



“Connecting Students to Literacy”

Bridge Preparatory Charter School (“Bridge Prep”) is committed to ensuring that our school is a safe, secure, and orderly environment in which students can meet high academic standards, educators can teach toward those goals, and parents can be assured that their children are learning in a safe and positive school setting. A safe and supportive school depends upon the efforts of all members of the school community to treat one another with mutual respect.

To provide for the health, safety, and wellbeing of students and employees and for the preservation of district resources and property, the Executive Director shall establish a District wide Safety Plan for the school district, in accordance with Commissioner’s Regulations and law. The District Safety Plan is created and developed based on the School Safety Plan which was created and established in collaboration with other school in our building, operated by the New York City Department of Education (“NYC DOE”). The District Wide Safety Team reviews and edits the School Safety Plan annually. Members of each school were part of the Emergency Response Team. From our side, our School District Chief School Safety Officer is Timothy Castanza, our Executive Director, and in his absence, this role will be fulfilled by Faron Ebanks, Director of Operations.

The team created plans for fire drills, soft lock downs, Hold drills and hard lock downs, as well as Visitor controls. In all cases, staff were provided guidance and policies through the Building Response Team and Campus Safety Committee, who collaborates to refine and improve these practices. Providing an orderly plan for dealing with emergencies is an important component of the management of the schools on our campus and there are a range of emergencies. Through careful planning, the disastrous effects of an emergency can be minimized.

The guiding principles for emergency management planning are protection of life first, then preservation of property, and restoration to normal activities. Mandates that influence planning and decision-making are included in the School Safety Plan, which shall be accessible in the school’s Main Office and can be requested via email.

The following highlights key components of the Bridge Prep and the DOE’s District-wide Safety Plan.

SCHOOL SAFETY TEAM

In addition to the Campus Safety Committee, Bridge Prep has appointed a School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, the Executive Director, Director of Operations, Director of Teaching and Learning, teachers, and other representatives.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

The School Safety Plan is in place and all personnel have a responsibility to follow its directions. A copy is available in the main office of the school and at individual’s request. The Plan will be reviewed and updated as necessary annually.

This plan incorporates the policies and procedures for maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment. The Plan includes policies and procedures for: responding to acts of violence or other criminal activities; contacting and notifying parents; and contacting and notifying law enforcement officials. The Plan also addresses: strategies for detecting potentially violent behavior; intervention and



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prevention strategies; strategies to improve communications among students and between students and school staff; the role and responsibilities of school safety personnel; training of school safety personnel; school building security and security devices; emergency response protocols; safety training for staff and students, including training on the emergency response protocols; and drills and other exercises to test these protocols and other components of the Plan.

Each staff member who has a responsibility in an emergency shall become familiar with that responsibility to expedite the appropriate response process. Each member of the Building Response Team is assigned an emergency portable two-way battery-operated radio.

When an emergency is declared, the Executive Director or Director of Operations will begin implementing the emergency plan by activating the chain of communication. The decision to close school remains exclusively with the Executive Director.

The Executive Director, during a local or state emergency, shall act as the chief communication liaison for all agencies within the district, including parochial schools, and shall address all news media. The Executive Director will also be responsible for notifying the New York City Department of Education as soon as possible whenever the emergency plan results in the closing of a school building within the district (except routine snow days).

The school shall provide information at the start of each school year to all students and staff about emergency procedures and shall provide for at least one sheltering drill and at least one early dismissal during each school year. Transportation and communication procedures shall be included in the tests. The sheltering drill may occur at any time during the school day. The early dismissal will begin fifteen minutes prior to the end of the regular school day.

The Executive Director and Campus Safety Committee shall review and revise, as necessary, the District Safety Plan at least once each year.

General Response Protocols (GRP)

The following are the emergency response protocols that schools must follow for conducting lockdowns, evacuations, and shelter in place. Each protocol has specific staff and student actions that are unique to each response. These are the actions schools take until first responders arrive. For all three protocols, 911 must be called. If the Executive Director or other member of the Campus Safety Committee did not initiate the call, they must. Be advised immediately that the call was placed, in accordance with Chancellor’s Regulation A-412, which sets forth the policies and procedures regarding contacting the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and 911.

These protocols were created to allow schools to immediately and safely respond to various types of emergencies that may occur both inside schools, and within the surrounding community. GRP prepares schools for emergency situations such as fire, intruders inside the school, active shooters within the school or dangerous conditions outside the school building. These protocols outline the immediate response school staff and students will take until first responders arrive.



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In an emergency, all employees have a responsibility to protect and maintain the health, safety, and welfare of the scholars. Staff members may be assigned to accompany and supervise students. Ordinary rules of work hours, work site, job descriptions and any other contractual provisions are subject to state, county, or local directives. Staff members involved in the response shall continue their response actions until the emergency is ended.

Drills

Bridge Prep will conduct twelve (12) evacuation drills during the school year eight (8) will be evacuation drills and four (4) will be lockdown drills. Of these twelve (12) drills, eight will need to be completed by December 31 for each calendar year. In addition, the annual drill schedule will include one early dismissal drill. The Building Response Team carries out their responsibilities during the drills

Lockdown (Soft/Hard)

Soft Lockdown implies that there is no identified imminent danger to the sweep teams. Administrative teams, Building Response Teams, and NYPD School Safety Agents (SSA) will mobilize to the designated command post for further direction. Hard Lockdown implies that imminent danger is known, and NO ONE will engage in any building sweep activity.

The following will be announced: “Attention: We are now in a Soft/Hard Lockdown. Take proper action.” (Repeated twice over the PA system.)

All individuals, including SSA, will take appropriate lockdown action and await the arrival of first responders.

Students are trained to: Move out of sight and maintain silence.

Teachers are trained to:

- Check the hallway outside of their classrooms for students, lock classroom doors, and turn the lights off.
- Move away from sight and maintain silence.
- Wait for first responders to open door, or until hearing the “All Clear” message: “The Lockdown has been lifted,” followed by specific directions.
- Take attendance and account for missing students by contacting the main office.

Evacuation

The fire alarm system is the initial alert for staff and students to initiate an evacuation. However, there may be times when the PA system and specific directions will serve as the alert initiating an evacuation. Announcements will begin with “Attention,” followed by specific directions. (Repeated twice over the PA system.)

Students are trained to: Leave belongings behind and form a single file line. In cold weather, students should be reminded to take their coats when leaving the classroom. Students in physical education attire



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WILL NOT return to the locker room. Students without proper outdoor attire will be secured in a warm location as immediately as possible.

Teachers are trained to:

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

Shelter-In

The following will be announced: “Attention: This is a Shelter-In. Secure all exit doors.” (Repeated twice over the PA system.)

Students are trained to:

- Remain inside of the building.
- Conduct business as usual.
- Respond to specific staff directions.

Teachers are trained to: Increase situational awareness + Conduct business as usual.

The Shelter-In directive will remain in effect until hearing the “All Clear” message: “The Shelter-In has been lifted,” followed by specific directions.

Building Response Team members, floor wardens, and Shelter-In staff will secure all exits and report to specific post assignments. These staff and their specific responsibilities are outlined in each Building Safety Plan.

HOLD

Hold is initiated when there is a condition inside the school building, and the immediate need to address the condition requires staff, students, and visitors to remain in place and conduct business as usual until the “All Clear” is announced.

Hold might be initiated to manage an incident in the building that does not place the school community in danger, or whenever directed by First Responders.

Hold does not replace a soft or hard lockdown. Upon hearing the Hold announcement:

Staff must:

- Lock the door.
- Hold in their current location.



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- Contact the main office to report any students who were out of the class when the Hold was announced.

Students/staff must:

- Remain where they are until the “All Clear” announcement is made.
- Ignore any bells that usually signal the end of the class.
- Remember that there is no use of the classroom pass, and everyone must remain in place until the Hold is lifted.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Six steps which are standard responses to any emergency in schools are: Summon Expert Help; Administer First Aid; Follow Instructions of the Expert; Evacuate to a Safe Place; Shelter inside the Building; and Send Everyone Home (Go Home). Obviously, all six steps will not be utilized in every emergency. Indeed, some are part of the planned response to a school emergency.

Definitions

- **Summon Expert Help:** Clearly, in most emergency situations, the need for expert help is evident. Fires are fought by firefighters; acts of violence and intruders are handled by police, and heart attack victims must be provided proper medical care.
- **Administer First Aid:** First aid is usually defined as treatment that will protect the life of a victim and provide comfort until more expert help is secured.
- **Follow Instructions:** Once expert help has arrived, those experts are usually “in charge.” At that time, the procedure is to follow instructions of the expert.
- **Evacuate to a Safe Place:** Evacuation may mean only going outside, away from the building and waiting until the danger has passed. In some circumstances, however, the nature or duration of the emergency may require transportation and temporary housing of the occupants in some other building.
- **Shelter Inside the Building:** There are circumstances when it is safer to stay inside the building than to go outside. For example, the sheltering procedure is called for during severe electrical storms, or radioactive emergencies.
- **Go Home:** Like evacuation, early dismissal or “go home” is a procedure for evacuating scholars from a building and uniting them with their families or other responsible surrogates designated by the parents.

BOMB THREAT

Bomb threat procedures are outlined in detail in each building’s Safety Plan.

Response to Threats and Criminal Acts

The BRT and all school staff must be prepared to respond to threats or acts of criminal behavior, by students, school personnel and visitors, from physical assaults to bomb threats. The procedures for notifying law enforcement officials of school-related incidents, crimes committed by students or school employees, or medical emergencies are contained in Chancellor’s Regulation A-412 and other policies. As outlined above, the General Response Protocols (GRP) will be used to respond to all threats and acts of violence, along with an immediate response by staff and 911 first responders. Upon arrival, all



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district and emergency response efforts will be coordinated with school officials and SSA to provide incident specific support.

When a student engages in behavior that poses a substantial risk of injury to the student or others, school officials must make every effort to safely de-escalate the behavior by using strategies and interventions for addressing behavioral crises and utilizing the in-school and community resources identified in the school’s Crisis De-escalation Plan. Additionally, the parent must be given an opportunity to speak with the student if safety considerations permit. If the situation cannot be safely addressed, the principal/designee must call 911 as set forth in Chancellor’s Regulation A-411.

School Safety Personnel

In September of 1998, the DOE, the Chancellor, and the City of New York entered into an agreement to implement a joint program between the DOE and the NYPD, under which school security functions including the selection, deployment, training, evaluation, and management of school security personnel would be the responsibility of NYPD. This agreement was subsequently continued and then modified on June 19, 2019.

The revised MOU continues the framework for providing security in DOE schools and addresses the role of school administrators, SSA and NYPD in maintaining a safe and secure school environment; emphasizes the school’s primary role in addressing student misconduct; defines the circumstances for when school staff should contact SSA to address student misconduct; provides for training of SSA and NYPD officers, including in de-escalation; includes procedures for when and how NYPD can question students on school property; includes expectations regarding when an arrest or summons can be issued with the least restraint necessary; and provides for use of diversionary or alternatives to arrest or the issuing of a summons.

Parent Notification

The threat to commit or the actual commission of an act of violence at a school affects an entire school community. In the event of threats or acts of violence, school officials must be prepared to contact the appropriate law enforcement agencies (as set forth above). Pursuant to Chancellor’s Regulation A-415 parents, staff, and elected officials may voluntarily subscribe to receive emergency notifications through electronic text messages, phone calls, and/or electronic mail through NotifyNYC. In addition, the Executive Director may employ the use of school specific notification systems to alert parents and the school community of specific emergencies occurring at the school. At Bridge Prep, this system is use of our school wide system, Remind.

Building-Level School Safety Plan

Pursuant to Chancellor’s Regulation A-414, every school on a DOE campus/building must establish a School Safety Committee for developing a building-level school safety plan. As set forth in each school safety plan, every school is required to establish a Chain of Command and multiple teams, including, a Building Response Team and a Crisis Team, and to designate administrative staff, who coordinate the school’s response in emergency situations. As noted above, this plan was created and established in



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collaboration with other school in our building, operated by the New York City Department of Education (“NYC DOE”).

The plan also describes, among other things, the school’s building entry and visitor control procedures; security assignments and schedules; intruder procedures; emergency communications systems, including the names and telephone numbers of appropriate law enforcement personnel; missing student protocol; procedures for responding to door alarms; and evacuation procedures for all students, including those with limited mobility. Each plan describes the Building Response Team’s roles and training to address all emergency response protocols for students and staff. Each building level plan establishes the protocols for responding to emergency situations, such as hazmat spills, intruders, bomb threats, hostage-taking or shooting, including whether to evacuate, shelter-in, or lockdown. Building level plans are consistent with a safety plan template developed by the NYC DOE’s Office of Safety and Youth Development (OSYD) and must be updated annually. Building level safety information that can be shared with staff and families is available, upon request, from the Executive Director. Pursuant to state education law, building level emergency response plans must be confidential and must not be disclosed.

RESOURCES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

- Building Floor Plans
- Local emergency responders: Police 911; Fire / Ambulance 911
- Building Level Emergency Response Plans
- Response to Serious Violent Incidents.
 - Serious violent incidents are defined by the Commissioner of Education as incidents of violent criminal conduct that are, or appear to be, life threatening and warrant the evacuation of scholars and/or staff because of an imminent threat to their safety or health, including but not limited to: riot, hostage taking, kidnapping and/or the use of threatened use of a firearm, explosive, bomb, incendiary device, chemical or biological weapon, knife or other dangerous instrument capable of causing death or serious injury.

SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

1. Assess the situation
 - a. Assaults and Fights
 - i. Call 911 to request police assistance immediately when assailant is armed, if assailant is an outsider, or if the situation warrants.
 - ii. Is there a continued danger to the individuals already involved or to any other potential victims?
 - iii. Determine the identity, number, and location of victims.
 - iv. Determine the need for first aid and medical response. Determine the need for Hold-In Place procedure.
2. Move others to safety - If the assailant has not been contained and continues to be a threat to others, initiate Lockdown or Lockout procedures as appropriate, call 911.
 - a. Fights
 - i. Intervening and managing physical altercations and/or fights require making a judgment call. Individual circumstances will determine the priorities of your interventions. Interventions may include:



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1. Disperse the crowd or bystanders and ensure the safety of the students.
 2. Call for help and assistance in managing the incident.
 3. Focus on defusing the fight.
 4. Use proximity and voice.
 5. Separate the individuals fighting by telling one to go into a nearby room or other location.
 6. Attend to medical needs.
 7. Use common sense when intervening with individuals who are dangerous.
3. Provide first aid for victim(s) using medically trained staff. Call 911 for medical assistance if warranted. Direct someone to the main entrance to direct the ambulance staff to the victim.
 4. Interview participants and/or bystanders to gather information on the event. The police will need details/take statement(s) as Assault/Battery are chargeable offenses.
 5. The parents, guardian (or spouse/family member of employee) of any participants should be notified as soon as possible.
 6. The Executive Director should be contacted as soon as possible for events involving serious injury or criminal acts. The Executive Director, or designee, will handle all media and community inquiries into the event(s).
 7. Convene Crisis Response Plan as needed to inform staff/students and coordinate counseling services as the situation warrants.

Biological Agent or Poisonous Substance Threat

If you receive a letter, package or container claiming to be infected with a Biological Agent (e.g., Anthrax) or Poisonous Substance or phone call saying there is such a threat present at your location, **YOUR FIRST ACTION SHOULD BE TO CONTAIN THE THREAT TO AS FEW PEOPLE AND AS SMALL AN AREA AS POSSIBLE.** This is accomplished by the following:

Immediately isolate the threat by not moving the letter, package, or container from its original location.

1. Move people away from the immediate area and do not allow ANYONE to touch or move the threat.
2. Close doors and windows to the area and lock the room, if possible, to avoid others accidentally contacting the threat. Those individuals originally present when the threat was discovered should remain nearby and not in contact with uninvolved individuals. They will not receive an additional exposure if the threat remains undisturbed.
3. Notify the Director of Operations and Call 911 and advise the operator of your situation. Remain on the line until instructed to hang up.
4. Director of Operations will notify Executive Director.
5. It is not necessary to confine students to classrooms, evacuate the building, or directly send students to a predetermined assembly area within the school unless these actions aid the response efforts of the emergency service responders, or these efforts will eliminate possible exposure to the threat if it is widely disseminated through the building or its location within the school is unknown. If the potential exists for a distribution through the building, the air circulation system(s) will be shut down and the area or building evacuated.



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6. The heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems within the building will be shut down if the threat was directed at the HVAC system or the package/container was found within the HVAC system.
7. Individuals who came in direct contact with the threat should be advised not to eat, drink, smoke, or chew, rub their eyes, ears, nose or mouth or place their hands near their face.
8. Law enforcement and health officials will advise if any additional precautions need to be undertaken by any potentially exposed individuals or if specific cleanup procedures should be utilized.

Dangerous Persons

These procedures are a guide in responding to a situation in which a student, staff member, or outsider is armed, has assaulted, or threatened another person, or is behaving irrationally. The first person to meet the individual suspected of being a threat should use common sense and remain calm. Remember, if the person is armed, then he/she is in control, and the staff should do what he/she request.

1. Institute Lockdown and then CALL 911, give as much information as possible on the location, identity, and description of the individual. Do not hang up until told to do so. Notify a School Director immediately. Executive Director should be notified as soon as situation allows.
2. Try to remain calm. Speak calmly and reasonably. Encourage the person not to act hastily. Be reassuring and non-threatening.
3. Reassure others and try to keep people calm.
4. As quickly as possible, move anyone away that is not directly involved with the incident.
5. If the person attempts to leave the building, allow this. Observe whether a car is used and note license number and description of vehicle.
6. If the person attempts to leave the building with a student or member of the staff, be cautious in trying to intervene. Remember that the most important consideration is the safety of all students and staff.
7. Try to gather as much detailed information as possible. As the situation allows and without putting anyone in danger, try to determine:
 - a. Location, identity, and detailed description of individual(s) & weapon(s)
 - b. Identify witnesses
 - c. Determine number and location of victims
 - d. Any pertinent background information on individual, including possible reason for carrying out actions
8. When police arrive, they will take control of the situation. Have master keys, a floor plan and site map of the school available for the police. Provide all available information.
9. Initiate follow-up district communications, public information, and crisis counseling.

Hostage Situation

If there is a hostage situation the procedures for Dangerous Person, above, will be followed. This means all staff/students/visitors are to take refuge. Follow Lockdown Procedures. If the danger is confined, responding law enforcement agencies may recommend an orderly evacuation of certain sections/areas away from the danger.

1. First person on scene
 - a. Identify hostage situation



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- b. Notify Director of Operations or Executive Director
2. Executive Director/ Director of Operations
 - a. Announce a Lockdown.
 - b. Call 911 and follow the instructions for handling intruder(s)
 - c. Notify the Building Response Team
 - d. Notify the Campus Safety Committee
3. Upon arrival of police officials, implement the following response actions as necessary.
4. The police will determine the termination of the emergency.

Intruder

1. First person on scene- Identify intruder situation
2. Executive Director/ Director of Operations
 - a. Announce a Lockdown.
 - b. Call 911 and School Safety and follow their instruction for handling intruder(s) and ensuring safety of students and staff.
 - c. Notify the Building Response Team and Campus Safety Committee.
 - d. Inform team of situation and actions taken.
 - e. Based on advice of police, confront the intruder
 - f. Escort intruder out of the building
3. Police determine the termination of the contingency.

Kidnapped Person

1. Identify kidnapping incident – first person on the scene.
2. The School Director or designee will take the following actions;
 - a. Announce a Lockdown.
 - b. Call 911 and advise them of the situation. Follow their instructions.
 - c. Notify Executive Director.
3. In coordination with police, notify parents or spouses of individuals who are or could be kidnapped.
4. Prepare official response in the event of media making an inquiry.
5. Police to determine the termination of emergency.
6. Develop attendance procedures to account for pupils and for unscheduled releases during school.

Student Elopement and Wandering

Elopement: A student leaving an assigned area without permission from or knowledge of staff, often to escape and/or avoid a school-related situation or task.

Wandering: Meandering which results in a student getting lost, leaving a safe environment or entering an inappropriate place, often due to the student’s inattention or distractibility.

1. Prevent the occurrence of wandering and elopements.
2. Staff should intercede when a student appears to be unsupervised.
3. Take appropriate action so that the child is redirected to the supervised activity or location.



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4. Report any unsafe or inappropriate behavior about a student to administration or staff working with that student.
5. Ensure that staff members are assigned strategically to areas around the school buildings during arrival, dismissal, lunch, recess, and other transitions to minimize chances of elopement.
6. If a student leaves the classroom, staff must ensure that adequate supervision is provided.
7. Establish a procedure to direct actions to be taken when an elopement does occur.
8. Notify the main office/administrator.
9. Initiate “Hold in Place”
10. Do an all call for ‘insert student name’ to come the main office.
11. Call the parents of child.
12. Initiate search team.
13. Announce that we are looking for “insert student name”
14. All staff should look outside their windows and in the hallway for the student
15. Any staff member not assigned to students at this time, come to office.
16. Conduct a coordinated search both in the building and on school grounds.
17. Have two people go in opposite directions outside of the school building starting and ending at the playground
18. Call the police (911) if a student has not been located in 5 minutes.
19. Have a picture of that child to show to law enforcement.
20. Notify Executive Director

Epidemic/Food or Water Poisoning

1. School Nurse
 - a. Identify the problem as possible epidemic/food or water poisoning.
 - b. Notify Director of Operations and coordinate with Main office.
2. Director of Operations
 - a. Notify Executive Director and New York City Health Department
 - b. Follow directives of Office of School Health and other public health officials, recognizing that public health officials have highest authority. Curtail or cease building operation as appropriate.
3. Director of Operations- Notify parents, staff, and students.
4. Public health officials- Monitor emergency.
5. Resources
 - a. Emergency Telephone Numbers: Fire/Ambulance 911
 - b. Building occupancy requires potable water. If water is undrinkable, cease operation of building unless equivalent provisions are made, including bottled water and single service disposable cups.
 - c. News media, public address system, Remind Message

Fire/Explosion

1. First person on the scene:
 - a. Upon discovery or detection of smoke or fire, or in the event of an explosion, sound building fire alarm immediately.



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- b. Notify Director of Operations of what prompted fire alarm, location, and source of fire/explosion if known
 - c. Summon Fire Department 911 give location of fire if known and entrance number to building.
2. Custodial Engineer
 - a. Report to Executive Director’s office on any fire alarm.
 - b. Investigate source and contain fire, if possible or practical. Keep Building Administrator informed.
3. All building occupants on sound of any fire alarm, evacuate building in accordance with established emergency evacuation plans posted in each classroom. After evacuation, close doors behind you.
4. FDNY- Termination of emergency.
5. Executive Director- Resume, curtail, or cease building operations as appropriate. Notify staff, parents, and students.

Carbon Monoxide Alarm

1. All building occupants- On sound of any fire alarm, evacuate building in accordance with established emergency evacuation plans posted in each classroom. After evacuation, close doors behind you.
2. Director of Operations:
 - a. Summon Fire Department at 911 and give location of fire/alarm if known.
 - b. Notify Executive Director
 - c. Notify Custodian Engineer
3. Custodial Engineer- Investigate source and contain fire, if possible or practical. Keep building administrator informed of situation.
4. Executive Director: Alert Office of Pupil Transportation and Pioneer Bus Company of possible need to evacuate students and staff to another building or alternate location.
 - a. Upon fire department’s arrival, advise of the situation and follow instructions.
5. FDNY- Termination of emergency.
6. Executive Director/Building Council: Resume, curtail, or cease building operations as appropriate. Notify staff, students, and parents.
7. Resources
 - a. Local Emergency Responders: Police 911; Fire / Ambulance 911
 - b. Zoned fire alarm system with enunciator panel.
 - c. Fire extinguishers serviced and charged.
 - d. Staff trained in First Aid, CPR and AED use.

Snow/Ice/Windstorm

1. Director of Operations
2. Monitor National Weather Service broadcast frequency and road conditions.
3. Notify Executive Director of impending situation.
4. School Director/Building Council
 - a. Curtail or cease all outdoor activities as appropriate.



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- b. Select appropriate Emergency Response Action and relay instructions to Building Council.
5. Executive Director- Terminate emergency as able.
6. Resources
 - a. National Weather Service app on smart phone.
 - b. Office of Pupil Transportation
 - c. Local emergency responders: Police 911; Fire/Ambulance 911
 - d. Staff trained in First Aid, CPR, and AED use.

Medical Emergencies

1. First person on the scene
 - a. Identify the situation. Who? What? Where?
 - b. Summon a Responsible Person (school nurse, School Director, Operations Team member)
2. Responsible Person
 - a. Calm and disperse other persons who are present.
 - b. Comfort the person and administer appropriate first aid.
 - c. Summon ambulance (911) if the situation warrants. Designate someone to meet emergency squad/ambulance outside the building to direct emergency personnel to the scene.
 - d. Notify School Director or Executive Director.
3. Custodial Engineer - Clean up body fluids according to district “Procedure for Cleaning Up Body Fluid Spills”.
4. Resources
 - a. School Nurse or responsible person capable of handling a medical emergency.
 - b. Local emergency responders: Fire/Ambulance 911
 - c. Staff trained in First Aid/CPR/AED.
 - d. Staff person(s) familiar with contingency plans.
 - e. Copy of district “Procedures for Cleaning Up Body Fluid Spills” see Appendix
5. If Narcan is used, complete “Narcan Utilization Reporting Form” and forward to school physician.

Hurricanes, Blizzards and Floods

1. School Director
 - a. Warnings and instructions may be relayed to the Executive Director and Building Council via the National Weather Service.
 - b. Implement the Emergency Response Action in coordination with above agencies.
 - c. Communicate selected emergency response action to Building Council, parents, staff and students.
 - d. Follow Executive Director’s instructions.
2. Termination of emergency will be issued by Executive Director or Building Council, as appropriate.



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Earthquake

1. Building Occupants
 - a. If indoors when an earthquake occurs, do not try to leave the building. Stay inside against an inside wall or under sturdy furniture. Assume a tuck position with hands over the head. If you are outside, get away from the building, utility poles, and trees.
2. Building Staff
 - a. After an earthquake has occurred, check for injuries and fires or fire hazards and report status to Building Administrator. Report fallen power lines and gas leaks.
3. School Director/Building Council
 - a. Summon local emergency responders if needed.
 - b. Inform Executive Director of situation.
 - c. Instruct Custodial Engineer to shut down building systems (electricity, gas, and/or water) if damaged or leaking.
 - d. Evacuate building if safety of occupants is threatened; use discretion in event of electrical hazards.
 - e. Be aware that aftershocks often occur.
 - f. If a total breakdown of communications occurs, implement the most appropriate Emergency Response Action to the best of his/her ability using resources available.
4. Executive Director- Coordinate selected emergency response action with local, county and state agencies.
5. Termination of emergency will be issued by Executive Director or Building Council.

Tornado Warning

1. School Director
 - a. Monitor emergency broadcast channel and weather service watches/warnings.
 - b. Relay selected emergency response action to Building Administrators, parents, staff, and students.
 - c. Cancel all outdoor activities and summon all persons into building.
 - d. Follow Executive Director’s instructions.
 - e. Do not assemble occupants in gymnasiums, auditoriums, or cafeterias.
 - f. Give instructions to building occupants over public address system.
2. Building Occupants: Take shelter against inside walls away from any windows and under a table or desk in a tuck position with hands over the head.
3. Building Staff - After tornado has passed, check for injuries and fires or fire hazards and report status to Building Administrator. Check for and report fallen power lines.
4. Building Council
 - a. Summon local emergency responders if needed. Inform Executive Director of situation.
 - b. Coordinate response action in coordination with local, county, or state agencies.
 - c. Communicate instructions to Building Council, parents, staff, and students.
5. Termination of emergency will be issued by Executive Director or Building Council, as appropriate.



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Toxic Spill, Radioactive Incident, or Air Pollution

1. Executive Director:
 - a. Implement Response Action in coordination with local and county agencies.
 - b. Relay selected response action to Building Administrators, parents, staff, and students.
2. Building Council or School Director:
 - a. Cancel all outdoor activities and summon all persons into building.
 - b. Direct building staff to close all doors and windows within the building by using the public address system.
 - c. Direct building custodians to close all vents and shut off fans bringing outside air into the school.
3. Termination of emergency will be issued by Executive Director or Building Council, as appropriate.
4. Resources
 - a. Cell phones to connect to key administrators.
 - b. Radio tuned to National Weather Service frequency. Battery operated AM/FM radio/smart phone apps.
 - c. Local emergency responders: Police 911; Fire/Ambulance: 911
 - d. Staff trained in First Aid, CPR, AED use.

Hazardous Materials

1. Upon discovery or detection of a fuel spill on school property, the first person on the scene will:
 - a. Notify Executive Director at 646-331-4561
 - b. Stop source of spill, if possible.
 - c. The Director of Facilities will evaluate the problem insofar as possible and stop source of spill, if possible, and commence remedial response, i.e. absorbent material
 - d. Executive Director, in conjunction with the Director of Operations, will decide whether to curtail or cease building operation as conditions warrant.
 - e. The Building Administrator will institute the correct Emergency Response.
 - f. Recovery: Custodian Engineer and Executive Director will direct cleanup work.
 - g. Termination of contingency will be issued by the Executive Director.
2. Resources
 - a. News media, email, text
 - b. Office of Pupil Transportation
 - c. Local emergency responders: Police 911; Fire/Ambulance 911

School Bus Accident Procedure

In the event of a school bus accident or a mechanical problem resulting in an extended delay, the following procedures will be adhered to. Please note that Classical funds and provides Bus Attendants for all buses.

1. The priority is for the safety and welfare of the students involved. The driver and Bus Attendant will ensure that, whenever possible, the vehicle is parked in a safe location. Depending on the physical condition of the passengers and vehicle as well as the prevailing weather and road conditions, the driver will determine whether the students should be removed from or allowed to



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- remain on the vehicle. When circumstances require, the driver will use triangle reflectors to mark the scene.
2. Notify the Office of Pupil Transportation immediately as to the bus(es) involved, the magnitude and location of the accident, and whether students are on the school bus.
 3. Record the names of all students. If any students/passengers are taken for emergency treatment, the names of those individuals will be recorded as well as their destination.
 4. No accident is to be discussed or information released to any party unless required by the investigating authorities or approved by the District Office.
 5. Submit to the Director of Operations, in an accurate and timely manner, a district accident report as per attached.
 6. Executive Director
 - a. If the accident does involve students on one of our daily scheduled routes, the School Director will make arrangements to go to the scene to provide supervisory assistance and determine the need for medical assistance.
 - b. Contact, as soon as possible on the same day, the parents of students involved in the accident. This step also required for co-curricular trips.
 - c. Direct school nurse to meet with students involved to evaluate and report any injury. Contact parents of students involved for the completion of any accident reports needed.
 7. Communication
 - a. Office of Pupil Transportation: 718-392-8855
 - b. Pioneer Bus Company: 718-984-8077
 8. Resources
 - a. Two-way radio in each bus to contact Office of Pupil Transportation at any point along its daily route. First Aid kits.
 - b. Local Emergency Responders: Police 911; Fire / Ambulance 911
 - c. Emergency road flares or reflectors.

Restricted Use of Building

1. Executive Director/Building Council: Relocate educational program(s) displaced by a contingency which renders all or parts of a building unusable for school purposes.
2. For temporary quarters, consult Building Council.
3. Executive Director: Revise student transportation system as necessary.
4. Executive Director/Building Council: Notify staff, students, parents, and NYC Department of Education. Executive Director: Institute recovery as appropriate.

Unplanned Fire Alarm

1. All Building occupants: On sound of any fire alarm, all building occupants shall evacuate building in accordance with established evacuation routes posted in each room. Staff need to be aware that their situational awareness levels need to increase during an unplanned alarm. Staff should lead all students out of the building and to assigned areas. Be vigilant of your surroundings by observing and assessing your environment for threats and taking appropriate action to avoid those threats.
2. Custodial Engineer:
 - a. Summon Fire Department 911 and explain situation.



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- b. If upon inspection, fire is not found at location where alarm was initiated, a Custodian shall be assigned to the location until fire department officials arrive.
 - c. Return building to normal operations.
 - d. Notify Executive Director or Director of Operations.
3. Custodial Team: Investigate source of alarm and confirm evidence of fire. And investigate source and contain fire, if possible or practical. Keep Building Administrator informed of situation.
4. Executive Director: Alert Office of Pupil Transportation of possible need to evacuate students and staff to another building.
5. Building Council: Upon fire department’s arrival, advise of the situation and follow instructions and keep Executive Director’s office informed.
6. Fire Department: Termination of emergency.
7. Executive Director/Building Council: Resume, curtail, or cease building operations as appropriate. Notify staff, parents, and students, as appropriate.
8. Resources
 - a. Local emergency responders: Fire/Ambulance 911; Police 911
 - b. Chemical inventory with MSDSs located in Building Administrator’s Office.
 - c. Zoned fire alarm system with enunciator panel if available.
 - d. Fire extinguishers serviced and charged.
 - e. Transportation System and Transportation Supervisor.

Systems Failure

Upon discovery or detection of Loss of Power, Heat, Water, or Sewage Systems, Gas Leak, Noxious Fumes or Structural Failure, the first person on the scene shall notify the Executive Director or the Custodial Engineer.

1. Custodial Engineer: Evaluate the problem insofar as possible, activate fire alarm if there is any question as to the safety of the building occupants. In the event of a
 - GAS LEAK: do not use public address system
 - POWER FAILURE: use fire alarm system and emergency lighting
2. Custodial/Maintenance person: Notify the Executive Director
3. Executive Director: Curtail or cease building operations as appropriate, and notify staff, parents, and students and issue instructions. Contact Building Council.
4. Building Council: Complete corrective actions and recovery.
5. Resources
 - a. Local emergency responders: Police 911; Fire/Ambulance 911
 - b. Emergency Two way Radios located in each building in the main office

Emergency Response Actions / Functional Annexes

Staff have been provided information on how to respond to crises that may occur on school grounds or during a school function. Staff will direct students to respond in a variety of ways depending on the situations listed below. Once administrators and first responders have accurate information to share, staff will be informed via email and students will be informed from staff. At this point the Operations



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Team will send information to parents via Remind. Information can then be broadcast via social media, and the school website for parents.

- Early Dismissal
- School Cancellation
- Hold-In-Place
- Evacuate
- Shelter-In-Building
- Lockdown
- Lockout

More specific detail regarding these scenarios is included in the Building Level Emergency Response Plans.

Early Dismissal

Early dismissal is announced in the event of a system failure such as heating/plumbing/electrical failure that renders the building unsuitable for instructional purposes. Early dismissal may be a viable option for other emergency situations as decided by the Executive Director. The Office of Pupil Transportation will be notified when and where to send buses. Early dismissal will normally follow normal dismissal procedures. Alternate dismissal procedures and/or loading areas are included in the School’s Handbook.

Recovery – District Support for Buildings

Bridge Prep’s intention is to support and cooperate with the building Emergency Response Teams who are called into action, according to individual circumstances and needs.

Disaster Mental Health Services

The Building Safety Plan include procedures for dealing with crises that necessitate disaster mental health services. The New York Mental Health Department is a resource that can be called upon.

Code of Conduct

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 consistently applied discipline policy 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 approved by our authorizer, the New York State Board of Regents.



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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 that 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 the 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. “In School” refers to a time when the student is attending school both in-person and virtual.
10. “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 students accountable for their behavior, both in-person and virtually. Infractions are grouped into five 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.

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



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Where and When the Discipline Code Applies

- Confiscation
- In-school disciplinary action (e.g., exclusion and/or removal from a particular class or event)
- Long term out-of-school suspension

Examples of Level 1 Infractions	
Unexcused absence from school	Selling, using or possessing obscene material
Violating the dress code	Gambling
Arriving late to school	Using abusive or profane language or treatment
Arriving to class unprepared	Forgery
Cutting school, class, detention, or mandatory school events.	Making unreasonable noise
Misbehaving on school-provided transportation	Defamation
Misbehaving inside or outside of class	Possession of inappropriate property
Disrupting class or preventing teaching	Being disrespectful toward a staff member or their designee
Gum, food and beverages during unauthorized times	Failing to comply with the directive of staff member or their designee
Cheating, plagiarism, copying others work, or allowing others to copy work	Being disrespectful toward a student
Failing to comply with School imposed-consequences	

Possible Disciplinary Responses	
Oral warning	Written warning
Written notification to parent/guardian	Conference with parent(s)/guardian(s)
Detention	In-school disciplinary action (e.g., exclusion and/or removal from a particular class or event)
Confiscation	Suspension from transportation



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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
Sexual harassment	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	
Conference with parent(s)/guardian(s)	Confiscation
Detention	In-school disciplinary action (e.g., exclusion and/or removal from a particular class 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 self or others	Fighting or unwanted physical contact
Play fighting, 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

Possible Disciplinary Responses	
Conference with parent(s)/guardian(s)	Confiscation
In-school disciplinary action (e.g., exclusion and/or removal from a particular class or event)	In-school disciplinary action (e.g., exclusion and/or removal from a particular class or event)
Short term out-of-school suspension	Long term out-of school suspension
Expulsion	



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The standards set forth in the Discipline Code apply to behavior:

- In school, which includes both in-person instruction and virtual instruction, 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

Students who are found to have violated the School’s Code of Conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination with another:

1. Suspension from Transportation

Students who do not follow the School’s Code of Conduct on school transportation may have their riding privileges suspended temporarily or permanently by the Executive Director or their designee. In such cases, the student’s parent or guardian will become responsible for seeing that their Bridge Builder gets to and from school safely.

2. In-School Disciplinary Procedures

When a Bridge Builder engages in behavior, which is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with a teacher’s authority over the classroom, the student may be subject to disciplinary action of any of the following:

- a. Oral warning
- b. Written warning
- c. Written notification to parent/guardian
- d. Confiscation
- e. Exclusion and/or removal from a particular class or event

3. 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. Alternative instruction will be provided for at least two hours per day.

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

Given the School’s limited excess space availability and the need to socially distance students or if for any other reason, the student’s presence in the school causes a risk of continuing disruption



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or a risk of danger for the student or others, the Executive Director may direct that the alternative instruction be provided off-site.

5. Long Term Suspension: More than 10 Days

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.

6. Expulsion

Expulsion is reserved for extraordinary circumstances, including 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 set forth for long-term suspension.

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 parents or guardian of the student and the student shall have the opportunity to present the student’s version of the incident and to ask questions of the complaining witnesses. 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 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 School’s decision to impose a short-term suspension may be challenged by the student’s parent or guardian in accordance with the School’s Complaints 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



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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 School initiates the suspension proceeding, they shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in their discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer’s report shall be advisory only and the Executive Director may accept or reject all or part of it. The School’s decision to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion may be challenged by the parent or guardian through an appeal process to the School, the details of which shall be determined. 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, 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 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, a mine, 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



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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).

Freedom of Expression

All members of our community 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 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

Students at school-sponsored off-campus events, both virtually or in-person 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.

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.



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Bullying

Bullying is understood to be a hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression and/or creates terror. 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 students 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 students 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.



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In order to assure the success and fidelity of our Social Emotional programming, the School has a designated DASA Coordinator who works 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 meets 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 Discipline Code, 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 their 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 their 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.