2025-26 FAMILY HANDBOOK

On behalf of the board and faculty of Bridges Preparatory School, we would like to welcome you to the 2025–2026 school year. For our families that are new to Bridges, we welcome you to our Buccaneer family. For our returning families, thank you for your commitment and trust in our schools of excellence.

Our administrative team is planning and preparing for another memorable year that fosters our deliberate approach to whole child development and supporting our students socially, emotionally, and academically. We are fully staffed and have complemented our exceptional faculty with high-quality educators from across our country. I am very proud and excited about the team that we have assembled for this school year. Your families deserve no less.

Our mission is to provide students equal access to a high-quality K-12 whole child education that maximizes academic excellence and strength of character in a student-centered learning environment created by a faculty of lifelong learners. We have a top-rated staff that genuinely cares about every child that walks through our doors and wants to give each child the best educational experience while ensuring our mission is instilled in our daily practices. As Chief Executive Officer, my goal is to create a culture where all stakeholders feel valued and can engage in a memorable educational experience. I will serve as your liaison for the day-to-day operations of the school, as well as curriculum and instruction. We have a policy-governing board that is responsible for all policies, as well as ensuring that financing, facilities, and structures align to our mission. I am confident that each family will enjoy an outstanding educational experience this school year!

Our charter is founded on the 12 principles of Paideia with a focus on STEM education to prepare our students for college and career readiness upon graduation. With an emphasis on authentic project-based learning, students apply their knowledge and skills to tackle real world problems by preparing them to compete in an ever-changing global society. In *The Paideia Proposal*, Mortimer Adler presented an idealistic and egalitarian vision of education. He wrote, “Here then are the three common callings to which all our children are destined: to earn a living in an intelligent and responsible fashion, to function as intelligent and responsible citizens, and to make both of these things serve the purpose of leading intelligent and responsible lives—to enjoy as fully as possible all the goods that make a human life as good as it can be.”

Further supporting our mission and vision, Bridges students can participate in a variety of year-round sports, clubs, and curriculum-supported field trips and activities. Students develop intrinsic understandings about interpersonal skills through the embedded approach to character education. One of the elements that make our school successful is the support of our parents and stakeholders. Two pivotal groups include the Bridges Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and the Athletic Booster Club. These groups are made up of parents, grandparents, teachers, and community members who give tirelessly for the support of our students. Whether you are a new or returning member to our school community, I urge you to join and to be actively engaged with one of these groups. I look forward to the new school year and all the celebrations and successes that it will bring.

We have enjoyed an incredible 12 years in the Lowcountry. We have experienced highs and lows that have established our strength and perseverance of the long-lasting footprint that we promise to provide for many years to come.

Last year, we centered our efforts on **The Power of Teams**, embracing the values of cooperation, commitment, and contribution. Together, we built a strong foundation rooted in collaboration and shared goals. This school year, we will use this momentum and change of mindset to embrace “**THE POWER AND IMPACT OF FAMILY-LIKE SCHOOLS**.”

When families, educators, students, and community members come together as true partners in education, something extraordinary happens—a Family-Like School emerges. In this environment, every child is surrounded by a caring network that works in harmony to support their growth, well-being, and success.

To bring this vision to life, I will be leading the formation of an **Action Team for Partnerships**—a group dedicated to fostering meaningful connections between home, school, and the broader community. Together, we will develop focused committees that will strengthen our school's commitment to excellence through three key areas:

1. Family-Like Schools & Communication – Building trust and understanding through open, two-way communication.
2. Volunteering & Community Collaboration – Creating opportunities for families and community members to be active participants in school life.
3. Learning at Home & Shared Decision-Making – Supporting learning beyond the classroom and empowering families to help shape our school's future.

We warmly invite you to join us in this important work. Your voice, your time, and your talents are vital to creating the kind of school community where every student can thrive.

Bridges Preparatory School is a very special place. We have quickly become the most sought-after school in the Lowcountry. I cannot thank our board and our school community enough for creating a school environment that is truly like no other. We look forward to another successful year where our focus on each individual's contribution to the power of family-like schools is centered around ONE VISION, ONE MISSION, and ONE COMMITMENT.

Together we are…Bucs!

Gary S. McCulloch

Chief Executive Officer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION **2**
FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS AND GOVERNING PRINCIPLES **6**
MISSION STATEMENT 6
VISION STATEMENT 6
CORE VALUES 6
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT 6
INTEGRITY 6
EVOLVING 6
COMMUNITY 6
SAFETY 6
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT 7
PARENT/VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT 7
FACULTY/STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT 8
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY 8
FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT 8
HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT 9
DISCLAIMERS 9
ACADEMIC INFORMATION **9**
GRADING POLICY 9
GRADE REPORTING SYSTEM 10
GRADING SYSTEM 10
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY 10
ASSESSMENTS 11
SOUTH CAROLINA UNIVERSAL GRADING POLICY 11
RANKING POLICY 11
OTHER PROTOCOLS/EXPECTATIONS 12
UNIT RECOVERY 12
MAKE-UP WORK (K-12) 12
ONLINE ACCESS TO GRADES/ATTENDANCE 12
EFFECTIVE GRADING PRINCIPLES 12
ACCURATE 12
MEANINGFUL 12
CONSISTENT 13
SUPPORTIVE OF LEARNING 13
RETENTION POLICY 13
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE POLICY 13
HOMEWORK 14
HONOR ROLL 14
PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS 14
FIELD TRIPS 14
UNAUTHORIZED FIELD TRIPS 14
CHAPERONE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 15
ATTENDANCE POLICY **16**
ATTENDANCE 16
SCHOOL START TIME 16
DISMISSAL TIME 16
SEAT TIME REQUIREMENT 16
LAWFUL ABSENCES 16
UNEXCUSED ABSENCES 17
COLLEGE TOURS/JOB SHADOWING 17
CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM 17
DOCUMENTATION OF ABSENCES 17
PROCEDURES FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE 17

TARDY POLICY 18
ARRIVAL TARDY POLICY 18
6-12 TARDY POLICY 18
EARLY DISMISSALS 18
LATE PICK-UPS 18
SOUTH CAROLINA COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW 18
SOUTH CAROLINA TRUANCY POLICY 18
TRUANCY INTERVENTION PROCEDURES 19
ENROLLMENT POLICY 19
ENROLLMENT 19
ELIGIBILITY 20
ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS 20
OPEN ENROLLMENT 20
CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENTS 20
STAFF PREFERENCE 20
SIBLING PREFERENCE 20
WAITLIST 20
VACANCIES 20
REGISTRATION 20
DISENROLLMENT/WITHDRAWAL 21
GENERAL INFORMATION 21
AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM 21
ASSESSMENTS 21
STAR ASSESSMENTS 21
SAEBRS (SOCIAL, ACADEMIC, EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORS RISK SCREENER) 21
SC READY 21
END OF COURSE TESTING/SAT/ACT/AP 21
BACKPACKS 22
BEHAVIOR POLICY 22
PENALTIES 22
SAFE HARBOR NOTE 22
SEARCHES 22
BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY 22
REPORTING PROCEDURE 23
REPRISAL 24
TRAINING AND EDUCATION 24
CELEBRATIONS 24
CELL PHONES 24
COMMUNICATION 25
STRUCTURE OF COMMUNICATION 25
DELIVERIES 25
DRESS CODE POLICY 26
K-5 GUIDELINES 26
6-12 GUIDELINES 26
DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES 27
GRADES K-5 27
GRADES 6-12 27
CAR RIDERS 27
FAMILY INFORMATION 27
MTSS (MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT) 28
FUNDRAISING AND SOLICITATION/SALES 28
GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM 28
GRIEVANCE POLICY 28
HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION 28
ACCIDENT, INJURY, OR HEALTH EMERGENCY 29
ALLERGY POLICY 29

HEAD LICE 29
ILLNESS 30
COVID 30
IMMUNIZATIONS 30
INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLANS OR INDIVIDUAL HEALTH PLANS (IHPs) 30
MEDICATIONS 30
FIELD TRIP MEDICATIONS 31
CONCUSSION 31
BEDBUGS 31
MENTAL HEALTH 31
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA) 31
HOMEBOUND 32
LOCKERS 32
LUNCH 32
PARKING PERMISSION AND RULES 32
PARENTS/GUARDIANS 32
PARKING EXPECTATIONS 32
STUDENT PARKING REGULATIONS 33
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE 33
RECESS 33
RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION 34
STUDENT EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS 34
EMPLOYEES ENGAGING IN RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES AND EXPRESSION AT SCHOOL 34
EQUAL ACCESS TO SCHOOL FACILITIES 34
CLUB/ORGANIZATION POLICY 34
INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC USE POLICY 35
PURPOSE 35
NETWORK AND INTERNET GENERAL USAGE 35
PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES 35
PROHIBITED MATERIAL 36
PERSONALLY OWNED DEVICES 36
POLICY CHANGES 36
SAFETY AND SECURITY 36
SAFETY DRILLS 36
HOLD 36
SECURE 36
LOCKDOWN 36
SHELTER 36
EVACUATION 36
SEVERE WEATHER INFORMATION 37
SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS 37
WEAPONS ON CAMPUS 37
SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND HARASSMENT 37
HARASSMENT DEFINED AND PROHIBITED 38
SEXUAL HARASSMENT DEFINED AND PROHIBITED 38
REPORTING PROCEDURES 39
INVESTIGATION AND RECOMMENDATION 39
ACTION 39
REPRISAL 39
RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES 39
POLICY DISTRIBUTION 40
VISITING AND VOLUNTEERING 40

FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS AND GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

The purpose of this Bridges Preparatory School ("BPS," "Bridges Prep," and/or the "School") Family Handbook (the "Handbook") is to provide information about rules, regulations, policies, and procedures in order to promote a better understanding of what is expected of BPS students and parents. The Handbook does not constitute a contract, and is subject to change. Please study and familiarize yourself with the contents of the Handbook.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide students equal access to a high-quality K-12 whole child education that maximizes academic excellence and strength of character in a student-centered learning environment created by a faculty of lifelong learners.

VISION STATEMENT

To assist each child in developing his or her unique gift intellectually, physically, socially, and ethically through whole child instruction in order to prepare students for college and career readiness, while ensuring their ability to be productive citizens, serving the community, and readily competing in the ever-changing global society.

CORE VALUES

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Understanding that learning and growth occurs in a variety of formats and environments, we offer engaging activities for our student body. We desire to advance student development and leadership capacity, support students in the pursuit of their passions, connect students with one another, enhance creative competence, and increase the overall sense of community and enjoyment.

INTEGRITY

All students are expected to hold themselves to the highest standards of independent excellence in the demonstration of their academic performance. We fully expect the focus on ethics and decision-making to lead to an environment where good character is important to all.

EVOLVING

At BPS, we value having a growth mindset. We give each student lifelong tools to persevere and readily compete in the ever-changing global society.

COMMUNITY

Building, enhancing, and maintaining community is integral to all aspects of school life. We promote strong relationships with each other and all stakeholders through respect and acceptance of one another. We embrace and encourage parent participation and open communication between the school and the home.

SAFETY

Every Bridges Preparatory School community member deserves a safe and caring environment. Safe schools are dependent upon leadership and the positive relationships we build to support school safety. Respect is vital in building a foundation for safe and secure learning environments.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As a student of Bridges Preparatory School, I have the right to:

- be respected as an individual human being.
- be taught according to my ability and achievement levels by qualified personnel.
- be evaluated according to my performance.
- express my opinions at the right time and in the right place.
- have a positive learning environment that is safe, reasonably quiet and comfortable, providing me with a reasonable amount of attention, and fair academic policies that support and encourage me to meet high expectations.
- receive fair and consistent treatment.
- attend school without having my person or property threatened.
- expect teachers to follow through with their responsibilities.
- expect a high-quality education.
- have the right to be involved in the decision-making process and advocate for any changes in policy.

As a student of Bridges Preparatory School, I will:

- support Bridges Preparatory School to fulfill its mission and vision.
- respect the authority of all staff members.
- respect the feelings, ideas, rights, and beliefs of others.
- act in a polite and respectful manner toward all staff, students, and Bridges Preparatory School community members.
- never tease or bully another student.
- be familiar with and abide by all school rules and policies.
- respect the right of all teachers to teach and all students to learn.
- be on time and prepared for all classes.
- keep the campus clean and respect school property.
- be familiar with and follow all school rules and policies, including the Bridges Preparatory School Dress Code Policy.
- bring only school-appropriate items to school.
- not use profanity or disrespectful language.
- put forth my best effort during the educational process.

PARENT/VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

As a parent/guardian of Bridges Preparatory School, I have the right to:

- be respected as an individual human being.
- be informed of school events.
- be informed on what is being taught in my child's classroom.
- appropriately express opinions/concerns.
- receive fair and consistent treatment.
- have questions answered in a reasonable timeframe.

As a parent/guardian of Bridges Preparatory School, I will:

- support Bridges Preparatory School to fulfill its mission and vision.
- contribute to Bridges Preparatory School through our family commitment to volunteer service to the school.
- attend parent/guardian/student/teacher conferences and communicate with Bridges Preparatory School's educators whenever I have a question or issue regarding my child and his/her progress.
- ensure that my child respects the rights of all community members, meets his/her responsibilities, and supports a disciplined, peaceful, and respectful school environment.
- treat Bridges Preparatory School educators, students, and other parents/guardians with respect.
- keep track of my child's progress, performance, and school activities, read school newsletters and other written/online communication, and communicate in person or via phone or email with appropriate faculty/staff members.
- ensure my child is familiar with and follows all school rules and policies, including the Bridges Preparatory School Dress Code Policy.
- ensure my child is at school on time and abide by pick-up and drop-off procedures.
- make myself available to Bridges Preparatory School and address any concerns the school may have.

I am aware that Bridges Preparatory School may not be the appropriate or ideal learning environment for every student. If my student has excessive absences/tardies, fails to meet academic expectations, and/or repeatedly misbehaves or continuously contributes negatively to the BPS community and disrupts the educational process at BPS, my child will be placed on an academic, attendance, or behavioral probationary contract.

FACULTY/STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

As a faculty/staff member of Bridges Preparatory School, I have the right to:

- be respected as an individual human being.
- be treated politely and respectfully by students, staff, parents/guardians, and other BPS community members in all interactions (in person, phone or email)
- work without threat to myself or my personal property.
- teach or work in the building without harassment or disruption.
- require compliance with classroom and school rules and policies.
- expect students and parents to follow through with their responsibilities.
- As a faculty/staff member of Bridges Preparatory School, I will:
- support Bridges Preparatory School to fulfill its mission and vision.
- respect all members of the BPS community.
- respect the feelings, ideas, rights, and beliefs of others.
- present a professional demeanor, both in appearance and actions, at all times.
- plan and teach the content areas and state standards using the best practice ideas as directed by the school administration and Board of Directors.
- hold students, parents/guardians, and each other accountable to upholding their respective responsibilities.
- be on time and prepared for classes, meetings, and school functions.
- not use profanity or disrespectful language.
- provide a safe and caring, but rigorous, learning environment for all students.
- think of each student at Bridges Preparatory School as “my student” and work with other teachers for the good of all students.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Bridges Preparatory School (BPS) is in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to the extent that no person shall on the basis of sex, race, or national origin, be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of, nor be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity, nor shall there be discrimination by gender, sexual orientation, race, or national origin in the employment of personnel.

Students, staff, and parents/guardians have the right to feel safe from threats, religious, racial or sexual harassment and bodily harm. It is the policy of BPS to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence. The school prohibits any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence. Slurs, innuendos, hostile treatment, violence or other verbal or physical conduct against a student or employee will NOT be tolerated.

All students, employees and volunteers will be treated with respect. BPS will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), a federal law, requires Bridges Preparatory School (BPS), with certain exceptions explained below, to obtain your written consent prior to any disclosure to an outside organization of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, unless you have advised BPS not to release such information, BPS may disclose to an outside organization without written consent, appropriately designated “directory information.”

Examples of outside organizations that may request the disclosure of directory information include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. BPS may also receive requests for directory information from various media outlets. Students participate in a variety of school-related events and activities that are subject to some form of publicity—from honor rolls to media coverage of special events. Information about and pictures of your child may appear in newspaper articles, on television, in radio broadcasts, on displays, on the school and district website or in school and district promotional pieces, including but not limited to, honor roll lists, yearbooks, newsletters, brochures, or fliers.

BPS has designated the following information as being directory information related to a student: the student’s name, address, telephone number, photograph, major field of study, participation in activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received, and the most recent school attended.

If you do not want BPS to disclose directory information from your child's education records to any outside organization without your prior written consent, you must complete the BPS Opt-Out for Media & Directory Information form, available on our annual registration.

Please be advised that if you do not submit a completed Opt-Out for Media & Directory Information form upon registration, BPS will be free to release or use directory information regarding your child as it deems necessary for educational benefits.

HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requires certain designated components within Bridges Preparatory School (BPS) to maintain the privacy of protected health information and to provide individuals with notice of BPS' legal duties and privacy practices with respect to this health information.

HIPAA and its regulations specifically exclude any education records covered by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), treatment records of a student over 18 years of age that are made or maintained by a health care professional and disclosed to no other persons, and employment records held by BPS in its role as an employer. Therefore, BPS acknowledges that the business activities of only some of its components may be considered subject to the privacy regulations of HIPAA.

DISCLAIMERS

This handbook does not serve to contractually bind Bridges Preparatory School in any way and is subject to change without notice by the administration or the Board of Directors.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

GRADING POLICY

Bridges Preparatory School's goal is to ensure that grading and reporting practices are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills that are consistent across grade levels and courses. We want student grades to be accurate, meaningful, consistent and supportive of learning.

Assignment of student grades is the purview of the teacher. Grades cannot be changed without following the established procedures which include explicit consent of the teacher. Teachers develop research-based grading and assessment practices to guide the recording and reporting of student progress under the supervision of the principal. Bridges Preparatory School follows the South Carolina guidelines for grading/assessment. As such, no school leader or teacher will engage in grading practices that violate state policy.

Students respond more positively to the opportunity for success than to the threat of failure. Therefore, through learner objectives and its instructional program, Bridges Preparatory School seeks to make the evaluation of student performance both transparent and positive.

All students are assessed according to South Carolina College & Career Ready standards.

GRADE REPORTING SYSTEM

Student grades are always accessible to parents on the PowerSchool Parent Portal for Grades K-12. Report cards are sent home at the end of each quarter for all students. Progress Reports are sent home halfway through each quarter for students in grades 6-12.

GRADING SYSTEM

- **Standards-Based Grading Scale (Grades K-5)**

E	90-100	Exceeds Mastery
M	80-89	Mastery
A	70-79	Approaching
D	<70	Developing

- **Grading Scale (Grades 6-12)**

A	90-100	Excellent
B	80-89	Above Average
C D F	70-79 60-69 0-59	Average Passing, Needs Improvement Unsatisfactory

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

At BPS, one of our five core values centers on integrity. All students are expected to hold themselves to the highest standards of independent excellence in the demonstration of their academic performance. All assignment submissions are to be completed solely and independently by the student, with the absence of plagiarism, AI (artificial intelligence) assisted material, and assistance from other parties.

A student who violates the Academic Integrity Policy by using AI (artificial intelligence) or submitting any work that is not their own will be subject to the following disciplinary action.

1st Offense: Incident will be recorded in Educators Handbook as a classroom level referral, the student's parent will be notified, and the student will be allowed to resubmit their original work with a 20% penalty applied to the assignment. An Academic Integrity Policy Contract will be completed outlining the policy's expectations and consequences.

2nd and Subsequent Offenses: Incident will be recorded in Educators Handbook as an office referral, the parent will be notified by teacher and administrator, the student will receive 0% for the assignment with no opportunity for resubmission.

ASSESSMENTS

Formative assessments are used to monitor student learning and to provide a benchmark of student progress toward learning targets and goals. It provides ongoing feedback to both the student and the teacher, which can in turn be used to improve instruction and learner outcomes. Formative assessments help identify areas of strength as well as areas of refinement for students, which allow for timely intervention. Not every formative assessment is graded. Summative assessments aim to evaluate student learning and mastery at the end of a unit of study. They are often high stakes and thus count more significantly in the calculation of a student's grade.

Formative Assessments ● 3-5 minimum per summative assessment ● Honors: 6-8 per unit **Activities that allow teachers to monitor the development of student learning. Some examples are:* ● *Classwork* ● *Observational checklists* ● *Structured center activities* ● *Word study*	**Weight: 40% Grades** **Grades K-12**
Summative Assessments ● 2-4 minimum per quarter **Activities that allow teachers to monitor the development of student learning. Some examples are:* ● *Unit/chapter tests* ● *Culminating projects* ● *Performance tasks with rubrics*	**Weight: 60%** **Grades K-12** **Grades 7-12: 20% EOC** **Related Arts: 60%**
Final Grade Calculations (Standard Practices)	**Non-EOC: 50% Quarter 1 and 50% Quarter 2** **EOC Class: 40% Quarter 1, 40% Quarter 2, and 20% EOC**
Homework (Use rubric or checklist)	**Grades K-6: No Homework** **7th-12th Grade Only: Homework should be used to reinforce and prepare for instruction for the following day.**

SOUTH CAROLINA UNIVERSAL GRADING POLICY

RANKING POLICY

Student Rank and Grade Point Average (GPA) at Bridges Preparatory School are calculated based on the South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy (SCUGP). The ranking is based on all academic classes at the end of each academic year and includes the entire class of diploma-seeking candidates. Class rank will be demonstrated on the official transcript of every student.

For more information about the South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy, visit: Department of Education SCUGP
For more information about the 10-Point Grading Scale, visit: Department of Education 10-Point Grading Scale.

OTHER PROTOCOLS/EXPECTATIONS

- Late assignments that are not due to absences will be accepted until the unit summative assessment for a maximum of 80%.
- All students will be given an opportunity to reteach/retake one summative assessment in each class/quarter. In order to be eligible for a retake, students must have completed all formative assignments prior to that summative assessment. The retake must be arranged to be taken within 1 week after receiving the initial score. The 'retake' grade will replace the original grade. All retakes must be requested by the student in writing to the teacher and require a minimum of 1 tutoring session prior to taking the retest.
- Parents will be notified if a student's overall grade drops below a 70. You will receive communication via email and text messaging that will state that your child has below a 70 in one or more classes. Parents that receive a below 70 notification are encouraged to contact the teacher.
- Parents will be notified if a student's overall grade drops below a 60 by phone from the teacher. In the instance that contact was not made, an email will be sent to the parent. Parent communication is documented.
- Grades will be entered into PowerSchool Gradebook on a regular basis. Grades may have comments attached including "Missing, Redo Possible, Updated from Redo, Late."
- Missing assignments will be marked with a 0 as a placeholder along with a (!) symbol indicating that the assignment is missing until the assignment is turned in.

UNIT RECOVERY

The purpose of Unit Recovery is to provide students an opportunity for remediation for a final quarter grade below a 60. Students that have demonstrated mastery in Unit Recovery will have their quarter grade updated to reflect a grade no higher than a 60.

In order for students to complete Unit Recovery, students must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Students must request Unit Recovery for the previous quarter from their teacher.
- Unit Recovery applies to quarters 1 and 3.
- Students must complete the assigned work by the teacher.
- Work assigned is at the discretion of the teacher.

MAKE-UP WORK (K-12)

For excused (Lawful) absences, students will be granted the opportunity to make-up any missed assignments and/or work due to the absence(s). This will include quizzes, tests, writing assignments etc. The period for making up the work will be a minimum of one (1) class day for each class day missed to a maximum of one week. For example, if a student misses two days of school (Monday and Tuesday) and returns on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday will be granted as make-up days for missing Monday and Tuesday (one day for each day missed). In this example, all missed assignments or work (test, quiz etc.) would not be due until Monday. Students who have unexcused absences may be given the opportunity to make up work at the discretion of the teacher during make-up sessions; however, the unexcused absence remains in the student's record. Arrangements for completing the work should be made by the student upon the student's return to school. Making up missed work when in school-sponsored programs and events is required.

ONLINE ACCESS TO GRADES/ATTENDANCE

Students and parents/guardians can access student grades via the PowerSchool Portal at any time 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Visit our webpage, then "Parents," then "Parent Resources" for more information.

EFFECTIVE GRADING PRINCIPLES

Bridges Preparatory School has developed a grading policy that follows the recommendations of the South Carolina guidelines for grading/assessment. Grading Recommendations are found in the PowerSchool Teacher Gradebook Document.

ACCURATE

Clear grading practices and procedures help provide for an accurate evaluation of student learning. Principles for improving accuracy include:

- Administer multiple graded assignments within each weighted category (e.g., one per week)
- Only include scores that relate to achievement of the standards
- Provide students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate that they have acquired the knowledge or skill expected with proficiency on a standard

MEANINGFUL

Clear feedback and evaluation is an essential part of the learning process. Research indicates that meaningful feedback is one of the most powerful factors in closing the gap between current student understanding and desired performance (Hattie, 2009). Principles for making grades more meaningful include:

- Organize gradebooks using standards-based categories
- Consistently provide feedback to students and parents in a timely manner
- Provide multiple opportunities within the grading period (redos and retakes) for students to demonstrate proficiency
- Engage students in tracking their own progress on identified standards

CONSISTENT

Grading practices (components, procedures, mathematical weights, etc.) that are commonly applied across a course or grade-level subject provide for common student experiences and consistent expectations. Principles for improving consistency include:

- Align school grading practices with a common set of district grading principles
- Establish common grade or course level grading practices uniformly implemented by all teachers
- Clearly define and communicate expectations in relation to performance standards
- Work in collaborative teams (PLC's) to calibrate scoring instruments and evaluate assessments and student work

SUPPORTIVE OF LEARNING

Above all, we need to understand that our goal is student learning, and learning is a process. To be supportive of learning, grades must be informative and provide students with opportunities to improve performance. Principles that are supportive of learning include:

- Regularly provide academic feedback in relation to the achievement of the standards, and opportunities for students to apply academic feedback to demonstrate their new understanding/performance
- Prioritize new evidence of learning over older evidence
- Reduce or eliminate punitive grading practices
- Refrain from evaluating students in comparison to one another
- Use a variety of assessment methods to collect evidence of student achievement
- Use assessment to improve student learning. Assessment is not just a labeling event, it should be used to inform instruction and improve student understanding

RETENTION POLICY (ELEMENTARY)

Research on grade retention at all age levels and across studies is based on group data and warrants serious consideration. The school will establish a multi-disciplinary team of school professionals to review all retention decisions and make recommendations to the principal. The team will review students' plan, assessment data and intervention effectiveness to determine a student's readiness to proceed to the next grade level. The principal is responsible for the final decision to promote or retain a student in grades K-8. Exceptions to this policy will be for 3rd grade students who will follow the Read to Succeed Law as outlined in State Law.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE POLICY (6-12)

BPS students are expected to invest themselves into their academics, achieving and producing their highest-quality academic work. The school team will apply multiple methods of support for student learning.

- Grade reviews will be conducted at each grade reporting period (4 ½ week intervals) by the school's leadership team.
    - If a student's grades are not meeting expectations, the team will work to identify the reason(s) and the level of support needed to assist the student, and an academic support plan may be implemented.
- Parents of students identified as failing two or more classes will be notified in writing, and an academic intervention plan will be implemented.
    - Students demonstrating a lack of progress and a failure to uphold their portion of the academic intervention plan will be placed on Academic Probation.

Failure to meet expectations of Academic Probation may lead to dismissal from Bridges Preparatory School.

HOMEWORK (GRADES 7-12)

Homework is viewed as an extension of classroom activity. Homework will be in harmony with the child's needs and abilities and will not be given for disciplinary reasons. Teachers should recognize that home and outside activities have educational value and therefore should not overburden students with homework. Assignments must be carefully planned, appropriate to the student's grade level and be well understood by the student before he/she leaves school.

HONOR ROLL

A student will be named to the Principal's Honor Roll if he/she has no grade less than A in all subjects/classes for that grading period, except in the related arts. A student will be named to the Honor Roll if he/she has no grade less than B in all subjects/classes for that grading period, except in the related arts.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Progress Reports are sent home halfway through each quarter for students in grades 6-12. Student Report Cards are completed at the end of each quarter. They will be sent home with students or may be picked up during scheduled parent conference times. Final Report Cards for all grades will be issued on the last day of school. Any outstanding fees due to the school will be required to be paid before the final report card is released.

FIELD TRIPS

Bridges Preparatory School recognizes the importance of out-of-classroom experiences for students. As enrichment to the learning experience, teachers may plan field trips, which have a specific goal and are clearly related to the curriculum.

Participating in field trips is a privilege. Students serve as representatives of BPS; therefore, they may be excluded from participation in any trip for reasons relating to behavior and/or conduct. Students acquiring 3+ office referrals per semester will require admin approval to attend any field trip.

All field trips and enrichment activities should be a cooperative activity involving teachers, students, administrators and parents. Trips/activities should be carefully planned for timely implementation as part of the instructional, co-curricular, or extracurricular programs of the school. Students in K-5 are strongly encouraged to wear a BPS spirit shirt for field trips.

UNAUTHORIZED FIELD TRIPS

Unless approved by the administrator(s), trips organized by teachers in conjunction with parents or other non-school organizations to any destinations during holiday periods (for example, Summer, Fall Break, Thanksgiving, Winter Break, Spring Break) will not be recognized by the BPS Board of directors as approved field trips. The BPS BOD assumes no liability for such trips. The use of school staff during the regular workday, school facilities, and school supplies for planning such trips is prohibited. The recruitment of students for such trips, or communicating information related to such trips should not occur on school property.

CHAPERONE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All chaperones are required to complete an initial background check (SLED) prior to going on the field trip. Background checks must be completed through the school office. Each year, a local screening will be conducted, and every third year, a complete background check will be reconducted. The cost for obtaining background checks shall be borne by the chaperone.

Chaperones are required to disclose information pertaining to prior arrests or convictions, regardless of the amount of time that has passed, determination of guilt or innocence, or significance of the incident. Failure to disclose may result in restriction from attending the field trip and possible restriction from attending future school-sponsored field trips.

- All students must ride in school provided transportation both to and from the field trip and during a field trip to multiple locations. At no time will students ride in cars unless prior approval by administration is granted in writing.
- Chaperones are responsible for general supervision and safety of all BPS students and expected to actively supervise students.
- Chaperones are not allowed to bring other people with them on the field trip including siblings or other family members. All other people require approval for siblings to attend.
- Adults observing behavior by students or other adults that is contrary to school policy or procedure shall immediately report the incident to a BPS staff member or administration.
- Chaperones are responsible for taking the roll of students prior to departure from any location, every time the group reconvenes, and periodically throughout the course of the field trip to ensure all students are present.
- Chaperones may not drink alcoholic beverages, utilize illegal substances, smoke or chew tobacco, vape, use profanity, or any form of inappropriate conduct at any time during the course of a field trip from departure from the school to arrival at the school after the trip.
- Chaperones should ensure that all students remain seated on the bus and monitor student behavior on the bus. Students are expected to be quiet while in heavy traffic, when exiting/entering the interstate, or when crossing a railroad track.
- Students in grades K-5 should be escorted into and out of public bathrooms. At no time should any student, even a child of a chaperone, be left unattended in a bathroom.
- Students in grades K-12 should never be left unattended by an adult.
- Students should remain with their specific chaperone unless authorized by a BPS staff member.
- Students who become ill during the course of a field trip should be brought to a BPS staff member. Parents of the student should be promptly contacted by the BPS staff member. The BPS staff member and chaperone will work collaboratively to ensure the child is properly attended.
- All procedures and rules specific to a field trip shall be strictly adhered to by all parents and students.
- Students will be accompanied by an adult when crossing streets. Children under the age of seven (7) should be escorted by the hand across streets.
- Chaperones should strictly enforce rules or procedures established as part of the BPS Discipline Code or those established by the venue.
- Chaperones are expected to provide direct instruction and modeling of appropriate behavior and etiquette at all times

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ATTENDANCE

Student achievement begins with regular attendance. Being in class is an essential part of student learning and progress. Learning at BPS involves active engagement, working together, student-centered research, and completing projects. As a result, students who do not attend class regularly put themselves at academic risk. Parents should consider the importance of attendance when planning family and other activities that may take a child from school.

SCHOOL START TIME

7:30 AM: Elementary School - Grades K-5
8:00 AM: Middle/High School - Grades 6-12

Students arriving after the start time are required to check-in at the front desk to get a Tardy Slip.

DISMISSAL TIME

2:30 PM: Elementary School - Grades K-5
3:00 PM: Middle/High School - Grades 6-12

SEAT TIME REQUIREMENT

In conjunction with R.43-274, in order to receive one Carnegie unit of credit, a student must be in attendance at least 120 hours, per unit, regardless of the number of days missed. Students participating in ½ credit classes must be in attendance at least 60 hours, per unit, regardless of the number of days missed.

Students that receive a (FA) Failure due to Absences, must make up required seat time hours/assignments within 30 days. Extensions may be permitted on a case-by-case basis; however, all requirements must be completed prior to the beginning of the next school year.

Any student who missed school must present a written excuse, signed by his/her parent or guardian or a healthcare professional for all absences **within three days of the student's return to school**. The written excuse to school includes the reason for and the date of the absence. If a student fails to bring a valid written excuse to school, his/her absence will be recorded as unlawful. The criteria below will be used to determine if an absence is lawful or unlawful.

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to ensure that all school-age children in their care are in school and on time every day. Students have the responsibility to be on time and attend all classes. Students are expected to attend school for the scheduled 180 instructional days.

Students who do not meet these attendance requirements will not receive credit. Seat-time make-up for grades 8-12 will be made available as scheduled by the administration for a fee.

LAWFUL ABSENCES

- Absences caused by a student's illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others. These absences must be verified by a physician statement within three days of the student's return to school (absences for chronic or extended illness will be approved only when verified by a physician's statement for that particular date). **Parent note can be written for a student's absence for up to four days. Five or more consecutive days due to illness must be verified by a physician statement within three days of the student's return to school (absences for chronic or extended illness will be approved only when verified by a physician's statement for that particular date).**
- Absence due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family verified by a statement from a parent within three days of the student's return to school.
- Absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith when approved in advance. Such requests must be made to the administration in writing.
- Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the administration. This would include absences for extreme hardships, including parental military deployment.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- Absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents (including class 'cuts').
- Absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents.
- Absences related to a family or out of town trip.
- Suspension is not to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes.

COLLEGE TOURS/JOB SHADOWING

Absences for high school juniors and seniors may be lawful for the purpose of visiting college campuses/job shadowing experiences. When applying for college visits/job shadowing experiences, students must adhere to the following:

- Requests for approval of absences for college visits/job shadowing experiences must be submitted in writing by a parent at least one week in advance of the scheduled visit.
- Approval will be granted for no more than four visits/experiences per school year.
- Each request should specify the duration of the visit and travel time, which may be approved at the discretion of the administration.
- Absences approved for college visits/experiences will be lawful absences and students will be allowed to make up classroom work.
- BPS requires a signed form (available in BPS guidance office) that will be completed by a supervisor of a job shadowing experience, or admissions counselor for college visits.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

As defined by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), chronically absent students are those absent 10 or more school days during the school year. According to the OCR, an absent student is one who misses 50 percent of the instructional day for any reason and regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused. In other words, students who are absent for any reason – including suspension, illness, and death in the family – AND miss 10 percent or more of the school year, will be considered chronically absent.

DOCUMENTATION OF ABSENCES

All written excuses should be completed on the Attendance Google Form or emailed to bpsattendance@bridgesprep.org within three (3) days of the student's return. Written excuses may be delivered in person to the front office.

A parent note should include:

- Student's first and last name
- Date(s) of absence
- Reason for absence
- Parent/guardian signature

A medical note should include:

- Student's first and last name
- Specific dates of absence
- Reason for absence
- Doctor signature/stamp
- Contact information for the medical office (phone, address, etc.)
- Any absence that extends beyond four days requires a doctor's excuse

**If the school receives written documentation without all of the above listed details or outside the three day return to school period, the excuse will not be coded and the absence will remain unexcused.*

PROCEDURES FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE

All parent notes and/or medical excuses must be submitted to the school within three (3) days of a student's return to school. There are three methods of sending a parent note and/or medical excuse to the attendance office:

- Send a hard copy to the front office of your child's school- not their teacher.
- Fax an excuse to (843) 982-7707
- Submit a medical/parent note using the Attendance Google Form.
- Submit a medical/parent note by emailing bpsattendance@bridgesprep.org.

TARDY POLICY

Students are expected to arrive at school on time and are also expected to get to individual classes on time throughout the day. Students reporting to school after their grade level start time, must report directly to the attendance office in order to be admitted to class. Any student that misses more than half the class shall be counted absent for attendance credit purposes. The only acceptable excuse for tardiness to school is when there has been an unusual emergency and the school has been notified by the parent/guardian.

ARRIVAL TARDY POLICY

If a student is identified as having excessive tardies, the parent will be notified by phone. Excessive tardiness is defined as an on time arrival rate of less than 80%. If excessive tardiness continues, the parent will be required to come in for a conference. If left uncorrected, the child may be placed on probation. Elementary students arriving after the start of school must be accompanied by a parent to be checked in at the front office. Parents/guardians should enroll their student in their zoned public school where reliable transportation is provided should tardies become habitual. Student drivers that accumulate 4 or more tardies to their first period class will have their driving privileges suspended for one week. Subsequent tardies will result in an extended driving suspension.

6-12 CLASS PERIOD TARDY POLICY

The following attendance rules for tardiness to school are effective immediately for Middle and High school students:

- 3 times late to class - Warning/Parent contact
- 5 times late to class - Lunch detention with parent contact
- 6-7 times late to class - Lunch detention with parent contact
- 8-9 times late to class, Referral, 1 period of ISS
- 10 or more times late to class - 1 day of suspension and letter of probation

EARLY DISMISSALS

Early dismissal occurs when a parent either comes in to pick up their child or sends a request in for students that drive to be signed out at a specific time. Guidelines below:

- No early dismissals will be permitted 30 minutes prior to the end of the school day.
- Requests for early dismissal for students that drive must be made in writing and received 24 hours in advance so that requests can be verified.
- Students signed out prior to being in class for 51% of the class will be considered absent for that class.

LATE PICK-UPS

Students are required to leave campus at dismissal. Students who are consistently picked up late (30 minutes after dismissal) will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. After 30 minutes, your child will be placed in the After School Program and you will be charged a $10 fee/child for each occurrence. Parents/guardians should enroll their student in their zoned public school where reliable transportation is provided should late pick-up become habitual.

SOUTH CAROLINA COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

The South Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law requires that children between the ages of five (5) and seventeen (17) years attend school regularly. The law mandates that parents assure the presence of their children at school. Section 59-65-20 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976 states: “Any parent or guardian who neglects to enroll his child or ward or refuses to make such child or ward attend school shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than $50 or be imprisoned not more than 30 days; each day’s absence shall constitute a separate offense.” Bridges Preparatory School complies with all compulsory attendance laws as written by the State of SC.

SOUTH CAROLINA TRUANCY POLICY

- **Truant:** A child, at least 6 but not yet 17 years old, who has accumulated three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences.
- **Habitual Truant:** A child, at least 12 but not yet 17 years old, who (1) fails to comply with the intervention plan developed by the school, the child, and the parents or guardians, and (2) accumulates two or more additional unlawful absences.
- **Chronic Truant:** A child, at least 12 but not yet 17 years old, who (1) has been through the school intervention process; (2) has reached the level of a habitual truant and has been referred to family court and placed under an order to attend school; and (3) continues to accumulate unlawful absences.

TRUANCY INTERVENTION PROCEDURES

- School personnel will communicate any attendance problems or concerns to parents/guardians in a timely manner. Schoolwide communication by telephone and email will notify parents when a student is absent. Information on how to submit lawful absence documentation will be provided in the notification.
- When a student accumulates three (3) consecutive or a total of five (5) unlawful absences, the principal or designee will complete a truancy investigation.
    - Administration or designee will contact parent by telephone, email, and/or mail to discuss attendance policies and absence documentation procedures and to develop an attendance intervention plan designed to improve student attendance and eliminate unlawful absences.
- When a student accumulates seven (7) unlawful absences, school admin will update the attendance intervention plan, indicate why the plan was unsuccessful, and make amendments as needed.
- When a student accumulates ten (10) unlawful absences and has not fulfilled the requirements of the attendance plan, the Department of Social Services (DSS) will be contacted and the student will be placed on an attendance probation plan.
- After violation of the attendance probation, the student will be recommended for expulsion and/or school that provides transportation.
- If a student continues to be unlawfully absent, a truancy referral is made to the Family Court.
- If a student accumulates 10 consecutive absences they will be withdrawn from Bridges.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

ENROLLMENT

Under the South Carolina Charter Schools Act of 1996, BPS' enrollment policy will:

(11) be subject to the ethics and government accountability requirements for public members and public employees as contained in Chapter 13, Title 8. For purposes of this subsection, employees of the charter school board are considered public employees. The charter contract in accordance with Section 59-40-60(B) must contain a statement of assurance of ethical compliance on behalf of the school.

(C)(1) If a charter school denies admission to a student, the student may appeal the denial to the sponsor. The decision is binding on the student and the charter school.

(2) If a charter school suspends or expels a student, other charter schools or the local school district in which the charter school is located has the authority but not the obligation to refuse admission to the student.

Bridges Preparatory School will recruit students in a manner that ensures equal access to the school and does not discriminate against students of a particular race, color, national origin, religion, or sex, or against students with disabilities. Furthermore, Bridges Preparatory School's Enrollment policy is designed to:

1. Meet the requirements of all South Carolina and federal statutes.
2. Ensure equal access to the school, particularly for students with special needs and at-risk students, as well as all other students.

The full Enrollment Policy can be viewed on the BPS Website under the Admissions tab.

ELIGIBILITY

Students entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1 of the year they intend to enroll. First graders must be six years old by September 1 of the calendar year in which they intend to enroll. All other students must have successfully completed the previous grade level.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

A copy of the student's state-issued birth certificate must be provided to the school at the time of enrollment. Hospital birth reports are not acceptable. If necessary, duplicate birth certificates can be obtained from local county health departments or the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Vital Records and Public Health Statistics Division at 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina, 29201 or from a similar agency in the state of the child's birth.

A valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization must be presented for all students prior to their enrollment. Certificates of Immunization can be obtained from the Beaufort County Health Department or from a private physician. Schools may ask for a student's Social Security number. However, by federal law, schools cannot require that a Social Security number be provided. For a student who is transferring from another school or school district, a transfer/withdrawal form and a copy of the student's last report card should be provided to the school at the time of enrollment. Official transcripts are requested by mail and sent directly to the school. A hand-carried copy will not constitute an official transcript. In cases where a student's parents are divorced and/or legally separated, the court order granting custody must be presented to school personnel and issues addressed prior to enrollment. In addition, a stepparent is NOT to be listed on enrollment forms UNLESS he/she has legal responsibility for the student by an order of the court.

In the case of guardianship (not to be confused with parental custody), a copy of the court order establishing the guardianship must be approved and filed with the school.

A correct "911" address MUST be provided at the time of enrollment. A post office box may be provided for mailing purposes only. A home address is required as well as a current home telephone number and daytime telephone numbers for emergency purposes. Parents are advised to notify the school immediately if their phone numbers change.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

Pursuant to state charter law, BPS is required to follow an open enrollment process. Open enrollment will occur for a 4-5-week period during which time enrollment forms for students will be accepted for the following academic year. Following the open enrollment period, if the number of applicants exceeds the number of available openings, a lottery will be held in order to fill any vacancy in the grade level for which the student is applying. All applications that were submitted in a timely fashion during the open enrollment period will be included in the lottery. All students not placed at this time will be put on a waitlist according to their position in the lottery for the grade level for which they are eligible. Vacancies will be filled in order of the waitlist.

CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENTS

Students currently enrolled in BPS will be automatically enrolled for the next academic year. Current students do not need to reapply on an annual basis. Students wishing to return the following academic year will be asked to complete an Intent to Return form during the month of January so that the school may prepare for the following year.

STAFF PREFERENCE

Children of staff members will have preference before siblings during the open enrollment period and will fill openings before any lottery is held. If there are no openings in a grade level and a child of a staff member applies, that student will be placed at the top of the staff member waitlist.

SIBLING PREFERENCE

Siblings of currently enrolled students will have preference after staff members' children during the open enrollment period and will fill openings before any lottery is held. If there are no openings in a grade level and a sibling applies, that sibling will be placed at the top of the waitlist.

WAITLIST

Waitlists do not carry over from year to year. A student's position on the waitlist is only valid for the grade level for which the student is eligible for that school year and will end after the 135th day of that school year. A student who is not placed prior to the 135th day, but who wishes to remain on the waitlist must reapply each open enrollment period.

VACANCIES

Vacancies will be filled via the waitlist. When a position becomes available, the first student on the waitlist will be notified. The family will have a set number of weekdays following notification to fill the vacancy. If the first family fails to respond or denies the open position within the time period, the next family on the waitlist will be contacted. It is important that the school has all the contact information for families that are on the waitlist. When a vacancy occurs, and a student accepts the opening, he/she will begin school once enrollment papers have been processed.

REGISTRATION
A student will not be formally registered to attend Bridges until all necessary registration forms have been completed and former school records have been reviewed.

DISENROLLMENT/WITHDRAWAL
A parent/guardian may unenroll/withdraw a student from BPS at any time. Requests for disenrollment must be made in writing and submitted to the Registrar. The withdrawal form, which can be obtained from the front office, has to be completed and submitted. Once the withdrawal form is submitted the student officially relinquishes his/her seat and the form cannot be retracted. Bridges Preparatory School will not release records to another school unless a withdrawal form is submitted AND a request for records form signed by a parent/guardian is received from the student's new school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Bridges Preparatory School After School Program is open to students in grades K-12. The program begins immediately after the school day and ends at 5:30 PM. The program balances academics and fun to keep children engaged in a safe and caring environment after our normal school hours.

For more information, parents are encouraged to review the After School Program Handbook.

ASSESSMENTS

In addition to regular formative assessments and beginning of year assessments to determine at what levels students should learn, BPS will provide several other types of assessments during the school year for educational purposes. Some of these are described below. You will be notified before any of these school assessments are given. An aptitude test and an achievement test are given to all second graders in the fall of the school year to identify potential Gifted and Talented Students.

STAR ASSESSMENTS
Star Assessments are short formative tests that provide teachers with personalized learning data for each student. Star tests are computer adaptive, which means they adjust in difficulty to each answer students provide. This helps teachers get the best data to help students in the shortest amount of testing time.

Students may take a Star test for early literacy, math, or reading. Teachers analyze the data they receive from Star Assessments to learn what students already know and what they are ready to learn next, to monitor student growth, and to determine which students may need additional help. Star Assessments are research-based and scientifically proven to help teachers guide each student on their unique path to proficiency.

SAEBRS (SOCIAL, ACADEMIC, EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORS RISK SCREENER)
Bridges Preparatory is committed to supporting every student's academic and social, emotional, and behavioral growth. As part of this process, all students in 2nd-12th grade will complete a screener in the winter and spring called the SAEBRS, or Social, Academic, Emotional, Behaviors Risk Screener. The screener will ask students a total of 20 questions. The student's teacher will also complete the screener based on their observations of the students in their classrooms. The information is confidential and will only be used by your child's teacher, principal, school counselor, and designated school staff to determine instructional needs in the classroom and at the individual student level. Any questions about the SAEBRS can be directed towards your child's counselor.

SC READY
SC Ready is the South Carolina standardized test for ELA, Writing, Math, and Science for Grades 3-8. 3rd grade students who do not meet the required achievement level in Reading according to the State of South Carolina Read to Succeed legislation, may not be promoted to the 4th grade.

END OF COURSE TESTING/SAT/ACT/AP

Any student taking Algebra I, English 2, Biology, or US History must take the End of Course Exam which accounts for 20% of their overall grade in the course. All Juniors will have the opportunity to take the SAT and/or ACT. Students interested in these tests will sign up with their guidance counselor. Students enrolled in an AP course will be required to complete the AP exam for course completion.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks may be used to transport books and supplies to and from school. Students are responsible for articles kept in their possession. Searches of personal possessions within the school may be done when there is a reasonable suspicion of a violation of a law or school rule. Any materials considered to be against school regulations may be seized and may be returned after a parent conference with the school level principal.

Students are asked to store backpacks in the assigned storage area during the school day.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

BPS will require good manners, respect for self and others, appreciation for property, honesty, punctuality, reliability, and responsibility from all students, staff, parents and community participants. We believe that teachers have a right to teach, and students have a right to learn. We fully expect the focus on ethics and decision-making to lead to an environment where good character is important to all. BPS's intention is to praise rather than to reprimand whenever possible. However, if the redirection is necessary due to disruptions to others' learning experiences, offense guidelines will be enforced.

PENALTIES

Anyone who violates any provision of BPS school rules is subject to appropriate penalties up to and including reprimand, restitution, suspension, probation, expulsion, arrest, and/or prosecution.

SAFE HARBOR NOTE

Any student who inadvertently possesses or finds a weapon or substance, which may subject the student to a possible expulsion, may or may not be recommended for these sanctions if the student voluntarily surrenders the property to a school staff person prior to discovery by another person. This should be done as soon as the student realizes that he/she is in possession of or has knowledge about the weapon or substance.

SEARCHES

The BPS Board reserves the right to authorize the CEO and/or his/her designee to search a student's belongings, including if an imminent danger to the student or others is suspected. At the time of the search, only the student and involved personnel will be present so as to maintain the student's privacy. Parents of any involved students will be notified as soon as possible if such actions are required. Please note that student cars on campus may be searched at any time.

BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' abilities to educate students in a safe environment.

Bullying is defined as meeting the 3 conditions listed below:

- Harmful
- Unfair Match
- Repeated Offense/Behavior

BPS cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of BPS and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of BPS in its normal operations, it is BPS' intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented.

The purpose of this policy is to assist BPS in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.

An act of bullying, by either an individual student or group of students, is expressly prohibited on school property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees. The misuse of technology including, but not limited to, harassing, teasing, intimidating, defaming, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of BPS by sending or posting e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs, also may constitute an act of bullying regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school property and/or with or without the use of school resources.

Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.

A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with the BPS's policies and procedures BPS may consider the following factors:

- The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved.
- The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior.
- Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior.
- The relationship between the parties involved; and
- The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

The school will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will administer appropriate consequences for students that may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official designated by this policy. A student may report bullying anonymously.

BPS's ability to act against an alleged perpetrator based solely on an anonymous report may be limited. BPS encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the **Report It** application that is on each student's computer, or report immediately to any school personnel.

Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future grades, work assignments, or educational environment.

REPRISAL

BPS will take appropriate action against any student, who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

BPS annually provides education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this school policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying.

CELEBRATIONS

Celebrating the birthday of our students and staff is very important to us. If parents would like to celebrate their child's birthday in class, they may arrange with the classroom teacher a time that works best for both parties or they may send a small token or treat to everyone in class. Food that is brought in must be store-bought and everyone should have the opportunity to participate. Check with the classroom teacher for allergies. If you are planning on having a birthday party outside of school for your child, please only hand out invitations at school if all boys or all girls or all students in the class will be invited.

CELL PHONES

On June 13, 2024 the state legislature passed the bill **H 3293** banning the use of wireless communication devices during the school day. Students are discouraged from bringing their cell phones/iPods/wireless headphones/smartwatches to school. If they do, these devices must be out of sight, including during arrival, transition, and recess. Students will be permitted to utilize their personal wireless communication devices before school and during lunch only. BPS students are encouraged to put their phones in their bookbag, cubbies, or lockers prior to entering their homerooms. If parents need to reach their child during the school day, they can call (843) 982-7737.

1. The first time a BPS employee sees a student's device, it must be given to a BPS employee. The device may be picked up by the student from administration (or a designee) at the end of the day. The student will receive a written minor referral for failure to comply.
2. The second time a BPS employee sees a student's device, it must be given to a BPS employee. The student's parent/guardian must come to the front office to retrieve the device. Both the parent and student will review and sign the BPS Personal Device Policy. The student will receive a written minor referral for failure to comply.
3. The third time a BPS employee sees a student's device, it must be given to a BPS employee. The student will receive a written major referral for failure to comply. The student's parent/guardian must schedule a time to meet in-person with an administrator (or a designee) within two school business days to retrieve the device and both parent and student will again review and sign BPS's Device Policy.
4. The fourth time a BPS employee sees a student's device, it must be given to a BPS employee and a 2nd major referral will be written for failure to comply. The student's parent/guardian must schedule a time to meet in-person with an administrator (or a designee) and the BPS CEO within two school business days to retrieve the device and the student and parent will review and sign BPS's Device Policy. At this meeting, the student will be placed on a Cell Phone Contract.

An email will be sent to notify parents/guardians of any offense and will explain the protocol for that level of offense and what would happen should there be another violation.

Students bring devices to school at their own risk. BPS and BPS' faculty and staff are not responsible for any damaged, missing or stolen cell phones/iPods/wireless headphones/smartwatches.

Should a student need to make a phone call while at school, he or she must receive permission from a BPS employee and will be directed by the employee to use the school's landline. Parents who need to contact a student while he or she is at school should call the front office.

The intent of the cell phone policy is to limit access to social media that has a negative impact on the social, emotional, and academic outcomes of our students.

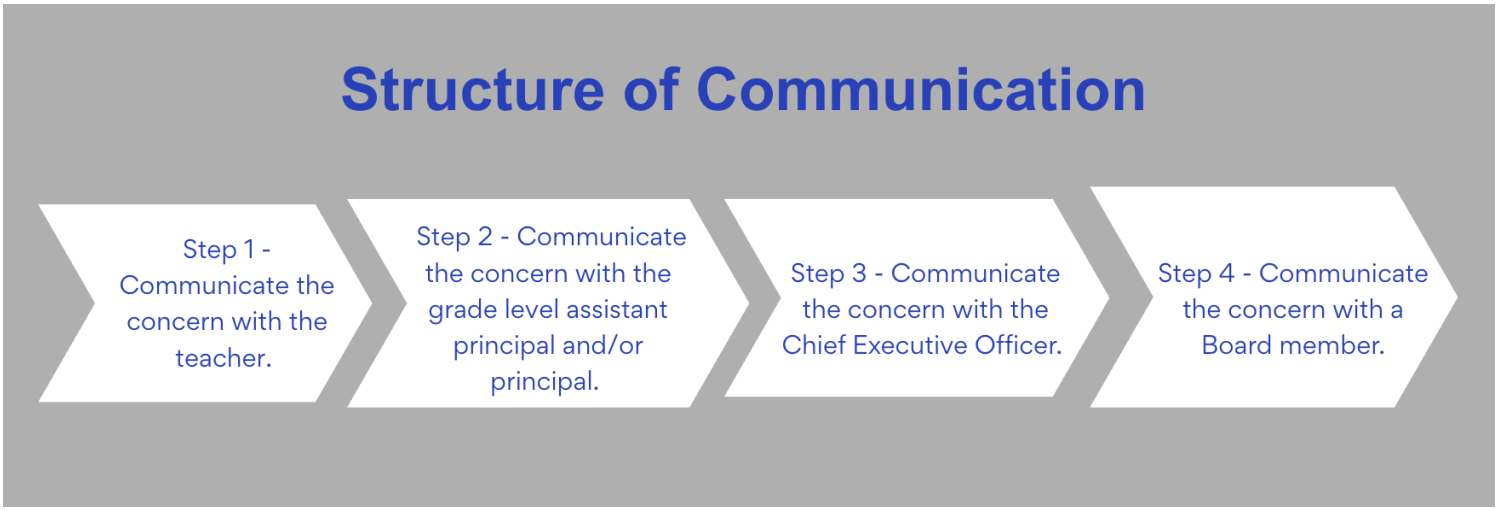
COMMUNICATION

Communication between school staff and parents/students is crucial for overall school success. BPS strongly believes that regular communication is essential between families and schools to engage students in learning and support their success at every grade level. For this reason, BPS has multiple forms of communication (PowerSchool, Facebook, Email, School Website) to support its efforts in keeping in close contact with its students' families.

Most communication will be sent via email. If you do not have an email, please contact us in the office so we can ensure that you will receive adequate communication.

STRUCTURE OF COMMUNICATION

Our school works hard to service the needs of all of our families. At times, another layer of assistance will be required to accomplish our student needs. We ask that our families use the progression of communication below to address their concerns.



If your communication is unsuccessful at any level, we ask our families to reach out to the next level of communication.

DELIVERIES

If a delivery such as flowers, etc. is sent to the school, the delivery will be kept in the front office until the end of the school day unless prearranged with a teacher (Ex. cupcakes for class). An exception to this is if parents are bringing a forgotten lunch box or some other school items.

BPS will not accept food deliveries from any delivery service unless it is delivered by a parent/guardian.

DRESS CODE POLICY

Students at BPS should display themselves neat and clean in appearance. BPS believes that the manner by which students dress has the potential to avoid unnecessary distractions in the academic environment and reflect a positive attitude in academic pursuits.

The following guidelines are for your assistance in preparing your child for a successful day. Please note that administration reserves the right to use a progressive disciplinary approach for habitual violations of our dress code.

K-5 GUIDELINES

- Students may wear any color polo (collared) shirt. Collared polo shirts may have a logo on the chest, not to exceed two inches. Sweaters, sweatshirts, and hooded sweatshirts must follow the same guidelines.
- School spiritwear will be permitted daily.
- Students are strongly encouraged to purchase a royal blue BPS spirit shirt for school events and field trips.
- Students cannot wear shirts that are see-through, backless, sideless, or worn off the shoulder.
- Pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be blue, black, khaki, or white.
- Shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be no more than three inches above the knee.
- Jeans are not acceptable except on announced casual days.
- Students will not wear clothing that is ripped, torn, bleach-spotted, or see-through.
- Shoes must have backs. No slides, slippers, or flip flops allowed.
- Pajamas are prohibited except on announced days.
- Leggings can only be worn under a skirt or dress.
- Jeggings, yoga pants, and other compression-style garments are prohibited to wear at all times.
- Students will not have undergarments visible.
- Students will not wear clothing that is not size appropriate (excessively large or baggy, or unduly tight/form fitting).
- Students will not wear clothing that promotes gang affiliation, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, the use of controlled substances, depicts violence, has obscene designs or language, is of a sexual or disruptive nature, and/or is disturbing to the educational environment.
- Hats must be put away once a student enters the building. Hats/hoods are not to be worn in the school building.
- Blankets are not permitted on school grounds unless it is a classroom sponsored activity.
- Students participating in P.E. may wear athletic wear on their designated day.
- Tank-tops and cut-off shirts are prohibited.
- Children should be cautious when wearing coats or hats with drawstrings around the neck area while on the playground. These drawstrings may contribute to entanglement or strangulation when playing on playground equipment.
- No rollers, combs, or picks to be worn in a student's hair.
- Spiked collars, spiked wristbands, and spiked belts are prohibited.

6-12 Guidelines

The following articles of clothing will not be permitted to be worn at school:

- Clothing with profanity in the form of words or symbols.
- Students will not wear clothing that is not size appropriate (excessively large or baggy, or unduly tight/form fitting).
- Students will not wear clothing that promotes gang affiliation, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, the use of controlled substances, depicts violence, has obscene designs or language, is of a sexual or disruptive nature, and/or is disturbing to the educational environment.
- Halter tops, tank tops, cut-off shirts, cut-off shorts, spaghetti strap shirts.
- Clothing items with holes.
- Students will be required to have tennis shoes on science lab days and for PE.
- Hats/hoods must be removed upon entry to the building and remain off until you have left the building**.** Hats must be put away in lockers or backpacks.
- No chains are to be worn. Spiked collars, spiked wristbands, or spiked belts are prohibited.
- Blankets are NOT permitted on school grounds unless it is a classroom sponsored activity.
- Students will not have undergarments visible.
- No rollers, combs, picks, bandanas, sweatbands, bonnets, or wave caps to be worn in a student's hair.
- All bottoms should be mid-thigh length or longer.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Parents may drop off their children beginning at 7:00 AM. There is no need to walk the student into the building.

GRADES K-5

Drop-Off Schedule:

- 7:00 AM: K-5 parents can begin dropping off students
- 7:30 AM: K-5 school day begins

Pick-Up Schedule:

- 2:30 PM: K-5 school day ends
- 2:30 PM: K-5 parents can begin picking up students
- 3:00 PM: All K-5 students must be picked up by this time, unless enrolled in the After School Program

GRADES 6-12

Drop-Off Schedule:

- 7:00 AM: 6-12 students may be dropped off as early as 7:00 AM
- 7:30 AM: Preferred drop-off time for 6-12 students
- 8:00 AM: 6-12 school day begins

Pick-Up Schedule:

- 3:00 PM: 6-12 school day ends
- 3:00 PM: 6-12 parents can begin picking up students
- 3:30 PM: All 6-12 students must be picked up by this time, unless enrolled in the After School Program Parents and students are required to follow all arrival and dismissal guidelines as communicated by school officials.

Parents may not line up for pick-up until your scheduled pick-up time. Please do not block the streets. Some areas are not designated parking areas. If you need to park to come in, park in a parking space.

Safety in our car rider line is prioritized at all times. We urge all members of our BPS community to be courteous, maintain our campus 10 mph speed limit, follow all posted signs, and use the correct zipper lane method. When utilized correctly, this method involves drivers taking turns to merge one car at a time into the same lane, keeping traffic flowing smoothly and safely. In these areas drivers should avoid excessive speed, abrupt lane changes, and blocking intersections, as these behaviors put students, staff, and other drivers at risk.

CAR RIDERS

Each vehicle must display the BPS car rider tag at all times while on campus. Unless students are enrolled in After School programs provided by BPS, all students must be picked up within 30 minutes of their dismissal time. If for some reason tardiness in pick-up is constant, your student(s) will be placed in the After School Program and you will be charged a fee of $20 per event. For Elementary students who have a Middle/High School sibling, parents have until 3:30 pm to pick up.

BPS has a ‘Put-It-In-Park Policy’: Please put your vehicle in park while loading and unloading your children! This is for the safety of your children and our staff. **Students must enter and exit on the curb side of the vehicle for safety purposes.**

FAMILY INFORMATION

It is essential that BPS maintains current home and emergency information for all students. Families were required to fill out an Emergency Information form when enrolling. It is also the responsibility of the family to update this information as needed. Please keep your information current regarding address changes, as well as changes in home phone number, work number, and emergency contacts.

If there is confidential information regarding your child that the office should be aware of, please let us know as soon as possible. It is for the safety of your child that BPS be kept informed of any changes. BPS students will only be released to people listed on the Emergency Information Form, so please ensure that all information is up-to-date and inclusive. In most cases, when parents/guardians are divorced, both parents/guardians continue to have equal rights where their children are concerned. If any parent/guardian has a court order that limits the rights of the other parent/guardian in matters such as custody, records access, or visitation, please provide a copy to BPS. In the absence of a court order, BPS will provide the non-custodial parent/guardian with access to academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. A note stating that the other parent may have no contact will not suffice. Upon request, parent/guardian conferences will be scheduled for the non-custodial parent/guardian. Non-custodial parents/guardians who wish to receive school mailings and announcements are asked to contact BPS’s office to provide the appropriate mailing information.

MTSS (MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS)

Multi-tiered system of support is not a separate program or class but rather an organizing framework for instruction and intervention. The goal of a school using a multi-tiered framework is to provide high-quality instruction that is responsive to the needs of all learners. Educators consistently analyze and use data, or progress monitor, to identify students who may benefit from additional academic, behavioral, and/or social-emotional assistance. Student response to intervention data is monitored and used to determine whether supports will be faded, continued, or modified. To inquire more about MTSS, contact Laura Merrick (lauramerrick@bridgespreparatoryschool.org)

FUNDRAISING AND SOLICITATION/SALES

Fundraising enables BPS to serve our students and learning community. Schoolwide participation in fundraising is encouraged but never required. No sale of articles, fundraising for, or promotion of outside organizations (not affiliated with BPS) is allowed in any BPS building, on grounds or in BPS publications.

GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

BPS uses state criteria and processes to identify academically gifted/talented students. Students who have been identified in another South Carolina public school district as gifted and talented as defined by the state of South Carolina may be placed in the BPS Gifted and Talented Program upon receipt of their South Carolina Screening/Referral/Assessment Student Profile. Students who have been identified as gifted and talented in another state must meet South Carolina criteria before they can be placed in BPS's gifted and talented program.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Parents/guardians should provide any grievance in writing by using the following chain-of-command: Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, CEO, Board.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

Bridges Preparatory School has two clinics on campus. One is located in the elementary school and the other is located in between the middle and high schools. The elementary clinic's hours are 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM. The middle/high school clinic's hours are 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM. Both clinics are staffed by full-time registered nurses.

It is the focus of our health team to ensure student health and wellness needs are met. Our nursing staff provides first-aid for injuries and care for illnesses that occur at school. A medical record is maintained on each student.The nurses will contact parents to discuss whether or not a child needs to go home. Students should not call/text parents/guardians asking them to pick the student up before they have seen a nurse.

Other duties of the school nurse include:

- Identify health problems that interfere with learning and assist families and schools to resolve them.
- Work with students who have chronic illnesses to help them benefit from their education.
- Monitor the administration of medications.
- Conduct health-related screenings as needed; and provide health promotion activities as needed.

Many health care services can be provided for students to keep them at school where they can learn and participate with other students. Our goal is to provide information to parents/guardians about some of the services and programs available for addressing the health care needs of students during the school day to help students succeed in school. It is important that the necessary health care information is shared with the appropriate people to make sure that the students' needs are met throughout the school day.

Parents/guardians should ensure that medical information on file and parent/guardian contact information is correct (please include cell phone and work numbers) to enable the school to reach you in case your child is hurt or ill.

ACCIDENT, INJURY, OR HEALTH EMERGENCY

Every accident, injury or health emergency in the school building or on school grounds must be reported immediately to the nurse's office of the student's building. Accidents occurring during school-sponsored activities will be reported as soon as possible. Except for minor injuries, the office staff, nurse, or Chief Executive Officer will attempt to contact parents/guardians or, if parents/guardians are not available, the responsible person designated by the parents/guardians. When immediate medical attention seems advisable, but not urgent, parents/guardians or the designated person will be asked to pick up the student from school. Medical emergencies will be referred immediately to the local emergency personnel, including police, fire and health services. If a student has an emergency plan on file that plan will be followed.

For injuries that need medical attention, or other health emergencies, a return to school note from the healthcare facility confirming that the student was in their care should be submitted to the clinic upon the student's return to school. This paperwork should contain the student's name, the date(s) of care, the name of the physician responsible for the care, any restrictions the student may have when he/she returns to school, and should state the date the student is able to return to school. If your student will need academic accommodations for an extended period of time, a temporary 504 plan may be needed. Please contact Taylor Hunt, Director of Special Education and 504 Coordinator, for more information.

ALLERGY POLICY

Bridges Prep is an ALLERGY AWARE school. The nurse will provide instruction on ways to minimize possible allergic interactions to staff and students. Please contact the school nurse in order to discuss allergies and any other health concerns of which he or she and the staff should be aware.

It is impossible to create a 100% peanut-free or allergen-free environment because of possible parent decisions to send nuts or other allergic foods. To create the illusion that the school environment is free of allergens would be misleading and potentially harmful; therefore, it is important to know that our school is an Allergy Aware school: A place where children with food allergies (or other dietary restrictions) and parents can feel safe. These guidelines have been designed to increase awareness and communication, to prevent possible exposure to known allergens, and to create an emergency procedure for allergic reactions.

The school may contact you concerning the special needs of individual students in your child's classroom. We may ask for your cooperation in providing only appropriate items in those specific situations to have during holiday parties or other special occasions. Please do not send food to share in any classroom unless it has been approved by the school. We also ask that students do not share food items with others at any time during the school day or on the way to and from school. This will reduce risk to students who have dietary restrictions of any kind.

Because it is impossible to create an allergen-free school, BPS cannot guarantee a student will not be exposed to allergens. We will make every effort available to ensure a safe environment for students with allergies. As such, BPS is not responsible for a student that has been exposed to allergens on or off campus; before, during, or after school hours; or otherwise. Enrollment at BPS waives any and all liability for BPS Board of Directors, including all committees and subcommittees; its employees; the student's family, or any third party acting on behalf of the student or the student's family or otherwise, as a result of exposure to an allergen.

HEAD LICE

Students must be picked up by a parent/guardian if BPS personnel suspect lice in his/her hair. Students MAY NOT return to BPS until treatment has been administered. See our complete lice policy on our website under the following tabs: Student Life, Health Clinic and then Policies.

ILLNESS

Regular school attendance is expected. However, in order to ensure the continued wellness of our entire school, students should be kept at home when they are sick. For example:

- Fever- A student should be fever-free without taking fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting due to illness- A student should not have any vomiting episodes for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Undiagnosed rash
- Active lice
- For a complete list of exclusions, refer to the guidelines listed on the DHEC School Exclusion List. You may also refer to BPS policies on our website under the following tabs: Student Life, Health Clinic and then Policies.

The school must be notified if a student has a contagious condition such as, but not limited to: COVID, flu, chicken pox, head lice, or pink eye. Parents/guardians will be called and expected to pick up their child when they have excludable symptoms that are listed on DHEC's Exclusion List or per BPS' policies.

COVID

DHEC no longer requires students/staff members to quarantine for 5 days if they test positive for COVID. DHEC does require students/staff members who test positive for COVID to be excluded from school until they are fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medicine and their symptoms are significantly improving. When your student returns to school, please submit one of the following documents to excuse the student's absences: 1) A completed "Attestation Form for At-Home Rapid COVID Tests" 2) COVID lab results if the test is not a home test 3) A doctor's note. Close contacts of someone who tested positive for COVID no longer need to quarantine. If your student is a close contact and is not experiencing any symptoms of COVID and you choose to keep them home from school, you must follow the same requirements for any other absence (refer to BPS attendance policy)

IMMUNIZATIONS

South Carolina law requires students to have a current South Carolina Certificate of Immunization on file within 30 days from when the student starts school. After this timeframe, the student will not be allowed to attend school until the record is received. Immunizations must be on SC Certificate of Immunization form 4024. The only exception is that military installations may use DHEC form 4375 which must be accompanied by form DD-2766-C or P-0630.

A schedule of required immunizations can be obtained at the SC DHEC website, or by contacting the Health Department or your healthcare provider. Our school nurses can also provide you with this information.

INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLANS OR INDIVIDUAL HEALTH PLANS (IHPs)

School nurses who are registered nurses write IHPs to guide how a student's health care needs will be met while at school. The nurse works with the student, the student's parents/guardians, the student's health care provider, and other school staff to write the plan. IHPs are written for students who have special health care needs that must be met by school staff during the school day. IHPs are also written for students who have medications at school or who have been approved by the school to self-medicate or self monitor. To learn more about IHPs, talk with your child's school nurse. For students in grades K-5, contact Nurse Jennifer at jdickerson@bridgesprep.org. For students in grades 6-12, contact Nurse Christy at cphares@bridgesprep.org. You may also contact Nurse Taryn grades K-12 at tkisolek@bridgesprep.org.

MEDICATIONS

Medication should be given at home, if at all possible. If medication is needed at school, it will be given by a school nurse or a staff member designated by the nurse.

Any prescription medication to be administered during school hours must be brought to your child's clinic by a parent/guardian along with our Prescription Medication Form completed and signed by the student's doctor and parent/guardian (must be completed annually). The medication should be in the original prescription container, currently dated and labeled with the name of the student and the medication, prescribing physician, dosage to be given, and time(s) of day to be administered.

Students with a history of asthma are encouraged to have an inhaler to keep in the clinic for use as needed. Students with food or other allergies are encouraged to have an EpiPen to keep in the clinic to be used as needed.

Tylenol, ibuprofen, and other over-the-counter medications are available in the clinics. If permission has been granted by the parent/guardian through the online Student Medical Form (must be completed annually), these medications will be

administered as deemed appropriate by the school nurse. If you bring an OTC medication to the clinic for your student, it must be in the original container, and you will need to fill out and sign an OTC medication form (must be completed annually).

Students are not allowed to carry medications in backpacks or purses, or to store them in lockers or classrooms unless the student has self-carry medication forms on file in the clinic (must be completed annually). Students are not allowed to carry controlled substances, i.e. prescription pain medication, ADHD medication, etc.

Medications kept at school must be picked up by a parent/guardian when the medication is discontinued, expired, or at the end of the school year. No medications are kept in the clinic over the summer.

All medication forms can be found on our website under the Student Life Tab, then Health Clinic, and then Health Forms. **Reminder: medications cannot be dropped off at the front office, or brought in by a student, or left with anyone other than the school nurse.**
Note: If your child will need medication after school hours for a club, sport, or other activity, please contact their club leader, coach, or the athletic director. Students will need to have self-carry forms on file if they will be carrying medication.

FIELD TRIP MEDICATIONS

If your student already has medication in the clinic, it will be sent on the field trip. All medications will be given by a designated staff member. If your student will need additional medication for the field trip, see our complete Medication Policy above.

All medications need to be brought to the clinic by a parent/guardian at least 24 hours prior to the departure time of the field trip. *Only provide the amount of medication that is needed for the field trip.*

CONCUSSION

If your student is diagnosed with a concussion:
1) Notify the school nurse and if your student plays sports at BPS, notify the athletic director, coach, and/or the athletic trainer.
2) Your student will not be able to participate in PE, recess, or sports until they have a doctor's note on file clearing them to return to these activities. Keep in mind, athletics may have additional requirements for your student to return to sports.
3) If your student will need short-term academic accommodations, have your doctor provide a list of these accommodations and submit them to the school nurse so these accommodations can be sent to your student's teachers.
4) If your student will need academic accommodations for an extended period of time, a temporary 504 plan may be needed. Please contact Taylor Hunt, Director of Special Education and 504 Coordinator, for more information.

BEDBUGS

If your student has bed bugs on them or on any of their belongings:
1. A parent/guardian will be notified so your house can be treated.
2. Student's bookbag and outerwear will be kept in a plastic tote in the clinic until your house has been treated and no bed bugs are found on the student or student's belongings (will be checked daily).
3. BPS's Custodial and Grounds Manager will be notified for treatment of classrooms as needed.

MENTAL HEALTH

For mental health crises, a behavioral threat assessment and management screening tool will be completed to determine next steps.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

Students, ages 3 to 21 years, may receive services under IDEA if the student needs special education and related services to benefit from his or her educational program. A team decides if a student qualifies for services under IDEA based on federal and state requirements. The team includes the student's parent or legal guardian, teachers, and other school staff. The team develops an individualized education program (IEP) that outlines a plan for helping the student receive a free appropriate public education and meet goals set by the team.

Students eligible for protections under IDEA and Section 504 are subject to the same disciplinary procedures as their non-disabled peers in accordance with the regulations specified by IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

HOMEBOUND

Medical homebound instruction is a service that is available for students who cannot attend school for a medical reason even with the aid of transportation. A physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant must certify that the student has such a medical condition but may benefit from instruction that was missed due to the medical reason and must fill out the medical homebound form that the school provides. The school then decides whether to approve the student for medical homebound services. The school will consider the severity of the student's illness or injury, the length of time that the student will be out of school, the impact that a long period away from school will have on the student's academic success, and whether the student's health needs can be met at school. To inquire more about homebound, contact Julie Smith at jsmith@bridgesprep.org.

LOCKERS

Students may be assigned a hall locker. Lockers are subject to search by school authorities since they are the property of the school. All assigned hall lockers should be kept clean and locked. Students are advised not to share lockers with other students.

LUNCH

During the school year, you may choose to send lunch with your child, or you may choose to purchase lunch from our outside vendor. If a student forgets lunch, lunches must be brought to the front office by a parent/guardian for delivery to students. To keep classroom disruptions at a minimum, and maintain the security of the school, parents may drop lunches off at the front office.

BPS will not accept deliveries from any delivery service unless it is delivered by a parent/guardian. There will be no free and/or reduced lunch at Bridges. Parents/guardians should enroll their student in their zoned public school where free or reduced lunch is provided should failure to consistently provide lunch become habitual.

Bridges Preparatory School is committed to providing an environment that enhances the development of lifelong wellness practices and ensures that all students are fit, healthy and ready to learn. We recognize our responsibility in promoting healthy eating habits and fitness in students. We do this through our curriculum and by reminding the students the importance of eating healthy and nutritious meals and snacks during the school day. Therefore, we are recommending that the beverages that students drink on campus reflect our commitment to life-long wellness. We recommend that students drink low fat or nonfat milk, flavored or unflavored water, and/or 100% juice with no added sweeteners for lunch and snack. Due to individual dietary restrictions, students at BPS are not to share food or drink items with others.

Based on the research of the health and academic benefits of keeping the brain and body hydrated, students will be allowed to bring a water bottle to school, **full of water only,** each day to sip on throughout the day. The water bottle will be sent home each day for cleaning.

PARKING PERMISSION AND RULES

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

If you have a student who has a valid driver's license and wishes to park in the school's designated area, a parent/guardian must complete a parking permission form available on the school's website. Once completed, show proof of purchase to the front desk at the high school to obtain a parking decal.
Parking in non-designated areas off school property is subject to local parking rules. **No student may park at school unless a form is completed**, and the parking decal is properly placed.

PARKING EXPECTATIONS

Parking in a school designated area is a privilege. You are welcome to park in a designated area if you follow the rules, drive safely, and do not jeopardize your safety or the safety of others. Rule violations may lead to immediate suspension of your parking privilege. In addition, chronic misbehavior at school may lead to the revocation of your parking privileges.

STUDENT PARKING REGULATIONS

Driving a vehicle to school is a privilege. At the beginning of each year, all students driving to school must purchase a *parking permit* at the cost of $25.
Violation of any of the following parking regulations will result in a parking ticket and fine(s).
Repeated failure to abide by the BPS parking regulations will result in revocation of the driving privilege. The information in this section of the student handbook constitutes the only warning given for violation of the following regulations.

- All vehicles parked anywhere on the school campus must display a parking sticker. Parking stickers are to be placed on the outside of the drivers' side of the rear window. All vehicles parked on campus are checked routinely throughout the day.
- BPS students must park their vehicles within marked spaces in the parking lot. Failure to park properly will result in a parking ticket and possible loss of campus parking privileges. Student parking in any other area is forbidden.
- Students must park their vehicles in the student parking area immediately upon arrival at school. Under NO circumstances should a student remain in the parking lot in a car after the vehicle has been parked. Windows should be closed, doors locked, all needed books and other items taken from the vehicle upon arrival on campus. Students and passengers are expected to drive and behave responsibly upon arrival and departure from the campus in any vehicle.
- Students are not allowed to enter the parking lot during the school day without permission from the office. This policy is issued to provide security and protection for students as well as security and protection of their vehicles and property from theft and vandalism.
- Students are not allowed to leave campus in a vehicle during the school day unless they have an early dismissal through the attendance office.
- Students are not allowed to leave campus to purchase lunch and return to campus.
- Illegal drugs, unauthorized medications, alcohol, and weapons (including but not limited to guns and knives), whether in sight, discovered, or confiscated as the result of a search by school or law enforcement officials, will result in immediate recommendation for expulsion of the student. All items in automobiles driven onto the campus are the responsibility of the student.
- No vehicle should be operated in a reckless manner while on the campus. Security cameras are used to record parking lots on campus.

Bridges Preparatory School assumes no responsibility for vehicles, or the contents of vehicles parked in designated areas. Students are encouraged to lock their cars and to report damage to their vehicles or theft of items in their vehicles to their insurance companies and the local police. **NOTE: Bridges reserves the right to restrict parking based on spaces available, and students will be required to pay a parking fee.**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The BPS board recognizes the need to display an appropriate United States flag and to provide instruction to students in the proper etiquette, display, and respect of the flag. Students will be instructed in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag, and in patriotic exercises. The purpose of this policy is to provide for recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and instruction at BPS to help further that end. Students at BPS shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America each day. Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so. Students and BPS personnel must respect another person's right to make that choice.

RECESS

Recess is scheduled each day for Grades K-8 for additional physical activity. Recess will be held outside, weather permitting (to be determined by the principal). Unless excused, students are expected to participate in recess daily. Upon written request by a parent/guardian, a student will be allowed to stay indoors during recess and will be placed in another class during the scheduled time. If the request extends beyond one day, the parent/guardian must provide written authorization from the student's physician or health care provider. Extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the principal.

RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION

It is the policy of the Bridges Preparatory School Board that the school will not discriminate against a student, parent, or school personnel on the basis of a religious viewpoint or religious expression.

STUDENT EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS

Bridges Preparatory School will treat a student's voluntary expression of religious viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner that the school treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular viewpoint. A student may express his or her religious beliefs in coursework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination. A student's homework and classroom assignments shall be evaluated, regardless of the religious content, based on expected academic standards related to the course curriculum and requirements. A student may not be penalized or rewarded based on the religious content of his or her work if the coursework, artwork, or other written or oral assignments require a student's viewpoint to be expressed. Students may elect to participate in before or after school events such as "See You at the Flagpole," and "FCA" gatherings on the same terms that they may participate in other non-curricular activities on school premises. School system employees may neither encourage nor discourage participation in such events and school officials may only be present to monitor for supervision. Teachers and administrators should ensure that no student is in any way coerced to participate in religious activity.

EMPLOYEES ENGAGING IN RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES AND EXPRESSION AT SCHOOL

Bridges Preparatory School may not prevent school personnel from participating in religious activities on school grounds that are initiated by students at reasonable times before or after the school day if such activities are voluntary and do not conflict with the responsibilities and assignments of such personnel. Bridges Preparatory School must comply with the federal requirements in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits an employer from discriminating against an employee on the basis of religion.

EQUAL ACCESS TO SCHOOL FACILITIES

Bridges Preparatory School shall give religious groups access to the same school facilities for assembling as given to secular groups without discrimination based on the religious content of the group's expression. A group that meets for prayer or other religious speech may advertise or announce its meetings in the same manner and to the same extent that a secular group may advertise or announce its meetings.

CLUB/ORGANIZATION POLICY

● Student organizers must meet with the Chief Executive Officer (or their designee) to discuss the goals and objectives of the new group, as well as the day and time that the group will meet on a consistent basis. Before a group can be considered for approval, the student organizers must submit a list of a minimum of three students who will serve as leadership for the club including their positions.
● The proposed group must obtain the signatures of at least 5 additional students who are in good academic and disciplinary standing. These students must be willing to join and support the proposed organization if it is approved.
● Membership in the proposed student group must be nondiscriminatory and open to the entire Bridges Preparatory School student population. For approved groups, an exception to this policy will be granted. An example of this would be for performing arts groups that wish to select members based on certain criteria. Any other student group that will require selective membership must request approval from the Chief Executive Officer. Such groups will be required to prove that their selection process is essential to the success of the organization and their process will be reviewed annually. No outside groups may start a club at Bridges Preparatory School.
● Select a member of the full-time faculty, staff or administration who is willing to serve as an advisor and submit their name to the Chief Executive Officer for appointment.
● Submit a copy of the proposed club/organization to the Chief Executive Officer.
● After final approval by the CEO, two copies of the organization's goals and objectives will be made. One given to the organization/club and the other will be held in HR.

INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC USE POLICY

PURPOSE

Bridges Preparatory School makes a variety of communication and information technologies available to authorized users. When properly used, these technologies promote the school's instructional and business purposes. Illegal, unethical, or inappropriate use can have significant negative consequences for the school, its students, and its employees. This policy is intended to minimize the likelihood of such harm by setting standards which protect the school, its users, its data, and its systems.

This policy governs the use of all electronic systems owned, provided, or subscribed to by BPS, including computers and computer-like devices, mobile devices, voice and data communication systems, networks, software, and services. It applies to all users (students and adults) of these systems, on or off school property, at all times.

BPS employees, contractors, and vendors will sign this policy prior to account access. Students are bound by an opt-out mechanism: parents not wishing for their child to be allowed access to computer networks, Internet, or other communication services must be indicated in writing to the CEO.

Under certain circumstances, the use of personally owned computing and communication devices may be allowed on BPS property. These non-school-owned devices access BPS services, networks, data, and services, and as such are bound by this policy. Such devices are the sole responsibility of the owners.

Guest user access can be arranged for lecturers, program presenters, or other event-based needs by arrangement with the Technology Manager. The Technology Manager can provide credentials for such users who are bound by this policy. Guest access is limited in terms of Internet and file access.

NETWORK AND INTERNET GENERAL USAGE

BPS employs a variety of technology protection measures to secure and protect data and systems, including filtering Internet content. These protection measures are imperfect and cannot guarantee complete protection. Access to Technology resources is made available to authorized users in support of the school's instructional and business processes only. Any use of these resources which interferes with these processes is prohibited.

Users of BPS's technology systems assume all responsibility for use of the network access accounts issued to them, and for District technology assets issued to them or entrusted to their use and care. BPS prohibits the use of its resources to view, access, download, store, or transmit any material which is in violation of any school policy or rule, or violates any local, state, or federal law or regulation.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- Attempts to access data or services to which the user has no school-defined need or permission
- Attempts to bypass, interrupt, or disable school security, filtering, or data-protection measures, hacking
- Use of a network access account other than that issued to you, or allowing (by any means) use of your account by anyone else, impersonation, misrepresentation of identity
- Operating or using a non-school network on BPS property, such a rogue Wi-Fi, MiFi, mobile hotspots, or another network technology
- Attaching any personally owned devices to the BPS wired network
- Student use of a staff-owned personal device
- Transmission or transportation of confidential or privileged data (such as student information or records, personally identifying information, BPS financial data, or personnel data) without authorization, or via means which make the data subject to loss
- Use of BPS resources for personal monetary gain, conducting personal financial activities
- Use of BPS resources to send unsolicited messages unrelated to school business, chain messages, spam, or bulk messages
- Installing software not approved or allowed by IT Manager, particularly any which interfere with the intended operation of the system
- Alteration of or damage to BPS resources

PROHIBITED MATERIAL

- Obscenity or pornography
- Threats against persons or property
- Material which could reasonably be construed as harassing, bullying, or discriminatory
- Material used to further any commercial business, political party, or other organization not specifically endorsed or supported by BPS
- Material protected by copyright or trade secret, plagiarism
- Material which is potentially disruptive of the Bridges Preparatory School's instructional and business processes, including viruses, malware, spam, and tools or software intended to bypass, interrupt, or disable school security, filtering, or data protection measures

PERSONALLY OWNED DEVICES

BPS has a specific wireless network configured for the use of personally owned laptops or mobile computing devices. When on BPS property, users of personally owned devices may access only this wireless network and no other network.

Personally owned devices are permitted on BPS property but may only be used at the direction of a teacher or school administrator. All use during the school or workday must be clearly related to instructional purposes. Administrators, Teachers, or IT personnel may prohibit the use of personally-owned devices at any time.

Owners of these devices are solely responsible for the configuration, content, upkeep, and safety of their devices. BPS will not assist with configuration, will not troubleshoot issues, and assumes no responsibility for function or safety.

POLICY CHANGES

Interpretation, application, and modification of this Acceptable Use Policy are within the sole authority and discretion of Bridges Preparatory School. Any questions or issues concerning these policies and regulations should be directed to the system administrator at the school office.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

SAFETY DRILLS

Drills will be held routinely and logs will be kept and housed in the school office. Bridges Preparatory School is an official partner of the Standard Response Protocol Crisis Plan. From this partnership, the five actions below will be utilized depending on the situation.

HOLD

The Hold action is called when there is any situation that requires students and staff to remain in their classrooms or stay out of access areas.

SECURE

The Secure action is called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the school building.

LOCKDOWN

The Lockdown action is called when there is a threat or hazard inside the school building.

SHELTER

The Shelter action is called when there is a need for a specific action to physically shelter from a recognized threat or hazard such as inclement weather.

EVACUATION

The Evacuation action is called when there is a need to move people from one location to another for safety reasons.

SEVERE WEATHER INFORMATION

In the case of a severe weather emergency, parents/guardians will be contacted by the school. In the event of an early dismissal, parents/guardians are responsible for arranging alternative care for children before the day needed. In the event of severe weather during the school day, students will take cover in assigned areas in the school building and remain there until there is an all-clear signal. In order to keep phone lines free during severe weather, we ask that parents/guardians DO NOT call the school. If it is necessary to call for early dismissal as a result of inclement weather, the Chief Executive Officer will notify the classroom teachers. The office staff will notify families via email and phone calls with information regarding time of dismissal. Children will be dismissed at the designated time and pick up procedures will be followed. No children will be dismissed to walk home, and no student will be released with anyone unless they are on the individual's check-out list. In the event that evacuation from the school site is required, parents/guardians will be notified as to the site and the time to pick up.

SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

BPS believes that safeguarding the welfare of its students, employees and visitors and deterring acts of violence, harassment, vandalism or theft are of the utmost importance. In order to enhance the safety and security of students, employees and visitors, BPS has installed surveillance cameras throughout our campus. These cameras are monitored and reviewed.

BPS respects the privacy of all individuals who enter school property and believes that this policy will balance that privacy concern against safety needs of students, staff and visitors. Images obtained through surveillance monitoring or recording may be retained by the school for review. In accordance with state, federal, and local law, only individuals with a legitimate educational or law enforcement-related interest will have access to images or footage.

WEAPONS ON CAMPUS

Bridges Preparatory School prohibits weapons of any kind on BPS property. BPS strictly prohibits the carrying and/or possession of a concealed weapon and/or equipment on school premises or at any school event without the express permission of the CEO or his designee. Any employee or visitor who brings a concealed weapon onto the premises is in violation of School policy and South Carolina statutes. S.C. Code Ann. SS 23-31-220, 16-11-620, which are subject to search as outlined in our policy.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND HARASSMENT

Bridges Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding the rights of all students, employees and third parties within the school system, on school campuses, at school events, and on school buses to learn and work in an environment that is free from all forms of harassment and/or sexual harassment.

It is the policy of Bridges Preparatory School to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment of any type. The Board prohibits any form of sexual harassment or harassment based upon age, religion, disability, color, and/or race/national origin. All persons are required to make a conscientious effort to fully consider and understand the nature and basis of a harassment or asexual harassment complaint. It will be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of Bridges Preparatory School to harass or sexually harass a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel through conduct or communication of any form as defined by this policy. The school system will act to promptly investigate all complaints and to promptly and appropriately discipline any student or school personnel who is found to have violated this policy, and/or take other appropriate action reasonably calculated to end the harassment or sexual harassment. For the purpose of this policy, school personnel include school board members, employees of Bridges Preparatory School, agents, volunteers, contractors, chaperones, or persons subject to the supervision and control of Bridges Preparatory School.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973 require school districts to have officially adopted policy statements of nondiscrimination based on sex, disability, sexual orientation, national origin and race. *The full Title IX policy can be found on our website under the About Us tab.*

HARASSMENT DEFINED AND PROHIBITED

It is the policy of Bridges Preparatory School Board of Trustees not to discriminate based on sex, race, national origin, color, creed, religion, age, marital status or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by the referenced federal and state statutes. Any student or school personnel shall be punished for infractions of the policy under the following conditions. The harassing conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the ability of the student or school personnel to participate in or benefit from the educational program or activity of the work environment and/or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive environment.

The harassing conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance. Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Graffiti, notes, or cartoons containing discriminatory language.
- Name calling, jokes, or rumors.
- Negative stereotypes and hostile acts that are based upon a person's sex, race, national origin, color, creed, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability.
- Written or graphic material containing discriminatory comments or stereotypes that is posted or circulated and which is aimed at degrading individuals or members of protected classes.
- Threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another because of the other's race, national origin, color, creed, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability.
- A physical act of aggression or assault, or other acts of aggressive conduct, upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, an individuals' race, national origin, color, creed, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability
- Texting, Emailing, Social Networking

SEXUAL HARASSMENT DEFINED AND PROHIBITED

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, or obtaining or retaining employment or of obtaining an education; or

Submission to or rejection of the conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education; or

That conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment or educational environment. Any sexual harassment as defined when perpetrated on any student or employee will be treated as sexual harassment under this policy. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual advances.
- Verbal harassment or abuse.
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity.
- Touching of a sexual nature, including inappropriate patting or pinching.
- Intentional brushing against a student or employee's body.
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status; Demanding sexual favors, especially when accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status.
- Graffiti of a sexual nature.
- Displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures or other written materials, including making and playing sexually explicit audio/video tapes.
- Sexual gestures, including touching oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activities in front of others; Sexual or "dirty" jokes; or
- Spreading rumors about or rating other students as to sexual activity or performance.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any person who believes he/she has been the victim of harassment or sexual harassment as defined in Section II and III of this policy by student or school personnel, or any third person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment or sexual harassment should report the alleged act(s) immediately to the appropriate school system official as designed by this policy. The Board encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of harassment or sexual harassment at the school level. Upon receipt of a report, the Chief Executive Officer must notify the Board Chairman or designee immediately.

A written report will be forwarded to the Board Chairman. Failure to forward any harassment or sexual harassment report or complaint as provided herein will result in disciplinary action. If the complaint involves the Chief Executive Officer, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Board Chairman.

Submission of a complaint or report of harassment or sexual harassment will not affect the reporting individual's future employment, grades, or work assignment. The school will respect the confidentiality of the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed as much as possible, consistent with the school system's legal obligations and the necessity to investigate allegations of harassment and take disciplinary action when the conduct has occurred.

INVESTIGATION AND RECOMMENDATION

By Board authority, the Chief Executive Officer upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment or sexual harassment, shall immediately authorize an investigation. This investigation shall be conducted by the school system official or by a third-party designee as designated by the SCPCSD Superintendent. The party making the investigation shall provide a written report of the status of the investigation to the Chief Executive Officer. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment or sexual harassment, the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the sexual advances, the alleged relationships between parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred should be considered.
The investigation will consist of, but not be limited to, personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation shall also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.
In addition, the Chief Executive Officer shall take immediate steps to protect the complainant, students and employees pending completion of an investigation of alleged harassment or sexual harassment.

ACTION

Upon receipt of a recommendation that the complaint is valid, the Chief Executive Officer, along with the Board Chairman and SCPCSD Superintendent, shall take such action as appropriate based on the result of the investigation.

The Chief Executive Officer shall report the result of the investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures in writing to the complainant. The report shall document any disciplinary action taken as a result of the complaint.

The Chief Executive Officer shall take other steps as are necessary to prevent reoccurrence of the harassment.

REPRISAL

The Chief Executive Officer shall discipline any individual who retaliates against any person who reports alleged incidents of harassment or sexual harassment or who retaliates against any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing relating to a harassment or sexual harassment complaint.

RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse that may be available under state and/or federal law.

False accusations of harassment or sexual harassment (as defined in Sections II and III of this policy) can have a serious detrimental effect on innocent parties. Any person who knowingly and intentionally makes false accusations for any reason that would be contrary to the spirit and intent of this policy, shall be subject to immediate and appropriate disciplinary action.

Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment may constitute sexual abuse as defined under South Carolina Law. In such situations, the school system shall comply with South Carolina Law regarding the reporting of suspected abuse to appropriate authorities.

POLICY DISTRIBUTION

A copy of the foregoing policy and reporting procedure shall be published in the Board's Policy Manual, shall be included in each student handbook published by the school, and shall be posted in a conspicuous place in each school building. Postings of the policy shall include the name(s) of the person(s) to whom reports should be directed. Staff development and student education will be provided by the school annually.

VISITING AND VOLUNTEERING

BPS encourages visitors to our school. To keep students and staff safe, BPS requires each visitor, volunteer, and vendor to enter through the school's office, show his/her picture ID, and sign into the school via our Office Manager. Prior to entering the hallways, each visitor will receive a badge to wear while in our schools and be accompanied by a staff member when traveling to and from the office. The badge must be visible at all times. Each visitor is also asked to return to the main office and sign out before leaving. By using these standardized procedures, school personnel know at all times who is on campus and the purpose of the visits, thereby enhancing the safety of our schools.

Parents are always welcome but are required to make an appointment at least 24 hours in advance to see a faculty member, administration, or the Chief Executive Officer during the school day. Parents, volunteers, or other visitors, including former students, to the school are not to interfere with the supervisory or instructional responsibilities. The use of any electronic video or audio recording device while on campus is strictly prohibited. Parents requesting to observe a classroom will need to secure an agreed upon time with the teacher. This will be confirmed by administration and communicated with front office staff.

Friends of students or students from other schools are not allowed to visit the school during the school day, unless approved by the Chief Executive Officer at or before checking in at the main office. Visitors on campus who do not check in at the main office will be considered trespassing. The administration is empowered to take appropriate action against non-students who invade the building, grounds or other school property. Such action will include, but not limited to, the right to call in the authorities, if necessary.

BPS checks all volunteers through the National Sex Offenders' Registry. We also require an annual background check through the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) for all persons who chaperone students on field trips or who work directly with students in the school. The chaperone/volunteer will be required to pay $8 for his/her check. Checks should be made payable to BPS. Volunteers who need background checks should arrange to have them completed early in the year. Background checks must be requested and paid for two weeks before the date of any field trip.