

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. This is the basis of our student Code of Conduct.

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
Leaving the classroom or school building through any exit without prior approval from a School staff member.	Engaging in sexual activity or inappropriate touching
Lewd behavior	Hazing

Gang membership	Play Fighting
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.

