a student without a disability, except as provided in 34 CFR §300.121(d), which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal.
- A parent or guardian may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the student will remain in their current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.
 - If a parent or guardian requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to weapons or drugs, the student shall remain in any interim alternative educational setting, pending the decision of the designated hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the School agree otherwise.

Appealing a Disciplinary Response/Consequence

Should a parent or guardian wish to appeal a disciplinary consequence, they should reach out directly to the staff member that initially assigned the disciplinary action in accordance with the School's communication protocols. In the event that a parent or guardian is not satisfied with the response provided by the staff member that assigned the disciplinary action, the parent or guardian may appeal the decision with the Director of Teaching and Learning and, if the parent or guardian is not satisfied with the response provided by the Director of Teaching and Learning, they may appeal the decision to the Executive Director.

If the parent or guardian is not satisfied with the response provided by the Executive Director, the parent or guardian may appeal the decision with the Board of Trustees in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

If the parent or guardian is not satisfied with the response provided after appealing to the Board of Trustees, the parent or guardian has the ability to appeal the decision to the School's Authorizer, the New York State Education Department, in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

Student Searches

The Executive Director and Director of Teaching and Learning are authorized to conduct searches of students and their belongings, if they have reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or the School's

Code of Conduct or otherwise constituted a threat to the health, safety, welfare or morals of the School, other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or attending an off-campus school event.

These authorized School officials may search a student or the student's belongings based upon information received from a reliable informant. Individuals, other than the School's employees, will be considered reliable informants if they have previously supplied information that was accurate and verified, they make an admission against their own interest, they provide the same information that is received independently from other sources, or they appear to be credible and the information they are communicating relates to an immediate threat to safety. School employees will be considered reliable informants unless they are known to have previously supplied information that they knew was not accurate.

Before searching a student or the student's belongings, the authorized School official should attempt to get the student to admit that they possess physical evidence that they violated the law or the School code, or get the student to voluntarily consent to the search. Searches will be limited to the extent necessary to locate the evidence sought.

Whenever practical, searches will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices, with at least two staff members present. The student's parent or guardian will be notified prior to any search and students will be present when their possessions are being searched.

Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy rights in school lockers, cubbies, desks, or other School storage places. The School exercises overriding control over such school property, which may be opened and subjected to inspection at any time by school officials.

Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)

Bridge Prep promotes a nurturing school culture that has respect for diversity among students and between students and staff. We provide all students with a supportive and safe environment in which to grow and thrive academically and socially. The ability of students to learn and our ability to educate our students are compromised when students engage in discrimination, harassment, bullying, or intimidating behavior toward other students. These behaviors affect not only the students who are its targets, but also those individuals who participate and witness such acts.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms and includes behavior that targets students because of their actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, citizenship/immigration status, religion, creed, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or weight.

Bullying

Bullying is understood to be a hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression and/or creates terror. In order to facilitate implementation of this policy, provide meaningful guidance and prevent behaviors from rising to a violation of law, this policy will use the term bullying (which is usually subsumed under the term "harassment") to describe a range of misbehaviors such as

harassment, hazing, intimidation or discrimination. The accompanying regulation provides more guidance regarding the definition and characteristics of bullying.

Discrimination

Discrimination is the act of denying rights, benefits, justice, equitable treatment or access to facilities available to all others, to an individual or group of people because of the group, class or category to which that person belongs (as discussed, under Harassment, below).

Harassment

Harassment has been defined in various ways in federal and state law and regulations. Bridge Prep recognizes that these definitions are important standards, but our 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.

Prevention

In the school setting, we are provided the opportunity to develop our Bridge Builders into caring, smart well-rounded young people, and our Social Emotional Learning programming and school culture is rooted in respect for others. Our targeted social emotional programming and emphasis exists to not only decrease incidents of bullying, but to help our Bridge Builders learn to develop supportive relationships with one another. Staff are provided with targeted supports to identify the warning signs of bullying, as well as to their responsibility to become actively involved in the prevention of bullying before overt acts occur.

In order to assure the success and fidelity of our Social Emotional programming, the School will designate a DASA Coordinator on an annual basis, who will work with the

entire staff to coordinate the dissemination of information on anti-bullying, implement strategies to prevent bullying, and enforce this policy. The DASA Coordinator will meet directly with School Leadership to provide updates and to share concerns or request needed support.

Intervention

Intervention by adults and bystanders is an important step in preventing escalation and resolving issues at the earliest stages. The purpose of intervention, which may involve remediation according to the School's Code of Conduct, is to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior and protect and prioritize the safety of the target.

Reporting and Investigation

School employees who witness harassment, bullying or discrimination, or receive oral or written reports of such acts, must promptly orally notify the Executive Director no later than one school day after the employee witness or receives such acts. The Executive Director or their designee will lead or supervise a thorough investigation of all reports of harassment/bullying and discrimination, and ensure the investigation is completed in a timely manner.

When an investigation verifies a material incident of harassment, bullying or discrimination, the Executive Director or his or her designee will take prompt action, reasonably calculated to end the harassment/bullying or discrimination, eliminate any of the hostile environment, create a more positive school culture and climate, prevent recurrence of the behavior, and ensure the safety of the student or students against whom such behavior was directed.

The Executive Director or his or her designee will promptly notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when it is believed that any harassment/bullying or discrimination constitutes criminal conduct.

Non- Retaliation

Retaliation by any School employee or student is prohibited against any individual who, in good faith, reports or assists in the investigation of harassment/bullying or discrimination.

Student Dress Code

In order to improve the School’s educational environment, promote a more effective climate for learning, foster school unity and pride, and allow Bridge Builders to focus solely on learning and not on attire, the School has a dress code for Bridge Builders that applies to school days and school-sponsored events. A majority of Dress Code items can be purchased at various retail stores, or directly through Flynn & O’Hara by calling 1-800-441-4122. The School sweater and polo are available exclusively at Flynn & O’Hara and as such, these items must be purchased from Flynn & O’Hara. Families will receive information about ordering uniforms and a list of the required items below, upon enrollment.

On days where students are programmed for Dance and Physical Education, Bridge Builders will be required to wear their gym uniform. The gym sweatshirt can be purchased from Novel-tees by On Your Mark, Inc (917-831-4990; www.novelteesoy.com) and the gym sweatpants and shorts can be purchased from a variety of retail stores, including Flynn and O’Hara. The School will provide each Bridge Builder with their Bridge Prep gym t-shirt at Family and Student Orientation.

The Dress Code is a part of the School’s Code of Conduct and as such, students coming to repeatedly school out of uniform may be subject to consequences according to the Code of Conduct. If a student comes to school out of uniform, the parent or guardian will be contacted to discuss the reason.

If a parent or guardian has any concerns with the Dress Code, they should reach out to the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator to discuss the concern and, if needed, schedule time with the Executive Director for follow up. Should the parent or guardian’s concern not be addressed, they should follow the School’s Complaint Policy.

Daily Dress	Gym Uniform
Navy blue pants	Grey Bridge Prep Gym shirt (provided by the School)
Grey Long or Short Sleeve Polo Shirt with logo <i>(To be purchased from Flynn and O’Hara)</i>	Solid Navy blue sweatpants (no stripes or designs)
Navy blue v-neck cardigan sweater with logo <i>(To be purchased from Flynn and O’Hara)</i>	Solid Navy Blue Shorts (no design or stripes)
Navy Blue Walking Shorts- Optional <i>(September 5- October 15 and May 1-June 22 only)</i>	Bridge Prep Grey Gym Sweatshirt <i>(To be purchased at Noveltees)</i>
Black shoes (rubber soles preferred)	White Sneakers
Black or blue socks	Socks(any color)

The School reserves the right to make changes or modifications to the Student Dress Code and related policies. Any changes or modifications will be communicated to families to provide them with ample time to provide feedback or concerns.

Change of Clothes

In the event of a bathroom accident or other issue(s) requiring a change of clothes for a student, the School will notify the student’s parent or guardian and provide the student

with a fresh uniform. Please note that families will be responsible for laundering and returning borrowed clothing within a week, or the family will be charged for the provided items.

Student Arrival and Dismissal

In the interest of student safety and to honor our agreement with the rest of the Petrides Campus community, we urge you to support our priority of student and traffic safety around the campus. Safe driving around the grounds improves the security for all students on the campus, including yours. We know that arrival and departure times can be stressful and that the campus parking areas can get congested, especially during inclement weather. Please allow enough time to pick-up and drop-off students safely and be sure to model respect and kindness to other drivers.

When moving around the campus at all times, we ask you to please:

- Use the Bridge Prep designated drop-off/pick-up areas only.
- Follow all directional signs for Bridge Prep and avoid walking around the campus.
- Drive slowly at all times on the campus (obey the speed limit).
- Cross at the crosswalks only and do not cross the street between or in front of the buses.
- Do not drive by any school buses when their lights are flashing and/or the Stop Sign is extended, as State law requires vehicles to stop when the lights are flashing.
- Yield to pedestrians at all times.
- Do not block crosswalks, driveways, red zones, or fire hydrants.
- Be courteous to your fellow parents or guardians, employees of all schools on the campus, and School Safety Agents or Crossing Guards.
- Remain alert and encourage others to follow these safe-driving tips.

If you choose to carpool, please notify the Main Office and your student's teacher in writing of the arrangements and the names of the adults with whom your Bridge Builder may be transported.

Any parent or guardian with questions about Bridge Prep's drop-off/pick-up policies should connect directly with the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator. We thank you for your help and cooperation in making our school community safe!

Arrival/Drop-off

Student drop-off is between **7:00- 8:00 a.m.** The School day officially begins at **8:00 a.m.** and any Bridge Builder who would like to have breakfast prior to the start of the school day may arrive beginning at **7:00 a.m.** Any student arriving between 7-7:30 will go directly to the Cafeteria for breakfast. Students arriving between 7:30-8 a.m. will enter through the Main Entrance into the Multi-purpose area. In order to relieve traffic congestion in the morning around the campus, Bridge Prep has a designated location at which you can drop-off and pick-up your Bridge Builder. This drop off area, located on Renwick Avenue and Safety City Boulevard, will have clear signage indicating the School's drop off location. Under no circumstance should a parent or guardian drop off

their student without a School staff member being present to escort the student to the building.

Dismissal/Pick-up

Bridge Builder pick-up is from **4:00-4:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday** and from **3:00-3:30 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday**. Any student taking the bus, will exit the building via Stairwell D and will be accompanied to the bus pickup area. Any student who is being picked up from school, will wait in the Multi-purpose area for their parent to pick them up. Parents who arrive early will wait at the reception area or in the Multi-Purpose space (when available) until dismissal starts to pick up their Bridge Builder.

On days where the school will be dismissing early, which will be provided to families at the beginning of the school year, and are indicated on the school calendar, dismissal is at **1:00 p.m.**

Early/Late Pick-up

We ask that you please arrive promptly to pick up your Bridge Builder. In the event that you are running late, please notify the school immediately. If you arrive to pick your Bridge Builder up prior to the designated pick-up dismissal times above, you must come into the building via the main entrance and sign out your Bridge Builder at the main office. Any Bridge Builder who is not picked up by the end of the dismissal window will be escorted to the main office and the parent or guardian will be contacted. In the event that the school has not been able to make contact with the parent, guardian or student's designated Emergency Contact within 60 minutes of the dismissal window, the School may exercise its option to contact the local NYPD Police Precinct to provide custodial care within the precinct.

Unless a parent or guardian has contacted the School in advance and provided a signed note to the School explaining the situation, and the School has granted permission, no student will be dismissed early from school. In addition, the parent or guardian must sign the student out in the Main Office before removing the student from the school grounds. Students will not be dismissed unless the parent or guardian has physically come to the Main Office.

If a student is planning on attending a religious education program (such as CCD), that would require the student to leave early from school on a school day, the parent or guardian will need to discuss the specific circumstances with the Executive Director prior to the start of the school year. The parent and guardian and the School will develop a plan and agreement for the logistics of the circumstance.

In order to minimize disruption for teachers and students, we ask that notification regarding early dismissals be made as far in advance as possible but not later than 7:45 a.m. on the day of the early dismissal. We also ask that all student medical appointments be limited to non-school hours.

Lateness

Lateness for Bridge Builders at Bridge Prep is defined as arriving any time after 8:00 a.m. An excused lateness for Bridge Builders will be provided if the parent or guardian

provides prior communication with the school.

When Bridge Builders arrive late for school they miss valuable time of the school day and disrupt the educational experience of other Bridge Builders. Excessive lateness, which is defined as 5 unexcused latenesses per trimester, will result in a mandatory family meeting. When students arrive late, their parent or guardian must walk them into the School building via the main entrance, sign in at the front desk and go to the Main Office to for a staff member to bring them to their classroom. If a student is late to school 5 times or more in any given trimester, the School will reach out to the student's parent or guardian to schedule a conversation to help resolve this issue.

After-School

Details about after-school programming that is provided by one of Bridge Prep's community-based partners, including frequency, cost and location, will be shared with families at the beginning of the school year. Any family that is interested in after-school programming should contact the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator to put their name on a list of interested families.

Student Health

There are a number of basic requirements that Bridge Prep has in order to ensure the safety and security of its students and staff. Cooperation on everyone's part will go a long way in guaranteeing that teaching and learning can take place.

Medical Requirements

Health Information Form

This form provides important information about a student's emergency contacts, health care providers, medications taken, existing health conditions/concerns and allergies. Most importantly, it gives the School permission to initiate emergency medical treatment in the event that a parent or guardian cannot be reached. We will ask for contact information for two individuals who can be reached if the parent or guardian is not available. Parents or guardians are expected to update this information annually and when contact information changes.

Notification of Health Conditions

At the beginning of each school year, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to inform the School if there are medical conditions that require special procedures during the school day. Families can provide this information on the Health Information Form provided by the school. If special plans or accommodations are needed, the parent or guardian will be asked to participate in health plan meetings.

Authorization to Dispense Medication Form

If a student requires medication while in school, the School must have an *Authorization to Dispense Medication Form*, filled out by the student's physician, on file. No student is allowed to bring medication to school without the School's full knowledge. All medication must be presented in its original container from the pharmacy. Additionally, a parent must deliver all medication and medication should NEVER be sent with the student. The nurse will administer medications prescribed by a licensed prescriber and

only those medications which are necessary to maintain the student in school and which must be given during school hours will be administered.

The form must be updated annually. Also, if there are any changes to the medication (including to the dosage of the medication) a new form must be completed and submitted, including an updated physician signature. We advise families to request multiple copies of this form to bring with them to all regularly scheduled doctor's appointments, in the event medications need to change.

The *Authorization to Dispense Medication Form* requirement applies to all medication, including over the counter medication (e.g., Tylenol). If a student needs to take medication during the school day, the student must have the authorization signed by their physician and a parent or guardian on file, giving the School permission to administer the medication. The form requirement also applies to asthma inhalers. Students (other than those who have been authorized to self-medicate, as described below) should go to the Main Office first to receive a pass to the Nurse for administration of medication.

Students who may need inhalers or other asthma medication on an emergency basis may be permitted to carry the inhaler if the student understands the condition and the procedures and written permission has been granted by the child's health care provider and parent. Please notify the School for this approval if you believe that your child can self-administer the inhaler or other emergency medication. Students are prohibited from carrying any over the counter medications including but not limited to: Tylenol, Aleve, Advil or Benadryl.

Students should **never** carry or take medications outside of these procedures. Any student found in possession of over the counter or prescription drugs could face significant consequences.

Medical Records/School Health Records

In accordance with the Public Health Law, all students must have an updated *Child & Adolescent Health Examination Form* completed within a year before their enrollment) on file with the school. Bridge Prep shall not permit students to attend for more than 14 days without being in compliance with Public Health Law.

Immunizations

Bridge Prep will comply with Section 2164 of the New York Public Health Law and all other applicable laws regarding immunizations for students. Prior to enrollment, parents or guardians are expected to provide documentation of all required immunizations. Students who have not been immunized in accordance with New York State immunization requirements may be excluded from school until they comply with mandated requirements.

A Medical Exemption for a valid contraindication to vaccination is the **only** exception to immunizations according to New York State Law. A medical exemption must be certified by a physician licensed to practice in the State of New York and must specify which immunizations are contraindicated and why. Regardless of whether or not a student has received a medical exemption to immunization from their previous School District,

Bridge Prep requires the parent or guardian to submit a **new** exemption request for the upcoming school year.

Medical Procedures

The school nurse is available on a daily basis to provide students with a general health consultation, medicine administration, and treatment. The nurse will work with the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator to maintain correspondence with students' families and as well as to coordinate vision and hearing screenings with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and, if necessary other community partners.

Keep Students at Home Policy/Communicable Illness

In order to protect the health of all children in the building, please keep your student at home if you notice that they begin to show signs of an illness or contagious disease. It is very important that you let the School know, as soon as possible, if your student has a communicable illness or infection. Please follow the following guidelines:

- Students with fever, vomiting or diarrhea should stay home until the symptoms are gone or until a doctor says it is okay to return.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) is contagious, and students with symptoms of this condition should be kept at home.

School-based Prevention

Bed Bugs: Parents or guardians are notified if bed bugs are found in classrooms, and bed bug prevention literature will be provided.

Head Lice: The policy on lice and nits for all NYC public schools is as follows:

- Students with active head lice will continue to be excluded until they are lice-free.
- Excluded students will be examined for lice when they return to school and re-checked 14 days later to confirm that they remain free of lice.
- Students will not be excluded from school if they have nits (lice eggs).

When lice are identified, the parent or guardian will be notified, instructed in treatment of head lice and asked to pick up their student as soon as possible. The following steps will be taken upon the student's return to school:

- Students will be re-examined by the nurse.
- Students with head lice will not be allowed to re-enter until they are lice free.
- Students that have been cleared of lice will be re-examined in 14 calendar days (or closest school day if 14th day falls on a weekend or holiday) by the nurse.
- Students found to have head lice on re-examination will once again be excluded until they are lice free.
- No school-wide surveillance will be conducted for nits.

Wellness Policy

Throughout the school year, Bridge Prep will provide students with multiple opportunities to learn about leading a healthy lifestyle and practice mindfulness. Students will have access to educational programming, including morning "mindful movement" and breathing exercises, as well as learning initiatives that focus on positive thinking, a growth mindset, and making mindful, healthy choices. Community partners are invited to

participate in developing strategies and events to model, foster and teach students about a healthy lifestyle.

Outdoor Play

Children benefit from vigorous exercise and should be given the opportunity to play outside whenever possible. Weather permitting, Bridge Builders will have the opportunity each day to play and exercise outside. Unless it is snowing or there is ice on the playground, low temperature will not be a barrier to outside play, as long as students are appropriately dressed. The Department of Health strongly encourages schools to maintain outdoor play periods on the vast majority of winter days. In the event that the weather prohibits students from playing outside for recess, designated space will be made available within the building and on the campus for students to have designated play time.

Breakfast/Lunch/Snack

Students at Bridge Prep will have the opportunity to receive a free breakfast, lunch and snack each day provided by the New York City Department of Education's Food Service program, which aligns to the New York City Food Standards. For more information, including menus, please visit the Office of School Food's Website at: <http://www.schoolfoodnyc.org/menusandrecipes/menus.htm>

Breakfast will be provided each day for all students. Students arriving between 7-7:30 a.m. will have breakfast in the Cafeteria and students arriving between 7:30-8:00 a.m. will have breakfast in the School's multi-purpose area. All students will eat lunch each day in the Cafeteria. A snack for each student will also be provided during the day. Students may eat or drink only in areas and during times designated by the School according to the daily schedule.

Forms will be provided for all families to complete to remain in compliance with State and Federal regulations and mandates. This form must be filled out each year even if your family's income has not changed. Please note:

- Any student who does not bring a lunch from home is required to take a tray during his/her lunch period.
- School meals are listed on a monthly calendar provided by the NYC Department of Education. For students participating in the school lunch plan, families can view the monthly calendar at www.schoolfoodnyc.org.

Any additional inquiries pertaining to meal eligibility and regulations should be addressed to:

Office of School of Food and Nutrition Services
44-36 Vernon Boulevard
Long Island City, NY 11101
718-720-6100

Lunches from Home

In order for students to fully be present and commit on a daily basis to the rigorous academic schedule at Bridge Prep, it is important that students eat healthy, balanced meals. As such, families who decide to provide lunch from home must comply with the

following guidelines. If your student is out of compliance with these requirements, inappropriate food items will be confiscated and returned at the end of day.

Foods with added sugar including candy or sweets of any kind are prohibited. Other prohibited foods and beverages for packed lunches include:

- Glass bottles;
- Soda of any kind (even diet); and
- Food that requires heat, hot water, or refrigeration.

Please note: Commercial food deliveries to school will not be accepted.

Food Allergies and Food Restrictions

Parents or guardians are expected to notify the School of any allergies, including food allergies, and provide documentation from a doctor for the student's health file. Families are also required to update the School if anything changes. If the allergy is likely to affect the student during the school day, parents are expected to meet with the nurse and School Leadership to develop a health plan for the student. Based on the specific medical needs of each student and on any information regarding food allergies provided by the parent or guardian, the School will develop a plan(s) to assure that these needs are met, including establishing an allergy table(s) in the cafeteria or any designated eating space.

Bridge Prep may serve milk at breakfast and lunch. Any parents or guardians wishing to substitute a different beverage must provide a note to the school indicating milk substitution. Parents may also notify the school of any other food restrictions based on religion or custom. Restrictions based on religious beliefs will be accommodated.

CPR, First Aid and AED training

All staff will be trained in school health policies and procedures, protocols for health emergencies, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of automated external defibrillator (AED) equipment. The following staff will maintain current First Aid and CPR Certifications:

- Executive Director;
- Director of Teaching and Learning;
- Social Worker; and
- Family and Community Engagement Coordinator.

School Safety

Mandated Reporting

The safety and protection of our students and staff is a top priority for Bridge Prep. Under New York law all School employees are required to report suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect when they have a reasonable belief that such abuse is occurring or has occurred.

Safety Plan

As a part of the larger Petrides Campus Community, Bridge Prep is a part of the Campus Safety Committee, which is responsible for addressing safety matters on an ongoing basis and is responsible for making appropriate recommendations to the leaders of each school

on the campus when it identifies the need for additional security measures, interventions, or trainings. The Safety Committee is also responsible for the development and updating of a comprehensive Safety Plan, a separate document that defines the normal operations on the campus and what procedures are in place in the event of an emergency. The Safety Plan includes the following:

- General Building and Facilities Information;
- Assignment and Responsibilities of School Safety Agents;
- Emergency Assignments, Egresses and Relocation Sites;
- General Response Protocols;
- Procedures for: Safety and Evacuation, Shelter-In, Lockdowns, Fire Safety and Fire Drills, Medical Emergencies, Shooting/Hostage Situations, and Bomb Threats;
- Safety and Evacuation Procedures for Special Needs Students/Staff; and
- Alarm Protocols.

The Safety Plan will be submitted to the NYC DOE’s Office of Safety and Youth Development for approval and then will be submitted to the New York City Police Department for final approval and certification.

All staff members and School Safety Agents are trained in School and Campus Safety policies, protocols and procedures. Bridge Prep has also established a Building Response Team that will consist of staff members from the School that is activated when emergencies or large building-wide events occur. Members of this team, identified and listed in the Safety Plan, are:

- Ms. Pirraglia- Director of Teaching and Learning
- Ms. Ebanks- Dean of Specialized Instruction
- Mrs. Illuzzi- Family and Community Engagement Coordinator
- Ms. Guerrero- Social Worker
- Mr. Cepin- CLE Teacher
- Ms. Otterbeck- Associate Teacher
- Ms. McGuire- Associate Teacher.
- School Custodian

A hard copy of the Safety Plan is available in Bridge Prep’s Main Office.

Visitors to the School

The Executive Director is responsible for all persons in the school building. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors of the school.

- Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the School will be considered a “visitor.”
- All visitors to the School must enter the building through the main entrance, present a valid photo ID, sign in and report to the Main Office. All visitors will be given a pass that must be kept with them at all times.
- Visitors are not permitted to take class time away from teachers to discuss individual matters.
- Any unauthorized person on School property will be reported to the Executive Director, who will reach out to School Safety, who will follow the protocols outlined in the Campus Safety Plan.

Bridge Prep is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment; therefore, it is necessary to monitor public conduct on School property and at School functions.

Limited Access Policy

At certain times during the school year, it may become necessary for the School to temporarily or permanently limit the access of a visitor to the School building. Limited access is warranted when a person’s conduct disrupts Bridge Prep’s learning environment and/or places the safety of staff, students and/or other family members at risk. If an incident occurs requiring limited access, notification to the person(s) involved will be provided in person, when possible, and in writing. The notification will outline the nature of the event, the start and end dates of the limited access period and the terms and conditions for continued attendance of the visitor’s scholar. At the conclusion of the limited access period, the visitor will either receive a letter indicating that the limited access has been rescinded or that additional conduct has required an extension of the limited access.

Transportation

Families have the option of student drop-off/pick-up at school or requesting transportation from the New York City Department of Education’s Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT). OPT determines student eligibility for busing and MetroCards based on grade level and the distance between the student’s residence and the school building. Information about bus eligibility can be found on OPT’s website at: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/transportation/bus-eligibility/> and is also described in the table below. Additionally, OPT guidelines state that students must use the same stop in the morning and in the afternoon.

Grades	Distance Code A	Distance Code B	Distance Code C	Distance Code D
	Students who live less than 0.5 miles away from school.	Students who live 0.5 miles or more, but less than 1 mile away from school.	Students who live 1 mile or more, but less than 1.5 miles from school.	Students who live 1.5 miles or more from the school.
Kindergarten-2	Half-fare MetroCard	Yellow School Bus or Full-Fare MetroCard	Yellow School Bus or Full-Fare MetroCard	Yellow School Bus or Full-Fare MetroCard
3-5	Not Eligible	Half-fare MetroCard	Yellow School Bus or Full-Fare MetroCard	Yellow School Bus or Full-Fare MetroCard

Please note that eligibility for any provided form of transportation, such as yellow school bus service, is determined by OPT and is **not determined by Bridge Prep.

OPT also provides specialized transportation to students whose Individual Education Programs (IEPs) recommend this service or to other students with disabilities who cannot take public transportation. Specialized transportation refers to school buses that are staffed by both a school bus driver and an attendant. Instead of being picked up at a centralized stop, the student is picked up at the closest, safest stop to their residence.

Student Conduct While on the Bus

For the safety of all students on the bus, it is essential that parents or guardians advise

their student to obey the following rules when on the bus:

- All students must be seated on the bus at all times, with a seat belt fastened.
- Students are not permitted to lean out bus windows; hands and heads must be kept inside the bus at all times.
- Students should speak quietly on the bus and should not speak to the driver when the bus is in motion.
- Students should not throw objects inside the bus or out of the bus windows.
- No hitting, spitting, or fighting is allowed on the bus; no shoving is allowed when boarding or leaving the bus.
- Students shall board and leave the bus one at a time.

Misconduct on the bus can and will lead to disciplinary action. There are consequences for breaking the rules aboard the bus, depending on the severity of the student's actions.

Consequences may include:

- Parent one-on-one meeting;
- Suspension from the school bus for a set number of days;
- Termination of busing rights
- Expulsion from school.

OPT provides "Safe Travel Tips" and best practices when riding the bus, including guidance about the use of seat belts, accommodations and walking to and waiting for the bus, which can be found on their website at: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/transportation/safe-travel-tips>.

Busing FAQs

Which bus route has my student been assigned to?

- OPT determines student bus routes, based on the information provided to them by Bridge Prep. This information is obtained from the parent or guardian at the time of enrollment.
- A parent or guardian may get this information from the school, by calling OPT directly or by going online. To access your student's bus stop assignment online, visit: <https://www.opt-osfns.org/opt/Resources/SchoolRouteStSearch/SearchResult.aspx>

Who is responsible for the management of the bus stops established by OPT?

- Once the initial set of bus stops is created by OPT, the school is responsible for the management of these stops. This means that the school, not the parent or guardian, will request that OPT:
 - Create a new bus stop when a student enters the school or moves.
 - Change the location of an existing bus stop; or
 - Delete a bus stop if no one is using the stop.
- If a parent or guardian has questions or concerns with their student's bus stop and would like to discuss a change to their assigned bus stop, they should contact the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator to schedule a meeting. The Family and Engagement Coordinator will discuss the concerns with the parent or guardian and will inform the Executive Director before contacting OPT.

Who do I call if the bus is late?

- In the event the school bus is late, the parent or guardian should immediately contact OPT directly at 718-392-8855 to report a late bus.
- The parent or guardian should also contact the main office to let the School know that the bus is late and, if needed, the School can directly connect with OPT to check on the status of the bus' arrival. Status reports on school bus delays can also be accessed online at: <http://www.opt-osfns.org/opt/vendors/busbreakdowns/public/default.aspx?search=YES#top>.

How can I request Specialized Transportation services for my student?

- The school based support team or CSE IEP team at the Committee on Special Education (CSE) will address transportation needs as part of the Initial and Annual Review process of your student's IEP. Please discuss any transportation-related concerns with the Dean of Specialized Instruction, who will provide you with any necessary paperwork to complete as part of the review process.

How can I change my student's method of transportation?

- Please contact the main office at 718-274-3437 if you would like to change your student's type of transportation service. It will take approximately two weeks for the change to be honored. Please plan accordingly for that transition.

If you have additional questions about transportation services, please contact the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator.

Complaints and Grievances

Academic complaints/grievances

If a parent or guardian has a complaint or concern that is academic in nature, meaning that the concern is specifically related to their student's academic experience, performance, or growth, the following process should be followed:

1. Request a meeting with your student's teacher to discuss the concern.
2. Once you have met with the teacher, if the situation has not been resolved, request a meeting with the Director of Teaching and Learning to discuss the concern.
3. After meeting with the Director of Teaching and Learning, if you still have a concern, request a meeting with the Executive Director, or complete a Complaint Form that will be forwarded to the Executive Director for review and follow up. Complaint forms can be requested at the Main Office, or from the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator.
4. The Executive Director will review the complaint/concern and contact the parent or guardian within 72 hours. Serious concerns are prioritized and responded to immediately. The parent or guardian will be required to attend a meeting at the School to discuss the concern/complaint.
5. If the concern has not been adequately addressed by the Executive Director after a meeting at the School, the concern/complaint is then submitted to the School's Board of Trustees. The parent or guardian is to contact the Board of Trustees directly via email at BOT@bridgeprepcharter.org, in order to submit a written complaint to the Board.

Non-academic complaint/grievance

Section 2855 (4) of the NYS Charter Schools Act provides a formal complaint process for use by individuals (including parents) or groups who believe that a charter school has violated a term of its charter, a provision of the NYS Charter Schools Act, or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of the charter school. The process requires that any and all complaints be brought first to the School's leadership, at Bridge Prep the Executive Director. A parent or guardian with a complaint should reach out directly to the Executive Director via email or request an in-person meeting. The Executive Director will work with the complainant to obtain a resolution to the complaint.

In the event the complaint includes the Executive Director or if the Executive Director does not provide the complainant with an adequate response, the complaint may be escalated to and addressed by the Board of Trustees. Any such complaint must be submitted in writing and addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Upon receipt of any complaint, the Chair will take such action as they think fit to resolve the complaint, including appointing a Board committee to investigate the complaint. The Chair will communicate his or her findings and the results of any investigation to the complainant within 10 calendar days. If the complaint is deemed urgent by the Chair, it will be escalated and a response will be provided within 5 calendar days.

If the complainant is still not satisfied with the resolution, they may address a complaint, in writing, to Bridge Prep's Authorizer, the New York State Education Department, via mail to: Charter School Office, NYS Education Department, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234, or via email to: charterschools@nysed.gov.

The subject line of the email should read: Complaint: Bridge Preparatory Charter School

The contents of the letter/email should include:

- A detailed statement of the complaint, including the provision of the School's charter or law that you allege has been violated.
- What, if any, response you received from the School's Board of Trustees.
- Copies of all relevant correspondence between you and the School, and you and the Charter Entity, if applicable. (You should maintain copies of all correspondence and materials for your own files.)
- What specific action or relief you are seeking.
- Contact information for you – name, address, email address and telephone number.

