



1415 Hyde Park Avenue, Boston, MA 02136  
PH: 617-357-0900 / Fax: 617-357-0949

# FAMILY HANDBOOK

School Year 2024 – 2025

*The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental, academic or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, homelessness or prior academic achievement in its educational programs, activities or employment.*

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# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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## **Mission**

The mission of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School is to nurture and develop academic, social, and emotional competence while building confidence, character and citizenship among its students.

## **Vision**

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School offers choice for Boston's parents of children in pre-kindergarten through grade six within a safe, nurturing environment conducive to learning. A rigorous academic program is provided in a vibrant, child-centered atmosphere that includes programs in technology, fine arts, vocal and instrumental music, dance, structured movement and foreign language.

## **Leadership Team**

Alexandra Buckmire, Head of School  
Lori Gover, Lower School Director  
Rachel Beck, Upper School Director

Sarah O'Connor, Director of Student Services  
April Shepard, Director of Visual & Performing Arts  
Alexandra Emery, Chief Financial Officer

## **Board of Trustees**

Brian Keith – Chair  
Craig Engerman, Vice Chair  
Kevin Cherry, Treasurer  
Marjorie Gardner - Staff Rep/Clerk  
Alexandra Buckmire, Head of School  
Cheryl Barrett, Parent Representative  
Shaumba Dibinga  
Rocklyn Clarke  
Devin Morris  
Katie Davis Kernizan

# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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## **Pledges of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School**

### **Pledge To Me**

I can be the best  
By doing my best  
In everything I do  
And taking pride in who I am  
My faith will see me through.  
I must have respect and confidence  
If I am to be, a healthy body  
A productive mind  
And a wise human being  
So, I can be my best  
By doing my best  
In everything I do  
And taking pride in who I am  
My faith will see me through

### **Renaissance Pledge**

I believe in you  
You believe in me  
We believe in all people  
I love you  
You love me  
We love all people  
I pledge to do my best for you  
You pledge to do your best for me  
We pledge to do our best for all people!

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental, academic or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, homelessness or prior academic achievement. If you believe that you have experienced such discrimination, please contact the Head of School.

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education program/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

- 1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.
- 2) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 – prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.
- 3) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, prohibits discrimination on account of age, including school age students.
- 4) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.
- 5) Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) – prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public schools, public accommodations and telecommunications.
- 6) McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987- each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.
- 7) Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)- ensures the educational stability of students in foster care and their equal access to the same free and appropriate public education through high school graduation as provided to other children and youth.

If you or your child feels you have been unfairly treated in regards to your rights, please contact Alexandra Buckmire, Head of School at (617) 357-0900.

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You may contact or file a complaint with the Board of Trustees of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School, US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), at the McCormack Post Office & Courthouse Building, Room 707, Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109, (617) 223-9662.

*Complete Policy may be found on pages 57-69 of your Family Handbook.*

## **Family Handbook**

The BRCPS Family Handbook has been created to inform families of the various policies and procedures of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School. Please familiarize yourself with its contents so we can work together for the benefit of your child.

The following information is offered to assist you in helping your child plan for school each day. It is very important that you encourage and support your child's school experience. In cooperation with teachers and administrators, parents are a major factor in the learning and achievement of children. Your support and encouragement at home and your attendance at school meetings are very important to the success of your child. Please note that the Attendance Policy, the Discipline Policy and the Dress Code Policy are outlined in this handbook.

### **School Hours**

Students Report Between: 7:15 am and 7:55 am

Students Dismiss: 3:15 pm

\*Students arriving after 7:55 am will be marked tardy

Early Dismissal Day Time: 10:30 am

### **Registrar Services**

#### **Admissions and Waiting Lists**

In accordance with state law and the school's charter, students must be residents of the state of Massachusetts, and shall be selected for admission to the school on the basis of an open lottery. An admissions lottery shall be conducted each year for the entering Kindergarten 1 class, and/or for any new classes that may be added to the school, or for existing vacancies.

A sibling preference shall apply for families seeking to enroll additional children in the school. Applicants for admissions to Kindergarten 1 or any newly established classes who are siblings of students currently enrolled in the school shall be placed in the next available space or on the waiting list.

Effective with the adoption of this policy, a sibling is a child who has at least one parent or legal guardian in common with another child.

Students not selected for admissions shall be placed on a waiting list for their respective grade levels, in the order in which their names were drawn in the lottery.

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The waiting list will remain active for only one academic year. When a seat in the school becomes available, that seat shall be offered to the next student on the waiting list at the available grade level. Parents who continue to want to have their child attend BRCPS will need to reapply and restate their interest for the next academic year. Interested parents can apply October through February via the Boston Charter School Application website.

## **Registration**

A child's birth certificate or other proof of age and place of birth must be submitted when a child registers at the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School. In addition to birth certificate, documents acceptable for this purpose include passport (showing date of birth), or Alien Registration Card. To enter kindergarten 1, a child must be four years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>. To enter kindergarten 2, a child must be five years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>. In addition to a birth certificate, an up-to-date record of immunizations must be provided at registration. No child will be allowed to attend school without the required record of immunizations. All children who have been found eligible for special education services in their prior schools must provide an accepted Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in order for the IEP to be implemented at the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School.

Parents are responsible for providing all records from the student's previous school including the health record.

## **Proof of Residency**

Students must provide reasonable proof of residency in Massachusetts. Accepted forms of proof of residency are listed below. Homeless and Foster Care students are exemptions to proof of residency.

- A Utility Bill (not water or cell phone) dated within the past 60 days
- A Deed, or Mortgage Payment dated within the past 60 days, or a Property Tax Bill dated within the last year
- A current Lease, Section 8 Agreement, or Residency Affidavit
- A W2 form dated within the year or a Payroll Stub dated within the past 60 days
- A Bank or Credit Card Statement dated within the past 60 days
- A Letter from an Approved Government Agency\* dated within the past 60 days

\*Approved government agencies: Departments of Transitional Assistance, Revenue (DOR), Children and Family Services (DCF), Transitional Assistance (DTA), Youth Services (DYS), Social Security, any communications on Commonwealth of Massachusetts Letterhead

## **Student Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Massachusetts student record regulations govern the school's maintenance of student records and access to such records. Parents or guardians have the right to: 1) inspect and review his/her child's educational records; 2) make copies of these records; 3) receive a list of all individuals having access to those records; 4) ask for an explanation of any item in the records; 5) ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is inaccurate misleading, or violates the child's right; and 6) request a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment. Parents wishing to receive a copy of their child's school records may do so by submitting a request for records form in the main office.

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Information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation shall be treated as a student education record, and shall not be deemed to be directory information. ESSA: Title IX, Part A, Sec. 722 (g)(3)(D)(G)

Non-custodial parents must request access to student records pursuant to the procedures set forth in Massachusetts Law, Chapter 71, section 34H, and its regulations.

## **Transfer**

If your child is transferring to a new school, parents must complete a withdrawal form. Please notify the office of the exact date of transfer and the last day that your child will be in school. It is most helpful to the school as well as to your child's reception in her/his new school if you give us the information in advance of your child's last day. This will give us time to prepare records and forms for transfer.

All school materials, including textbooks, must be returned with all accounts settled before your child transfers.

## **Notice on Transfer to Other Schools**

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(g), notice is hereby given to parents and eligible students that the school forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such transfer of records takes place without consent of the parent or eligible student. Please note: All obligations must be met (return of books, payments and other obligations) prior to records being forwarded to the new school.

## **Change of Address**

The school must be notified immediately when a change of address, a change of telephone number or email occurs. Parents must call the office at 617-357-0900 or send a note containing the new address, telephone number and/or email as soon as these changes occur. Please be sure to alert the office of the need for a bus change if necessary (allow two weeks for bus changes).

## **Change of Name**

If a child's legal name is changed, a court order showing the change must be submitted to the registrar for necessary recording and revision of student records.

## **Programs & Student Services**

### **After School Program**

The Renaissance School offers an Extended Day After School Program for students in grades K1 – 6. The program runs from 3:30 - 6:00 PM every day, **except** for Professional Development Days and school vacations. The After School program enrolls students beginning in August on a first-come basis. There are a limited number of seats at specific grade levels. The After School Program follows the Renaissance's schedule for school closures due to snow or health emergencies.

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## **Child Study Team (CST)**

The Child Study Team (CST) is a process to help students succeed in the classroom. It is a general education initiative where students are referred by staff members to discuss areas of need and develop strategies to support the student in the classroom. Boston Renaissance employs a comprehensive team of professionals (School Psychologists, Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Pathologists, Physical Therapists, BCBA etc.) trained to support students in all areas. Over the years, the Child Study Team has streamlined a multidisciplinary team approach to properly identify the needs of students and provide the academic, emotional and social support necessary to support students. CST is a place for all of these professionals to collaborate and identify strategies that can promote student success.

The Child Study Team (CST) process allows for teachers to discuss students they have concerns about (academic, social/emotional, speech, OT, PT, Behavior) and receive feedback from colleagues. Teachers also meet with related service providers to discuss concerns they have about students. The school Child Study Team Coordinator facilitates the CST process and meets with all teachers who have concerns about their students.

The CST Review Team is composed of the Child Study Team Coordinator, Director of Student Services, and rotating related service providers that meet monthly to review students. All referrals for special education services are comprehensively discussed by the team. The CST Review Team determines next steps for the students (for example: file reviews, related service screen, observations or special education and 504 referrals). Next steps from the CST Review Team are communicated to classroom teachers and any other necessary stakeholders.

## **Full Service Model**

BRCPS is a full service model and has developed partnerships with several health organizations to support academics through provision of medical and social emotional interventions and support. Currently, BRCPS has partnerships with the New England Eye Institute, Tufts Dental and The Home for Wanderers. The Full Service Model is a regular education initiative that provides dental and mental health services for students during the school day. These services are created to remove obstacles to learning and allow improved access to academic programming.

## **Counseling Services**

At Boston Renaissance Charter Public School, we recognize that students cannot meet their full academic potential when emotional, social and behavioral challenges interfere with learning. Students who require support in these areas have access to the Mental Health Team. The Mental Health Team is made up of two school psychologists and five social workers. These counselors have experience and training in an academic setting.

The primary role of our Counselors is to ensure that students have the resources they need to be fully available for learning. By collaborating with teachers, administrators and parents, our team can identify challenges which impede the learning process and help students, parents and staff to develop and implement appropriate interventions.



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As we believe family support is integral to students' academic success, our team also provides parents with a variety of resources and referrals related to child development. Families who have concerns about their child's social or emotional well-being are encouraged to contact the Mental Health Team for guidance. If you are interested in your child receiving counseling services please contact Sarah O'Connor, Director Student Services.

## **Related Services**

Related services include speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, applied behavior analysis and counseling. Related services are provided in all learning settings, including but not limited to the inclusion classroom. Services are provided by highly qualified licensed Speech and Language Pathologists, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, BCBAs, ABA paraprofessionals, and School Social Workers and School Psychologists. BRCPS specialists provide direct student services, consult with teachers, offer student support, social skills groups, and prevention initiatives. Students who may not need an IEP, but are in need of short-term intervention services are serviced through a 6-8 week treatment plan. This plan is sent home for parental approval, and allows related services providers to target specific skills in the classroom or in a pull-out capacity.

Individual and group counseling services are available for students as well as family referrals for on-site or off-site counseling. In the 2009 school year, Boston Renaissance formalized a partnership with The Home for Little Wanderers to increase the capacity of counseling services available to students and families. Additionally, in 2023 Boston Renaissance formed a partnership with Cartwheel Care to provide behavioral and mental health services to students and families via virtual platform with limited to no wait time.

## **Student Support Team & Student Mentor Program**

BRCPS employs Student Support Specialists who work to support students with behavioral challenges that preclude them from accessing their full learning potential. The Student Support Team works collaboratively with the Mental Health Team to develop a fair and consistent approach to dealing with specific student behavior issues. If a student has violated the code of conduct, the Student Support Team mentors students to support a plan for improved success in the classroom.

## **Special Education**

BRCPS provides a full continuum of special education services for eligible students. Services are designed to meet the individual educational needs of each special education student. For information regarding a student's rights to special education services, specific special education services provided by the school or for a referral for a special education evaluation, please contact Sarah O'Connor, Director Student Services.

The BRCPS Special Education and SEI Program models are structured to benefit all learners. The models are described below and the various resources support and improve the general education program.

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## **Special Education Services**

The Renaissance school follows a full inclusion model for students who are not meeting grade level proficiency benchmarks or are identified with special needs. These inclusion classrooms grades 1-6 are co-taught with one special education and one general education teacher, accommodating all students with and without IEPs. In K1-K2, there is one general education teacher, one special education teacher, and a highly qualified paraprofessional in each room.

BRCPS also offers three resource rooms and two substantially separate classrooms. This placement is for students needing all day small classroom instruction to meet their academic and social/emotional development. These classroom settings are for students with a range of disabilities including Intellectual Impairment and Social/Emotional disabilities.

In addition to the full inclusion model BRCPS offers intervention services in and out of the classrooms. Reading and Math Specialists provide small group instruction daily in the classrooms, additionally, they provide targeted intervention, based on data, through our “What I Need” (WIN) Block, which is individualized academic support during a specific daily block of time.

## **SEI Program Model**

The SEI Program Model integrates language instruction and content instruction. Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) classrooms are taught by licensed teachers, who have participated in RETELL or SEI category training and are SEI endorsed. SEI teachers understand and consider the Common Core instructional “shifts” and their implications for Multilingual Learners (MLs).

The SEI Program Model involves instruction that includes a range of techniques such as direct instruction, facilitation and modeling. SEI teachers provide direct support, encourage student engagement in group work, and cooperative learning activities aligned to grade level standards and learning objectives. All MLs receive daily small group English language instruction with a licensed ESL teacher.

SEI classrooms offer culturally responsive teaching, and SEI teachers encourage and respect diverse communication and interaction styles, as well as developmentally appropriate social and academic language to support English language acquisition. Language objectives posted in SEI classrooms stem from the linguistic demands of a standards-based lesson task, and academic vocabulary taught focuses on high-leverage language that will serve students in other content.

## **Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is an Act which prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal assistance. The Act defines a person with disability as anyone who:

1. Has mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities include activities such as caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working);

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2. Has a record of such an impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such impairment.

The school has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to provide reasonable accommodations so that the student can access the school's programs.

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding Section 504 to Ronnie Bevis, Assistant Director of Student Services.

You may also contact or file a complaint with the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), at the McCormack Post Office & Courthouse Building, Room 707, Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109, (617) 223-9662.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Many employees of BRCPS are mandated reporters pursuant to M.G.L. c, 119, sec. 51A. As a result, employees or the Head of School's designee are obligated to notify the Department of Children and Families in the event that there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering physical or emotional injury as a result of abuse, including sexual abuse; neglect, including malnutrition; drug dependent upon birth; sexual exploitation; or human trafficking.

Mandated reporters are required to file a report whether the abuse is suspected to occur inside the home or outside of the home setting. Employees or the Head of School's designee may also contact local law enforcement or the child advocate regarding suspected abuse or neglect. BRCPS will cooperate with a DCF response to an allegation of abuse or neglect involving a student and provide information as requested. If requested, BRCPS will also allow DCF to interview the child who is the subject of the report or their sibling at school.

## **Homeless & Foster Care Policy**

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES**

As required by law, the district will work with homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth (collectively, "homeless students") as well as their families or legal guardians to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, school nutrition programs, summer programming and extracurricular activities.

**Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:**

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Being abandoned in hospitals;

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- Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings; and
- Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

## **Students Remaining in Schools of Origin**

It is presumed to be in the best interest of homeless students to remain in their schools of origin, i.e. the school that the student was attending at the time he or she became homeless, or the last school the student attended prior to becoming homeless. Homeless students may continue to attend their school of origin for as long as they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. For homeless students who complete the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term “school of origin” shall also include the receiving school in the same school district educating students at the next grade level.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation comparable to that provided for all other students attending school in the district. The district will transport students who are sheltered or temporarily residing within the district to the students’ school of origin. For homeless students attending a school of origin located outside the district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing, the district in which the school of origin is located will coordinate with the district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing to provide the transportation services necessary for the student, and these districts will divide the cost equally. Formerly homeless students who find permanent housing mid-school year will continue to receive transportation services until the end of the school year.

## **Students Enrolling in District Where Sheltered or Temporarily Residing**

Parents or guardians may elect to enroll homeless students in the school district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing, rather than having the student remain in the school of origin. Enrollment changes for homeless students should take place immediately.

If homeless students are unable to provide written proof of their shelter or temporary residence in the district, the homeless liaison will work with the family seeking enrollment to determine homelessness. Information regarding a homeless student’s living arrangement shall be considered a student education record, and not directory information. Records containing information about the homeless student’s living arrangement may not be disclosed without the consent of the parent or satisfaction of another student-privacy related exemption.

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be permitted to enroll under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. After enrollment, the district will immediately request available records from the student's previous school.

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Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families who reside in the district. Accordingly, the district will provide transportation services to school in a manner comparable to the transportation provided for all other students in the district.

## **Dispute Resolution**

If the district disagrees with a parent or guardian's decision to keep a student enrolled in the school of origin and considers enrollment in the district where the student is sheltered or temporarily residing to be in the student's best interest, the district will explain to the parent, in writing and in a language the parent can understand, the rationale for its determination and provide parent with written notice of their rights to appeal the district's determination to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. During the pendency of any such appeal, the student should remain enrolled in the school selected by the parent or guardian, receiving transportation to school and access to other available services and programs.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Advisory on Homeless Education Assistance contains additional information about educating homeless students and the appeal process.

## **Homeless Liaison**

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families. The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in locations such as schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students. The liaison shall ensure district staff receive professional development and other support on issues involving homeless students. This district's homeless liaison is located in the front office and can be reached at 617-357-0900.

LEGAL REFS.: The McKinney-Vento Act and Title I, Part A, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

## **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the educational stability of students in foster care. Educational stability has a lasting impact on students' academic achievement and wellbeing, and the School Community is committed to supporting all efforts to ensure that students in foster care have equal access to high-quality, stable educational experiences from preschool (if offered) through high school graduation.

Irrespective of the location of a foster care placement, students in foster care will continue to attend their school of origin, unless after a collaborative decision-making process, it is determined to be in the

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student's best interest to enroll in and attend school in the district in which the student resides in foster care.

The district's point of contact for students in foster care is the Homeless Liaison. The district and the homeless liaison will collaborate with DCF to ensure that students can access transportation and the other services to which they may be entitled.

## **Best Interest Determination**

Decisions about whether a student in foster care should continue to attend the school of origin should be made collaboratively by DCF, the student (as appropriate), the student's family and/or foster family (or, if different, the person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student), the school and district of origin, and (when appropriate) the local district where the student is placed. Best interest determinations should focus on the needs of each individual student and account for unique factors about the student and his or her foster care placement. Every effort should be made to reach agreement regarding the appropriate school placement of a student in foster care; however, DCF will finalize the best interest determination if the relevant parties cannot agree on the best school for the student to attend.

The district can seek review of DCF's decision by utilizing a Foster Care School Selection Dispute Resolution Process established by DESE and DCF. Decisions made through this process are not subject to review. To the extent feasible and appropriate, the district will ensure that a child remains in his or her school of origin while the disputes are being resolved to minimize disruptions and reduce the number of moves between schools.

## **Transportation**

The district of origin must collaborate with DCF on how transportation will be arranged and provided to ensure that students in foster care or homeless who need transportation to remain in their school of origin will receive such transportation.

Transportation options may include using Title I funds, establishing regional collaborations among districts, coordinating with existing routes for transportation, seeking help from foster parent(s), etc. Absent other agreements between the district and DCF, the district of origin is responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.

## **Enrollment**

During enrollment of students in foster care, DCF representatives will present the district with a form indicating that the student is in foster care, along with a state-agency identification badge.

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be permitted to enroll under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. After enrollment, the district will immediately request available records from the student's previous school.

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Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to students in foster care (homeless families) on the same terms as families who reside in the district. Accordingly, the district will provide transportation services to school in a manner comparable to the transportation provided for all other students in the district.

LEGAL REFS: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA);

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections Act)

## **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN**

To facilitate the placement, enrollment, graduation, data collection, and provision of special services for students transferring into or out of the District because of their parents or guardians being on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, the District supports and will implement its responsibilities as outlined in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. The district believes it is appropriate to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families resulting from frequent moves required by parents' or guardians' military deployment.

### **Definitions**

**Children of military families:** School aged children, enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade, in the household of an active duty member of the uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserve serving on active duty.

**Deployment:** The period one month before the service members' departure from their home station on military orders through six months after return to their home station.

**Education(al) records:** Official records, files, and data directly related to a student and maintained by the school including, but not limited to, records encompassing all the material kept in the student's cumulative folder.

Eligible students are children of military families as well as the children of veterans who have been severely injured and medically discharged, and children of active duty personnel who died on active duty. Children of retired active duty personnel are also eligible to receive services for one year following the discharge due to severe injury, or the retirement or death of an active military parent. The Compact does not apply to children of inactive Guard or Reserves, veterans and retired personnel not included above, or U.S. Department of Defense personnel and other federal civil service employees and contract employees.

### **The District's responsibilities to eligible students include the following:**

Sending schools must send either official or unofficial records with the moving students and District receiving schools must use those records for immediate enrollment and educational placement.

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Upon enrollment of an eligible student, the receiving school must request official records and the sending schools shall respond within 10 days with the records.

Immunization requirements of the District may be met within 30 days from the date of enrollment (or be in progress).

Receiving schools must initially honor placement of students in all courses from the sending school. These include, but are not limited to, Honors, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, vocational-technical, and career pathway courses if those courses are offered in the receiving school and space is available. The receiving schools must also initially honor placement of like programs to those of the student in the sending state, including, but not limited to, Gifted and Talented programs, and English as a Second Language programs. Receiving schools are not precluded from performing subsequent evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in courses and programs.

In compliance with federal law, the district will assume financial and programmatic responsibility for the special education programs of students with existing IEPs drafted in other states.

As appropriate, the District will exercise the right to waive prerequisites for all courses and programs, while also maintaining its right to re-evaluate the student to ensure continued enrollment, also as deemed appropriate.

Students of active duty personnel shall have additional excused absences, as necessary, for visitations relative to leave or deployment.

An eligible student living with a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis shall be permitted to continue to attend the school in which he or she was enrolled while living with the custodial parent or guardian, without any tuition fee imposed.

The District high school will accept exit or end-of-year exams required from the sending state, national norm-referenced tests, or alternate testing instead of testing requirements for graduation in the District (receiving state.) If this is not possible, the alternative provision of the Interstate Compact shall be followed to facilitate the on-time graduation of the student in accordance with Compact provisions.

LEGAL REFS: M.G. L. ;

## **Health Office**

### **School Nurse**

The health office is located on the first floor of the building. In case of illness or in need of first aid, the student should report directly to the health office with a pass signed by the dismissing teacher. A sick student will be released into the custody of a parent or guardian who is on file at the school to dismiss the student. There are mandatory health screenings during the school year including vision, hearing, height, weight and scoliosis. Health services are provided for students who are genuinely ill. Students will not be allowed to visit the nurse's office unless there is a valid need for medical attention.

Over-the-counter and prescription medications must be delivered by the parent/guardian along with a



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Doctor's order to the nurse for administration in the School Health Office. Only a nurse licensed to practice nursing in the state of Massachusetts may administer any medication in school.

## **Communication**

School health services are available daily to all students. A full time nurse is on duty during the entire school day. The school nurse will notify the parent/guardian when she determines the need for student dismissal due to illness/injury. These dismissals are not considered excused absences'. Parents/guardians should arrange for their child to be picked up within half hour for the benefit of their child and other students coming to the health office. The school nurse can be reached by telephone or email if you have any questions regarding any health related information. The school nurse should be notified by parent/guardian and provided with any supporting medical documentation of any:

- Serious injury, hospitalization or illness
- planned surgery
- communicable disease
- new diagnosis or change in your child's health status
- fracture, sprain, stitches, cast or crutches
- new medication and/or dosing change
- need to be excused from gym and/or recess

## **Student Illness**

To minimize the spread of infection disease and to provide for a safe environment, students should be kept home from school for:

- fever greater than 100 within the last 24 hours (fever should be under 100 for 24 hours **without the use of fever reducing medication** before returning to school)
- vomiting/diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- A communicable disease (i.e conjunctivitis, COVID-19, hand foot and mouth disease, chicken pox, measles, influenza, etc.)
- An upper respiratory illness with significant coughing and/or nasal discharge

## **Universal Precautions**

Universal precautions are the recommendations developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to control the spread of infectious diseases. Universal precautions treat all human blood and body fluid as infectious. Strict adherence to universal precautions is practiced by all BRCPS nurses in clinical situations.

## **Medication**

Regulations require that all medications, including prescription and over the counter, be given only by the school nurse. All medications, even over the counter medicine, must be accompanied by a doctor's written order for dispensing medicines and parent/guardian written consent. Parents/guardians must deliver medication in the original pharmacy container or dispensing packaging to the school Health Office. Students may not carry medication.

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If medications cannot be given at home and your child must take medication in school, the following procedures need to be followed. Have your doctor write orders for the school to dispense medication giving the following information:

- The student's name
- The name and signature of the licensed prescriber and his/her business and emergency telephone numbers
- The name, route and dosage of the prescribed medication
- The frequency and time of medication administration
- Diagnosis and any other medical condition requiring medication, if not a violation of confidentiality or if not contrary to the request of the parent, guardian or student to keep confidential, and
- Specific directions for administration
- Any side effects of which the staff should be aware
- The duration of the prescription

Sign the school's written parental permission form and deliver all medications, along with Physician's written orders to the Nurse in the Health Office. Prescription medications must be in the original, pharmacy labeled container. Medications must remain in locked storage in school. They may not be taken home every night.

## **Health Requirement**

BRCPS in accordance with the regulations of Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires the following information before a student enters school.

- Required immunization: an immunization record must be submitted to and reviewed by the school nurse prior to entry in school
- Exemptions: if there is a medical reason why immunizations are not done, a certificate must be obtained from your physician and forwarded to the school nurse. For religious exemption, parents/guardians must fill out a Religious Exemption from Immunization form which can be obtained from the school nurse.
- Physical Examination: A physical examination is required for all new students. The examination should have been carried out within one year of the start of the school.

## **Life Threatening Food Allergy**

BRCPS recognizes the increasing prevalence of food allergies and the life threatening nature of these allergies for many students. The management of students with food allergies requires the awareness, support and response of the entire school community.

**If a student has a life threatening allergy, he/she must have access to emergency medication (EpiPen) at all times. Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing the health office with the necessary medical information about their child's emergency allergy action plan.**

Key points of the BRCPS Life -Threatening allergy Policy:

- An individualized health care plan will be developed for each student with a medically diagnosed life-threatening allergy

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- Our school programs are not declared as allergen free and food with known allergens are not banned from our school.
- Communication, planning, and education with staff, parents/guardians and students will aim to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students.

## **Children with special health care needs**

For students with asthma, diabetes, allergies, seizures, or any other medical condition requiring special health services in school and/or requires the assistance of medical technology, it is vitally important that the parents/guardians meet with the school nurse to develop an individualized care plan as soon as possible.

## **Student with medical equipment need**

A student needing crutches, wheelchair, or any other medically required equipment a medical order is mandatory for such equipment. If a student comes to school without a medical note for this equipment, the student will be sent home for reasons of liability and the potential for further injury. It is important for the school nurse to be aware when students with crutches, etc. are in the building so that in the event of an emergency, an evacuation plan can be developed.

## **Concussion**

Concussion or Traumatic Brain injury can occur whenever there is a blow or jolt to the head. BRCPS seeks to prevent concussion and provide a safe return to activities after a head injury. Although every concussed student is different, BRCPS believes that the care and management of students who have sustained a concussion requires education, supervision and close collaboration between students, parents/guardians, and school nurses and administrators.

Symptoms to look for following a head injury at recess or gym:

- headache or feeling of pressure in head
- Nausea/vomiting
- Loss of consciousness
- feeling groggy
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Blurred or double vision
- Appear Dazed and confused
- Balance issues or dizziness
- Answers questions slowly
- Behavior or personality changes
- Concentration or memory problems

Please call the Health Office with questions at (617) 357-0900 ext. 1103 or 1104, 1105.

## **Transportation & Parent Pick Up Policy**

### **Transportation**

Transportation to and from school is provided by Boston Public Schools Transportation Office and is offered to all eligible students. Transportation to and from school is a privilege (not a right) and should

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be treated as such. It is critical that all parents reinforce the need for proper behavior on the school bus. School bus behavioral requirements are contained in the Bus Safety Policy of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School. Students who violate these rules and regulations may be suspended or excluded permanently from school transportation vehicles.

If you are moving, notify the main office of your new address. It will take two weeks to obtain a new bus stop. If your child is attending an after school day care facility or program, please request an Alternative Drop Off Request Form and submit it to the main office to be processed by the transportation department, this can also be done directly on BPS Transportation website in the parent portal. Please allow the school two weeks' notice to attain a new bus route for your child if you are changing bus stops due to moving or change in childcare.

## **Parent Pick Up**

Parent Pick-up begins at 2:50 PM.

The school does not provide coverage for your son or daughter post 3:30 PM; therefore **your child must be picked up by 3:30 PM.**

Procedures if students are not picked up by 3:30 PM

- **1<sup>st</sup> offense** will result in a verbal warning to the Parent/Guardian.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> offense** will result in a **written warning** and a phone call home to the Parent/Guardian stating the subsequent action if another offense occurs.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> offense** will result in students being **TERMINATED** from the use of the Parent Pick up services. Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the Transportation Coordinator to arrange for an alternative transportation home.

**The Parent Pick-Up policy will be strictly enforced.**

## **Visitors & Volunteers**

### **Visitor Guidelines**

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Head of School, teachers and other staff, a warm welcome is extended to parents and others to visit our school and classrooms. Active involvement of families and the community in our students' education is a key to student success and is one of our highest priorities.

*To keep our students and staff safe and secure, and to keep classroom disruptions to a minimum, we have developed the following guidelines for school visits. "Visitors" include all parents and external agencies, as well as others.*

1. ALL visitors **MUST** report to the school office and sign in before going elsewhere in the building, and they must sign out before leaving.
2. All visitors will receive a Visitor's Pass when they sign in. Please be sure your Visitor's Pass is visible while you are in the school or schoolyard. Visitor's passes will not be required at Open Houses, Parent Nights or other school-sponsored events open to the public.

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3. For the safety of our students and staff, we will consider that visitors who do not sign in and cannot show a Visitor's Pass are trespassing. A school staff member may ask them to leave the building and schoolyard.
4. Visitors who want to meet with a teacher or administrator must make an appointment. Teachers have time each week set aside to meet with parents. No appointment is necessary for Back to School Night or other school-sponsored events open to the public. Parent-teacher conferences and student led conferences will take place twice a year. Teachers will reach out to arrange an appointment time slot for these conferences.
5. Teachers who are expecting a visitor should notify the office. In some cases, a staff member may escort the visitor to the meeting place.
6. Sometimes, there may be a problem between a parent and a teacher or other staff member. If a meeting is scheduled to address the problem, it will take place in the office or a conference room—not in the classroom. The parent must first report to the office and will be escorted to the meeting place. A school administrator will be present at the meeting.
7. It is very disruptive to the classroom for parents to pick up their children before the regular dismissal time. If this is necessary, the parent should call the school office in advance and pick their child up in the office or other location designated by the school. Parents may not go directly to the classroom to pick up their child. The school will not release a student to anyone other than a custodial parent without the parent's consent and proper identification and a Parent Pick-Up Card (PPU).
8. In the event that a visitor disrupts school activities by insisting on visiting classrooms unannounced, harassing staff, shouting, or using inappropriate language, the school administrator may restrict the individual's visits or deny future access to the building and schoolyard.
9. Children, not enrolled at the Boston Renaissance School, may not visit without an adult for safety and insurance reasons.

*Thank you for your cooperation in observing these guidelines. Be assured that our goal is to create a safe, secure, and positive learning experience for all our students and their families.*

## **Volunteers**

We welcome parents and other adults to work with us as volunteers. Staff and administration will communicate with parents and community volunteers about ways in which they can help and support BRCPS.

Please let teachers know of your interest in volunteering and the type of volunteer activity you wish to engage in. All individuals will be required to provide information necessary to conduct a state mandated CORI (Criminal Records) check prior to being accepted as volunteers.

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## Food Services

### Food Service Program

BRCPS offers nutritious breakfast and lunch to all of its students at no cost.

### Breakfast

BRCPS has universal breakfast which means breakfast is free to all students. Breakfast is only served until 7:50 am for grades 1-6. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students eat breakfast in the classroom. All students are offered the opportunity to have breakfast.

### Lunch

BRCPS has universal lunch which means lunch is free to all students. Students in K1-6 will eat in the cafeteria. Students may bring a bagged lunch or their own drink (not in glass containers) for lunch.

\*Lunch will be offered on Half-Days\*

WE ARE A NUT FREE SCHOOL

## School Uniform & Supplies

The Parents of Renaissance (POR), formerly Parent Advisory Board, the Board of Trustees, and the administration and staff of the BRCPS have voted to enforce a mandatory dress code policy. Parents may purchase light blue polo shirts bearing the school logo from **Donnelly's and Metro School Uniforms**. Uniforms can be purchased both in person and online at both locations.

[Donnelly's](#) has several locations:

**Donnelly's Clothing**, 70 Tolland Street, East Hartford, CT. 06108, 800.498.0045

**Donnelly's Clothing @ Howard Industrial Park**, 50 Sharpe Drive, Cranston, RI. 02920, 401.942.5202, 800.498.0045

**Donnelly's Clothing @ Sullivan Square**, 260 Marion Road, Wareham, MA. 02571, 508.291.2975, 800.498.0045

**Donnelly's Clothing**, 39 Cummings Park, Woburn, MA. 01801, 800.498.0045

**Donnelly's Clothing**, 1471 Main Street, Weymouth, MA. 02190, 800.498.0045

[Metro School Uniform](#) is located at 745 Dudley Street Dorchester, MA.

Parents may purchase other items, navy pants, skirts, and jumpers at a retailer of their choice. **Parents also have the option to purchase a sweat suit directly from the school (pants and jacket) which must be worn with the light blue polo shirt with the school logo beneath the jacket.**

Parental cooperation is essential for the success of our dress code policy.

**The BRCPS Mandatory Dress Code is as follows:**

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- Boys may wear navy blue trousers with a belt and a light blue long or short-sleeved polo shirt, bearing the school logo, tucked in.
- Girls may wear navy blue slacks, skirts with white or navy blue tights, or jumpers (no shorter than two inches above the knee) and a light blue long or short-sleeved polo shirt bearing the school logo.
- Boys and Girls may also wear the school sweat suit with a light blue polo shirt bearing the school logo available for purchase at the school.
- On days that students have movement class, boys and girls can also wear gym uniforms, which consist of navy blue cotton sweat pants and a navy blue sweatshirt
- Navy blue shorts, capris and skirts, no shorter than two inches above the knee, and light blue polo shirts with the school logo.
- Navy button-front sweater or solid navy button-front sweatshirt with ***no hood*** may be worn if desired.
- Due to safety concerns, flip-flops, slides of any kind, open-toe sandals, Crocs, UGGS slippers and Yeezy foam runners are **NOT** to be worn anytime.

## **Violation of the Dress Code Policy**

**First Offense** - A **warning letter** will be sent home with the student to be signed by a Parent/Guardian and returned to the classroom teacher.

**Second Offense** - The homebase teacher will make a phone call home.

**Third Offense** - Parent/Guardian must meet with the **Student Support Specialist or School Director** before the student is allowed to return to class.

## **Movement Classes**

All students are required to wear sneakers in the gymnasium and dance studios.

## **Hats and Outerwear**

Hats and outerwear may **NOT** be worn in school at anytime. Outerwear should be hung up or put in cubbies. **NO HOODED SWEATSHIRTS** may be worn in class at anytime during the school day. Students will be asked to remove unapproved attire by school staff.

## **Labeling Clothing**

All items of clothing such as backpacks, boots, raincoats, hats, gloves, jackets, coats, sweaters, etc., should be labeled with the student's name. This avoids loss and confusion and helps students identify their own belongings. Lost articles are kept in the Lost and Found area for approximately 30 days. BRCPS is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.

## **Free-Style Fridays**

Please keep in mind that although we have provided students the opportunity to dress down on these half days, there is still a dress code in which they must adhere to. This means:

- No clothing that allows the midriff, cleavage, undergarments, or bare back to be exposed is not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to the following: excessively baggy or tight

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pants/leggings, tank tops, spaghetti strap/halter/mesh tops, see through shirts, tube tops or crop tops.

- No mini skirts, mini dresses, shorts, pants etc. that hang below the waistline, sit on the hip or lower, or show underwear. Appropriate length is to the end of the fingertips when arms are directly by one's side.
- Students must wear clothes-toe shoes.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Sports Equipment**

Students may not bring sports equipment to school, i.e. football, baseball, or basketballs etc. These will be taken, held and returned only to parents. All necessary sports equipment will be provided by the school.

### **Bicycles**

Bicycles may be brought to school and locked up in bicycle racks by students between May 15 through October 30. Locks will **NOT** be provided by the school. BRCPS is **NOT** responsible for lost or stolen bicycles or damages to the bicycles. Bicycles are **NOT** permitted on school buses.

Scooters **MAY NOT** be brought to school.

### **Elevators**

Students may only use the elevators when accompanied by an adult.

### **Recess**

All K1-6 students will have regularly scheduled recess each day for 20 minutes. Classroom teachers will give students many opportunities to move around in the classroom and will provide supervised breaks as necessary for everyone during the day.

### **Library Media Center**

The Library Media Center, located at the front of the building is a bright, colorful, and welcoming space for students, staff and our visitors. The Library Media Center is a comprehensive resource center that contains books, periodicals and computers. All of these materials help to enrich the education of children by improving their research skills and empowering them to become critical thinkers and discriminating users of information. Teachers are also able to use these resources to develop individualized instruction.

### **Overdue and Lost Books**

Notices are sent home to the families of children with overdue books. Parents will be held accountable for books that are not returned to the library. Students will lose the privilege of checking books out until a payment has been made or the book has been returned. Payment for lost books can be submitted directly to the librarian or deposited in the "Library" box located at the security desk.



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## **Cell Phones**

All cell phone use is **prohibited** during school hours. If a student violates the cell phone policy, they will be assigned a lock box slot in their classroom's cell phone lock box. The cell phone will be expected to be handed in to the teacher upon arrival and locked in the student's assigned lock box slot until dismissal. Repeated violations will result in the phone being confiscated and a consequence will be issued to the student. Parents will be notified and arrange to meet with a member of the Student Support Team to pick up the cell phone. If you wish for your student to be assigned a lock box, please contact their teacher.

## **Electronics**

Personal iPods, CD players, radios, or any other electronic devices, toys and non-essential items will be taken from students and returned to parents only.

## **Money, Property (including clothing) and other Valuables**

Students should not bring large amounts of money, personal property, or any valuables to school. Money for milk and lunch is enough for students during the school day. Money should be sent in a sealed and labeled envelope and given to the teacher as soon as he/she enters the homeroom. If money is required for any other reason, students and parents will be notified. The school cannot assume responsibility for money, property, or other valuables lost or stolen.

## **Parent Involvement**

We welcome your involvement in your child's education and school. We encourage you to become involved by attending the *Parents of Renaissance* meetings. Parent Involvement sign up forms are available in the main office and reflect the numerous ways you may volunteer at the school. If you have an email address, be sure to share it with the main office so that you will be able to receive information sent electronically.

## **Notices to Parents**

Please check your child's book bag each day for notices. It is often necessary to send notices home during the week. Please be sure that your child remembers to give you everything that is sent home by teachers and administrators. Please check the BRCPS web site at [www.bostonrenaissance.org](http://www.bostonrenaissance.org) for the latest news and announcements as well as important Family Resources.

## **Parents of Renaissance (POR)**

Every parent/guardian of a student enrolled and attending the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School is automatically a member of the Parents of Renaissance Committee. Every parent is invited to attend all meetings of this committee during the school year. The schedule of meetings is listed on the school calendar. Please make every effort to attend these important meetings. Your active participation is necessary to help us create a positive learning environment for every child.

## **Parents of Renaissance – Executive Committee**

This elected representative group meets throughout the school year in order to assist in establishing the agenda for the Parents of Renaissance Meetings. Also, members of the Executive Committee provide a

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communication link between the larger Parents of Renaissance and the school. The purpose of the Parents of Renaissance Executive Committee is to serve in an advisory capacity to the Head of School.

## **Family Engagement Specialist**

**The Parent Liaison** serves as a link between home and school and is able to provide you with helpful information. If you have a question, please continue to think of your classroom teacher as your first contact. But if you have a concern and you are not sure who to call, please feel free to call the new *Parent Communication* line: 617-357-0900 x1411. Leave a message and we will get back to you promptly.

## **Student Led Conferences**

Student led conferences are an important way for parents and teachers to communicate about how a student is doing academically and socially. Conferences provide an opportunity to review report cards and progress reports with the teacher and to discuss their child's progress. There are two regularly scheduled Conferences. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to attend all of the conferences. A schedule of the conferences during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester will be sent home by your classroom's teacher.

Conferences with teachers and School Directors at other times are encouraged and welcomed. In order for teachers and administrators to set aside time to meet with parents, appointments must be arranged in advance. If you wish to make an appointment with any member of the staff, please send a note to the teacher or call the school's main office. If you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment with a teacher or administrator, please call the office to cancel it.

## **Parent Involvement Opportunities**

Parent involvement is crucial to the success of each student and the whole school community.

Your participation in the learning of your child, as well as your participation in the life of the school, is a critical factor in our success. We believe that parent involvement is everything you do to support your child's education. This participation includes what you do at home to foster good study habits and love of learning and, when possible, your active involvement at school in those areas that contribute to the ongoing support of students and staff.

In the spring of 2001, the Parents of Renaissance (POR), formerly Parent Advisory Board Executive Committee, approved expectations for parents with children attending the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School. These expectations are as follows:

- 1) Parents are strongly encouraged to attend two Parent Teacher Conference Nights with their child's teacher.
- 2) Parents are strongly encouraged to attend three Parents of Renaissance meetings throughout the course of the year.
- 3) Parents are to make sure that their child is prepared for learning at school every day.

What follows are some of the ways you can be involved with your child's education at home:

- Read aloud with your child every night for at least 20 minutes.

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- Talk to your child about school. Ask specific questions, such as, “What did you do in math class?” or, “What did you talk about in science class?”
- Establish and enforce an appropriate time to go to bed each night.
- Check homework for completion and neatness.
- Talk about your own positive learning experiences.
- Share the importance of appropriate behavior in school and on the way to school.
- Provide both quiet time and a quiet space for a child to do their homework.
- Volunteer to become a Room Parent.

## **Policy regarding in-school observations by parents and their designees**

In accordance with Massachusetts special education law, Boston Renaissance Charter Public School permits parents and their designees (defined by law as parent designated independent evaluators and educational consultants) to conduct in-school observations of their student’s current or proposed special and regular education program.

When a parent or designee wishes to conduct such an observation, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The parent shall contact the Special Education Office or the School Director and indicate that an observation is requested. The parent will indicate the name of the person who will conduct the observation and the affiliation of that person to the child and/or parent.
2. If the request for the observation comes from someone other than the parent, the school will need to confirm with the parent the identity of the observer and ensure that the parent consents to the observation. If the designee wishes to observe the student’s records, the school must obtain written consent from the parent before allowing the designee to access the student’s record in accordance with the Massachusetts student record regulations.
3. Upon notification of the request for the observation, the school will provide timely access to the student’s current or proposed educational program. The school will contact the parent and/or designee to schedule a mutually convenient time for the observation. Please be advised that there may be certain times of the year such as when the MCAS is being administered that the school generally will not schedule observations due to the disruption the observation would cause during these particular time periods. If the observation is requested during one of these time periods, the school will work with the observer to find another mutually agreeable time for the observation.
4. The school will also discuss with the parent and/or designee in advance of the observation a reasonable time allotment for the observation. The observer will be permitted to observe both academic and non-academic activities, if requested. Observation times will be determined on an individual basis depending on the circumstances of the particular student and/or program to be observed.
5. Boston Renaissance Charter Public School is responsible to ensure the safety of its students at all times. If, in the opinion of the school, the observation threatens to compromise the safety of the

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students in the observed program, the integrity of the program during the observation, or if there is the threat of disclosure by the observer of confidential or personally identifiable information he or she may obtain while observing the program, the school may impose reasonable limitations and restrictions on the observation. The school will discuss these concerns with the observer prior to the observation and the school will make reasonable efforts to work with the observer around these issues to ensure a safe and productive observation. Any limitations and restrictions imposed pursuant to this paragraph will be done on a case by case basis.

6. Boston Renaissance Charter Public School may exercise its discretion at any time to reschedule or terminate an observation in the event of a building emergency or a disruption that impacts the physical or emotional well-being of the children in the school or the program being observed.

## Field Trips

Field trips for specific educational purposes will be planned by classroom teachers in collaboration with the School Director. The teacher will send a notice home prior to each field trip. This notice will include the place, time and date of the field trip and the transportation that will be used, if necessary. If for any reason a parent/guardian does not wish his/her child to participate, arrangements will be made for the student to remain in school with another teacher. Students are expected to follow classroom rules of conduct while on field trips. In the event that the school team believes they will need additional support on a field trip, a staff member will reach out to arrange a parent/guardian chaperone for that student. School disciplinary policy and procedures will be in effect. All students attending a field trip are expected to wear the school uniform. A child may be excluded from a field trip for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to dress code violations, and inappropriate behavior. All adult volunteers are required to have a CORI form filled out and approved before they can attend a field trip.

## Homework Policy

We believe that the home to school partnership is crucial for academic and social-emotional growth. As a school community, we work to create developmentally appropriate practices that support students in school and at home.

**Lower School:** At each grade level, we offer enrichment activities for families to reinforce foundational skills and concepts at home. Each night, we encourage families to discuss their scholar's day (*What did you learn? What are you proud of? How can you grow and improve tomorrow?*), read together and discuss (*in any language*), and practice foundational skills in various content areas (*math, science, social studies, social skill building*). All students should read, or be read to, for 20 minutes each night. Classrooms will send out suggested grade level specific activities. Additionally, we will use data to create a homework focus that supports the scholar's growth in meeting grade level standards. If you find that the suggested activities are not appropriate for your child, please call the classroom teacher to discuss. Homework is not mandatory or graded.

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## Upper School:

Content learning becomes increasingly more rigorous in upper grades and additional time at home spent practicing and reviewing will have a positive impact on your child's academic success. Students entering 3rd grade will be shifting to complete homework as expected by their classroom teachers. All homework is developmentally appropriate to reinforce previously learned content and skills. All 4-6 grade students will receive homework which will be reflected in their overall classroom grade. Upper school students are expected to achieve higher overall performance and demonstrate responsible decision-making. We believe this policy will support our scholars to feel successful. Any questions on homework should be addressed with your child's classroom teacher.

## **Promotion, Attendance, Absence, & Tardiness Policies**

### Promotion Policy

This policy was developed to complement the expectations and requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School. BRCPS reserves the right to retain any student who does not meet the grade level standards set by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Boston Renaissance Public Charter School. Students failing two or more core subject areas for the year are in jeopardy of being retained.

Families and school staff are encouraged to work together to support and develop the necessary skills of our children, to meet and surpass the requirements for promotion to the next grade.

### Attendance

Excellent attendance and school success go hand in hand. Therefore, parents and educators are required to make every effort to ensure that students are attending school regularly.

### Absence Policy

If a student is going to be absent, parents must call the school at 617-357-0900 and report their student's absence to the classroom teacher by 8:30 am. However, parents must also submit a note to the Main Office after each day the student is absent. It is also acceptable to inform the teacher of the student's absence by email. Written notes and emails must include the date of the absence, the reason for the absence, a phone number for the parent/guardian, and the parent/guardian's signature. Documentation may be submitted to the classroom teacher's email or the Main Office at [mainoffice@brcps.school](mailto:mainoffice@brcps.school). If possible, notify the school in advance of your child's absence. **Please be advised, students with three or more consecutive absences must provide documentation from a medical provider.** Please be aware that students with three (3) or more unexcused absences in a trimester or twelve (12) or more unexcused absences for the year are considered to be in violation of this policy and are subject to the consequences listed below.

➤ Here are a few examples of excused absences:

- An illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school

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- A death in the family or other significant crisis
- Court appearances
- Medical or psychological tests during the school day
- Religious holidays
- Disability related absences
- Other extraordinary situations as approved by the Director's

Some parents think that any absence will be excused as long as the parent sends a note. **This is not accurate.** Here are a few examples of unexcused absences—even if the parent sends a note:

- Repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a health care provider verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
- Family vacation / Trip to the homeland / Extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar.
- Parent/Guardian illness

## **Tardy Policy**

Students arriving at BRCPS after 7:50 AM are considered “late” and will be marked tardy in the attendance register. In order to be considered present for the day the student must sign in with a tardy slip at the main office. **Students arriving after 12:00 PM will be marked absent for the day.**

Students that are tardy nine (9) or more times in a trimester or twenty-four (24) or more times in the year are considered to be in violation of this policy and will be subject to the potential consequences listed below.

The only acceptable excuse for being tardy is a medical appointment or family emergency. Proof of the medical appointment must be submitted with the tardy slip.

## **Early Dismissal Requests, Family Vacations, & Non-Adherence of Attendance Policies**

### **Early Dismissal/Change in Dismissal Policy**

Students should attend school all day, every day. Doctor's appointments and other outside-of-school obligations should be arranged for after-school hours or on weekends whenever possible. In a case of an emergency or extenuating circumstance, and in case a child must be dismissed earlier than the prescribed school hour a parent must send a note to school which includes the critical reason for the early dismissal, the time the student should be dismissed, and a telephone number that can be used to verify the note that day. Requests for early dismissal should be for emergencies, only. **Students are not permitted to be regularly dismissed at an earlier time.**

It is imperative that parents keep a consistent dismissal routine. Frequent changes in dismissal may cause confusion for students and teachers and pose a safety risk. **All dismissal changes must be made prior to 12:00PM. No requests for a dismissal change will be granted after this time.** This gives the school adequate time to coordinate the change.

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**Excessive early dismissals and changes in dismissal are considered to be in violation of this policy and are subject to the consequences listed below.**

## **Family Vacation**

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking students on family vacations while school is in session. Please plan your vacations around the standard vacations of December, February, April and Summer. **Please be advised, all absences due to family vacations will be recorded as unexcused.**

## **Non-adherence to the attendance policy of BRCPS will include the following steps:**

1. Classroom teacher reaches out to check on student absence
2. Parents/guardians will be contacted to discuss the frequency of absences.
3. An attendance warning letter will be mailed home
4. A Director will call to discuss chronic attendance concerns and schedule a meeting.

## **Consequences for Violation of Attendance Policy**

- Your child will receive a failing grade for the current trimester
- Your child may be retained in their current grade for the following school year
- Your child may be referred to outside agencies such Boston Juvenile Court for Truancy or DCF (Department of Children and Families)

## **Media & Solicitation**

### **Media**

The news media will be interested in what is happening at our school and we welcome their attention. Photographers, reporters, and news commentators will from time to time visit us. We may also wish to publish examples of student projects, photos of students, and other work on a World Wide Web server accessible through the Internet.

### **Solicitation**

School regulations prohibit solicitation during school hours on school grounds of or by individual staff or students for membership in, contributions to, or purchases in support of any charitable organization or association, which has not been approved by the Head of School as a school fund-raising activity.

### **Confidentiality**

Laws involving privacy and confidentiality prohibit any school employee from giving names, addresses or telephone numbers of students, parents or staff to anyone without appropriate authorization.

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## Acceptable Use Policy for Technology Resources

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School provides technology resources to its students and staff for educational and administrative purposes. The use of technology resources (including, but not limited to, computer facilities and services, desktop and laptop computers, mobile devices, networks, the internet, electronic mail, and electronic information and data) at the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School is a privilege, not a right. All adult users of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School technology resources must submit a signed Acceptable Use Policy form to gain access to such technology resources. Students of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School must submit an Acceptable Use Policy signed by the student's parent or guardian to gain access to the school's technology resources. Inappropriate use of these resources will result in cancellation of these privileges and may result in appropriate legal action as well as school disciplinary action.

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School is a public entity, therefore, all records (except those specifically excluded by law), whether in electronic or hardcopy form, are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and open to public inspection. Copies of all information created, sent or retrieved may be stored on the computer network's backup files. Technology resource storage areas (including back-up and user files) will be treated like school lockers may be subject to inspection. Internet (email) messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images may be subject to applicable law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. Technology resource administrators may review communications (email, attachments, and files) to maintain integrity and ensure that users are using the system in a responsible manner. Users should not assume that uses of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School technology resources are private. All users are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential.

Use of any information obtained via email, the Internet or other sources is at the risk of the user. Boston Renaissance Charter Public School specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet.

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School uses a filtering system as a tool to try and prevent access to any online material deemed inappropriate.

### **RULES:**

#### **1. Unacceptable use of Technology Resources includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- Using email or the Internet for non-academic reasons while at school
- Visiting inappropriate websites (i.e. music lyric sites, social networking, or chat rooms that do not contain information related to academics)
- Using personal email accounts such as "hotmail" or any instant messaging
- Displaying inappropriate material on a computer screen (especially backgrounds and screensavers)
- Playing music, CDs, DVDs, or portable music devices at school, unless they are being used for a class project
- Downloading music and/or videos



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- Using the School Network for illegal activity including, but not limited to, violation of copyright or plagiarism
- Using the computer or other technology resources without supervision
- Placing software or external data on any computer, whether stand-alone or networked, without permission from a member of the Technology Department
- Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state law or regulation
- Submitting, publishing or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, racially offensive, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, or threatening materials or messages either public or private
- Knowingly placing a computer virus on a computer or the network
- Attempting to or harming equipment, materials or data
- Attempting to or sending anonymous messages of any kind
- Sharing of network passwords
- Wasting of limited resources such as disk space or printing capacity
- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to programs or equipment
- Exhibiting any other action that would in any way subject the user or the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School to any civil or criminal action
- Cell phone usage

## 2. **Access to Technology Resources**

Access to the school's technology resources will be governed as follows:

- Students will have access to the technology resources for class assignments and research with their teacher's permission and/or supervision
- Users will be required to maintain password confidentiality by not sharing their password with others
- Any technology resource user identified as a security risk or having violated Boston Renaissance Charter Public School's Acceptable Use Policy for Technology Resources may be denied access to the system

## 3. **Individual User Responsibilities**

The following standards will apply to all users of the school's technology resources:

- The individual student whether working alone or in a group classroom setting will be responsible at all times for the proper use of technology resources
- The system may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any other activity prohibited by the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School Discipline Policy
- System users are asked to purge electronic mail or outdated files on a regular basis.
- System users are responsible for making sure they do not violate any copyright laws, copies of which may be found in the library

## 4. **Vandalism Prohibited**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy BRCPS equipment or materials, data of another user of the BRCPS system, or any of the agencies or other networks to which BRCPS has access is prohibited.

Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of BRCPS guidelines and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses.

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Vandalism as defined above will result in the cancellation of system use privileges, possible prosecution, and will **require restitution** for costs associated with system restoration, hardware, or software costs.

## **5. Forgery Prohibited**

Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic messages is prohibited. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users or deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.

## **6. Network Etiquette**

System users are expected to observe the following network etiquette:

- Use appropriate language: swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and any other inflammatory language is prohibited
- Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is prohibited
- Submitting, publishing or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, racially offensive, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, or threatening materials or messages either public or private
- Revealing such personal information as addresses or phone numbers of users or others is prohibited
- Using the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by other users is prohibited

## **7. Consequences of Inappropriate or Unethical Use**

- Termination/Revocation of System User Account
- Violations are subject to school disciplinary action as well as appropriate legal action. The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School reserves its right to seek restitution from any user for costs incurred by the school, including legal fees, due to such user's inappropriate use of the school's technology resources.
- The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of its computer systems and networks.

## **Acceptable Use of Technology Resources for Students**

I have received a copy of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School's Policy regarding the Use of Technology Resources (the "Policy").

I have read and understand the rules set out in the policy.

I understand and have explained to my child that he/she may only use the school's technology resources if he/she obeys all of the rules set out in the policy.

I understand and have explained to my child that he/she may only use the school's technology resources for purposes related to his/her schoolwork.

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I understand that although the school uses a filtering system to prevent access over the Internet to material inappropriate for children, I also understand that no filtering system is perfect, and that my child may therefore gain access to inappropriate material.

I understand and agree that I will not hold the school responsible if my child should gain access to materials inappropriate for children.

By signing the signature page on page 48, I give my child permission to use technology resources available at the school, including Internet access.

I understand that if I do not sign this document, my child will not be permitted to use the school's technology resources, including Internet access.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Parent/Family signature page (page 61) acknowledges that the parent has read the entire handbook and understands its contents including the Acceptable Use Policy for students.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

Boston Renaissance promotes and utilizes the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework to support all students in learning behaviors conducive to a successful and safe school environment. PBIS is an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting *students'* behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health. When implemented with fidelity, PBIS improves social emotional competence, academic success, and school climate. It is a way to create positive, predictable, equitable and safe learning environments where everyone thrives. Boston Renaissance is committed to the ongoing support of students, educators, and families through identifying and reinforcing positive behaviors. Through implementing with parent and family guidance, students experience improved behavioral, social, emotional, and academic outcomes; schools and programs reduce their use of exclusionary discipline practices and improve their overall climate. All students will be able to earn STAR Tickets for displaying the Boston Renaissance Core Values and Core Actions, *Be safe, Be respectful, Be responsible*. Students will be explicitly taught what these actions look like within each location of the school building and grounds, including the school bus. Students who earn STAR tickets will receive individual, class, and whole school incentives throughout the year for displaying positive behavior.

## **SCHOOL BASED RULES**

*Grades K1-Grade 2*

The school recognizes the complexity and range of problems that are associated with children ages 4 to 8 and their behaviors in a school setting. The policies herein and the considerations given to students and parents are respectful and at the same time expect that all students and parents pay equal respect to other school community members, including other students and parents, teachers, bus drivers and monitors, administrators and all other school staff.

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In general, students are always expected to comply with the acceptable modes of behavior while in any school setting, including classrooms, cafeteria, assembly areas, tutoring stations, stairwells, hallways, and school buses.

Unacceptable behavior includes but is not limited to:

- ❖ **Disruption of learning, in any setting including throwing things, screaming, running around the classroom etc.**
- ❖ **Threats to safety of oneself or others, including hitting, biting, kicking etc.**
- ❖ **Inappropriate (obscene, threatening, disrespectful) language or gestures.**
- ❖ **Disrespectful behavior or language towards adults or other students.**
- ❖ **Destruction of property or theft.**
- ❖ **Possession of any dangerous device or illegal substance.**

Part of the discipline process is to review the aberrant action or behavior with the student and attempt to teach the student how to make better choices in the future. Consequences are also a necessary part of any discipline code.

BRCPS follows progressive discipline practices. The following progressive steps are taken where students need to be redirected inside or outside the classroom for K1, K2, Grades 1 and 2:

## **Grades K1 and K2**

- ❖ Warning from a teacher or staff person.
- ❖ Use of calming area within the classroom, with optional classroom-based consequence (no more than 3-5 minutes).
- ❖ Use of a calming area in a neighboring classroom, with optional classroom-based consequences for up to 10 minutes. Children should bring a learning task with them to the neighboring classroom. If a child is upset, teachers will have the children fill out a feeling/thinking sheet.
- ❖ Use of calming area with a parent notification by the Student Support Specialist with optional classroom or school based management.
- ❖ If students report to the Student Support Specialist numerous times within one school day for any disruptive or unacceptable behavior he or she is subject to a suspension.
- ❖ In more serious cases, such as hitting, kicking, biting or destruction of property, a student may be suspended from school by the Student Support Specialist or the Directors.
- ❖ Students may be subject to suspension or expulsion for possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28).
- ❖ Students may be subject to suspension for a felony charge or subject to expulsion for a felony conviction pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H ½ (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H ½ on page 30).

These progressive steps are a guideline for school administrators. The administration, however, reserves its right to impose appropriate disciplinary consequences for student misconduct. Our goal is to work in partnership with families to ensure that all students get what they need to be successful in the classroom/school setting. This may look different for each child. Parents are required to support the school policies by reinforcing our efforts in maintaining a safe, structured and positive learning environment for all school community members. Teachers are instructed to contact parents whenever

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they see a child struggling academically or behaviorally. Parents are encouraged to keep a child's teacher up to date on anything social, emotional, physical or medical in the child's life that may affect school performance.

## **Grades 1 and 2**

Part of the discipline process is to review the aberrant action or behavior with the student and attempt to teach the student how to make better choices in the future. Consequences are also a necessary part of any discipline code.

The following progressive steps are taken when students need to be redirected inside or outside the classroom:

- ❖ Step 1: Warning from a teacher or staff person.
- ❖ Step 2: Use of calming area within the classroom, with optional classroom-based consequence.
- ❖ Step 3: Use of calming area in a neighboring classroom, with optional classroom-based consequence.
- ❖ Step 4: Use of calming area with parent notification by Student Support Specialist, with optional classroom- or school-based consequence. Incident report written if removed.
- ❖ Step 5: Student sent to Student Support Specialist and an incident report is written (possible suspension). Incident report written if removed.
- ❖ Step 6: Suspension Warning, Suspension or Expulsion of the student from school in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws.

These progressive steps are a guideline for school administrators. The administration, however, reserves its right to impose appropriate disciplinary consequences for student misconduct. Parents are required to support the school policies by reinforcing our efforts in maintaining a safe, structured and positive learning environment for all school community members. Teachers are instructed to contact parents whenever they see a child struggling academically or behaviorally. Parents are encouraged to keep teachers up-to-date on anything social, emotional, physical, or medical in a child's life that may affect school performance.

## **Suspension Offenses: (all grades)**

- Repeated disrespect to school staff
- Repeated disruption to classroom environment
- Hurting any other person or threatening to do so
- Coming to school with a dangerous object of no reasonable use
- Damaging or stealing private or school property, or threatening to do so
- Sexually harassing another person
- Using racial slurs, profanity, or obscene language or gestures through verbal, written, or electronic communication
- Being in an unauthorized area of the building
- Leaving school or class without permission
- Failure to serve an assigned detention
- Physical aggression including fighting

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- Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28)
- Assault on a Director, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games. pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28 )
- Issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½ on page 30)

## **Expulsion Offense: (all grades)**

- Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28)
- Assault on a Director, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28)
- Being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71§37H ½ (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½ on page 30)

***This is not an all-inclusive list of offenses. The Director or School Safety & Security will determine if a given action by a student will result in detention, suspension or expulsion.***

As you may be aware, there are strong state and federal protections around student record information. These protections extend not only to grades and work assignments, but also to any record that the school maintains where a student is identified or identifiable. The Renaissance strives to maintain compliance with these laws to ensure that no student information is ever shared inappropriately. It is for this reason that the Renaissance may, from time to time, be constrained with regard to information that can be shared about school events or incidents that involve other students. Parents and families will always be informed of any issue affecting their student directly and will be provided as much information as is appropriate under the circumstances. In the event that there is ever a threat or concern regarding the entire student body, all families will be notified.

## **SCHOOL-BASED RULES**

### *GRADES (3-6)*

Boston Renaissance Public Charter School recognizes the complexity and range of problems that are associated with student behaviors in school settings. The policies herein and the considerations given to students and parents are respectful and at the same time demand that all students and parents pay equal respect to other school community members, including other students and parents, teachers, bus drivers and monitors, administrators and all other school staff.

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Students are always expected to conform to acceptable modes of behavior while in any school setting, including classrooms, cafeteria, assembly areas, tutoring, stairwells, hallways, after school programs, school buses, and while on all field trips.

Generally, unacceptable behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Disruption of learning, in any setting
- Threats to safety of oneself or others
- Inappropriate (obscene, threatening, disrespectful) language or gestures
- Disrespectful behavior or language towards adults or other students
- Destruction of property or theft
- Possession of any dangerous device or substance
- Physical aggression including fighting

The following is a specific list of offenses that may result in detention, suspension or expulsion. All students are held accountable for their own behavior in school and while commuting to and from school.

Detention Offenses:

- Showing disrespect to school staff
- Repeated refusal to follow directions
- Repeated disruption of class
- Insulting others
- Being out of class without a signed and dated pass
- Inappropriate language
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Disregard for School Dress Code
- Possession of electronics (e.g. cell phones, iPad, video games, etc.)
- Leaving Supervision

Suspension Offenses:

- Physical fighting
- Consistent disrespect to school staff
- Consistent disruption to classroom environment
- Hurting another person or threatening to do so
- Threatening another student with a weapon
- Bringing to school a dangerous object of no reasonable use
- Damaging or stealing private or school property, or threatening to do so
- Sexually harassing another person
- Using racial slurs, profanity, or obscene language or gestures through verbal, written, or electronic communication
- Being in an unauthorized area of the building
- Leaving school or class without permission
- Failure to serve an assigned detention
- Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 27 )

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- Assault on a Director, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games. pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28)
- Issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½ on page 28)

## **Expulsion Offense: (all grades)**

- Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 27 )
- Assault on a Director, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28)
- Being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H ½ (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½ on page 28)

This is not an all-inclusive list of offenses. The Head of School, Director, or Student Support Specialist will determine if a given action by a student will result in detention, suspension or expulsion.

## Detention

The Upper School's Detention System facilitates detentions for students who violate the Code of Discipline in grades 3-6. An arrangement of Detention is mandatory and must be served within 36 hours of parent notification. Failure of a student to serve a school based detention may result in additional day(s) of detention being assigned, or in-school suspension if multiple days of detention are missed.

Staff will contact a family member the day a detention is assigned. The staff member will state the facts of the incident and the action(s) to be taken. **The school will not provide transportation if detention is served after school.** If there is an after school detention given, students must be picked up no later than 4:15 PM. Students picked up earlier than the designated time of 4:15 PM will have to serve their detention the next day. Students picked up later than 4:15 PM will be assessed a charge based on the parameters used by our regular After-School program.

## **For Afterschool Detention only:**

Detention Room rules are as follows:

- ❖ **Students must report to the Detention Room by 3:10PM.**
- ❖ **Students must bring homework lessons or a book to read.**
- ❖ **Students are expected to sit quietly and complete their work.**
- ❖ **Students must stay in the Detention Room, unless permission is given.**

**The aforementioned rules are non-negotiable.**



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As you may be aware, there are strong state and federal protections around student record information. These protections extend not only to grades and work assignments, but also to any record that the school maintains where a student is identified or identifiable. The Renaissance strives to maintain compliance with these laws to ensure that no student information is ever shared inappropriately. It is for this reason that the Renaissance may, from time to time, be constrained with regard to information that can be shared about school events or incidents that involve other students. Parents and families will always be informed of any issue affecting their student directly and will be provided as much information as is appropriate under the circumstances. In the event that there is ever a threat or concern regarding the entire student body, all families will be notified.

## Discipline Process

Part of the discipline process is to review the aberrant action or behavior with the student and attempt to teach the student how to make better choices in the future. Consequences are also a necessary part of any discipline code. The following progressive steps are suggested when a student needs to be redirected inside or outside the classroom:

Step 1: Staff redirection and Tier 1 intervention, with optional classroom-based consequence.

Step 2: Staff redirection and Tier 1 intervention, with optional classroom-based consequence.

Step 3: Staff redirection and Tier 2 intervention referral, parent notification by a staff member, optional Student Support based consequence (**alternative behavioral support, reflection lunch(LS) or detention (US Only)**).

Step 4: Student sent to Student Support Specialist and an incident report is written (**alternative behavioral support, loss of privilege, detention, or suspension**).

Parents are required to support the school policies by reinforcing our efforts in maintaining a safe, structured and positive learning environment for all school community members. Teachers are instructed to contact parents whenever they see a child struggling academically or behaviorally. Parents are encouraged to keep a child's teacher up to date on anything social, emotional, physical or medical in the child's life that may affect school performance. It is most helpful to teachers and administrators to know when a child is troubled or challenged.

## Discipline Procedures

BRCPS believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents in their preferred language.

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Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation. The Superintendent shall ensure that all notifications and materials pertinent to this policy are shared with students and/or their family members in their preferred language. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

## **Suspension**

“Short term suspension” is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for 10 consecutive days or less.

“Long term suspension” means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than 10 consecutive days, or for more than 10 days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

A suspended student is restricted from entering the school buildings or coming onto school grounds; and a suspended student may not participate in any school sponsored activities or functions during the suspension period. It is also recommended that parents restrict the activities of a student during the suspension period to reinforce the importance of the disciplinary consequence and to demonstrate cooperation between the school and family.

The principal or their designee has the sole responsibility for determining who is suspended. The suspended student may not be permitted to return to school until a parent conference is held.

## **Alternative remedies**

Whenever an incident of student misconduct occurs that does not involve a violation of M.G.L. c. 71, 37H or 37H ½, when deciding the consequences for the student, the principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. The principal shall not issue a short-term or long-term suspension or expulsion until alternative remedies in direct response to a specific incident or incidents have been employed and their use and results are documented, unless:

- specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, or
- when the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school.

Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to:

- mediation

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- conflict resolution
- restorative justice; and
- collaborative problem solving

Documentation of alternative remedies must describe the alternative remedies, the results of these efforts, and for instances when suspension is used, the reasons that alternative remedies would be unsuitable or counter-productive, or specific concern about serious bodily injury or other serious harm being inflicted upon another person while the student is in school.

Implementation of a school-wide model to re-engage students in the learning process shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the school may remove a student on an emergency basis without employing alternative remedies in accordance with the guidelines and procedures regarding emergency removals.

## **Emergency Removal**

The principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal.

In the event of an emergency removal, the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal. The principal shall provide written notice to the student and parent as provided above and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal as provided above, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.

The principal shall render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements as described above.

In the event of an emergency removal from school, the principal will not release the student until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

## **In-School Suspension**

At the discretion of the principal, in-school suspension may be imposed where a student is determined to have committed a suspendable offense as an alternative to short-term suspension. In-school suspension means the student is removed from the regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for no more than 10 consecutive days. Students will be subject to limitations on their movements and activities

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as determined by the principal. In-school suspension for less than 10 days shall be considered a short-term suspension. An in-school suspension of more than 10 days shall be deemed a long-term suspension.

For an in-school suspension, the principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the students' in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parents orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior.

Such meetings shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for the purpose of informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal if such a meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivered, certified mail, first class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

## **Short-term Suspension**

Prior to imposing a short-term suspension for conduct not covered by M.G.L. c. 71 37H and 37H 1/2, the following procedures will be followed:

1. **Notice**: The parent and student must both receive oral and written notice. The written notice will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, and sent by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, and any other method of delivery agreed to by the school and parent. Such written notices will include the following:
  - a. the disciplinary offense;
  - b. the basis for the charge;
  - c. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
  - d. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
  - e. the date, time, and location of the hearing; and

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- f. the student and parent's right to interpreter services at the hearing if necessary.
2. **Efforts to Involve Parents**: The principal will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent of the opportunity to attend the hearing. The principal must document that the principal has sent written notice and has made at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification in order to conduct a hearing without the parent present.
3. **Format of Hearing**: The principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student. Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what alternative remedy or consequence will be imposed.
4. **Decision**: The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

## **Long Term Suspension**

Prior to imposing a long-term suspension for conduct not covered by M.G.L. c. 71 37H and 37H 1/2, the following procedures will be followed:

1. In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, student rights prior to the disciplinary hearing include:
  - a. the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
  - b. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
  - c. the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
  - d. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
  - e. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio recording will be made, and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
2. The written determination following the disciplinary hearing shall:

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- a. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- b. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached;
- c. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- d. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive educational services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school; and
- e. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Executive Director, the procedure required to make the appeal (see "Appeals" below), and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect until and unless the Executive Director decides to reverse the principal's determination. Notice of the right to appeal will be in English and in the primary language of the home.

The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

If the student is suspended for more than 10 days for a single infraction or for more than 10 days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the notice will include written notification of the right to appeal to the Superintendent and the process for appealing in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home. No student will be suspended for greater than 90 days, beginning on the first day the student is removed from the building.

**Due process rights for students who have been charged with possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on school staff, and/or students who have been charged with or convicted of a felony (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½).**

**Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions:** Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less, the student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond. In the event that the principal or designee determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and in writing.

**Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions:** Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parents/guardians will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, a written decision will be issued.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long-term suspension or expulsion from school to the Superintendent. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L.

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c. 71, §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76, §17, M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ½.

## **Expulsion under MGL c. 71 s. 37H and 37H 1/2**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school indefinitely or permanently as allowed by law under MGL c. 71 s. 37H and MGL c. 71 s. 37H 1/2 for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student alleged to have committed one of these acts shall be afforded the same due process rights as for a long-term suspension. Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

## **Superintendent's hearing:**

The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion to submit a written request for an appeal to the Superintendent but may be granted an extension of time of up to 7 calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent will hold a hearing with the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) within 3 school days or the student's request for an appeal. The time may be extended up to 7 calendar days if requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s). The Superintendent's hearing may proceed without the parent(s)/guardian(s) if a good faith effort was made to include parent(s)/guardian(s). The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

At the hearing, the superintendent shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. Students shall have all of the rights afforded to students at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension. The Superintendent will issue a written decision within 5 calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The Superintendent's decision is the final decision of the district.

## **Academic Progress**

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Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of their removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide Education Service Plan (*see p. 50*).

The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

## **Discipline of Students with Disabilities (Includes students currently on 504 accommodation plans or Individual Educational Program).**

In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding



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ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.
2. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her/their program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or ten (10) cumulative school days in a given school year, building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination). During disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to receive services identified as necessary to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion.
3. If building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP team or 504 Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
4. If building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent/guardians consent to a new placement, or unless the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The Student's Team shall also review the student's IEP, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavioral intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.
5. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational placement (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA hearing officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.

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## **Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education**

1. If prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
  - a. The parent/guardian had expressed concern in writing: or
  - b. The parent/guardian had requested an evaluation: or
  - c. School district staff had expressed concern that the student had a disability.
2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent/guardian requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures to conduct an evaluation to determine eligibility. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.
3. The school district has developed procedures consistent with the federal requirements to expedite evaluations.

## **Reporting**

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

## **School-Wide Education Service Plan:**

While under an in-school suspension, a short-term suspension, a long-term suspension, or expulsion, students will have the opportunity to make academic progress. The principal will inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing any time a suspension or expulsion is imposed. Students will be provided with an opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, and make up assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of the student's removal from the classroom.

The educational services will be based on and provided in a manner consistent with academic standards for all students. Students and parents will be notified in writing about this opportunity, in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, any time a suspension or expulsion is imposed.

For students who are suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive days or who are expelled, BRCPS has developed a school-wide **Education Service Plan**. The Education Service Plan may include, but is not limited to:

- a. tutoring,
- b. alternative placement,

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c. online or distance learning.

The principal shall send a list of alternative educational services to students and parents of students who are expelled or have received a long-term suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The principal shall document the enrollment of every such student in education services, and shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and other data as required for data reporting purposes. The notice will include a list of the specific education services available to the student and the contact information of the appropriate School Director who can provide additional information.

If the student withdraws from BRCPS and/or moves to another school during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school or district of residence shall either admit the student to its school or provide educational services to the student under the new district's or school's education service plan.

As required by M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the following statutory language is provided: Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

## **Bus Transportation Discipline Policy**

School rules are in effect as soon as the child leaves home for school until the child returns home or to the designated drop-off at the end of the day. Riding a school bus to school is a privilege, not a right and those privileges can and will be suspended or terminated in the event of inappropriate behavior.

Parents/Guardians, please take time to review our discipline procedures that support the rules of bus safety policy included in the student handbook. All school rules and consequences are in effect while students ride the buses to and from school.

If your child violates the school Code of Discipline while riding the bus, the steps of progressive discipline will be as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> offense will result in a **warning or 1-day suspension from the morning and afternoon** bus after a full investigation has been completed. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing and by phone regarding said warning or suspension.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense will result in a **1 to 3-day suspension from the morning and afternoon** bus after a full investigation has been completed. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing and by phone regarding said suspension.

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3<sup>rd</sup> offense will result in a **3 to 5-day suspension from the morning and afternoon** bus after a full investigation has been completed. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing and by phone regarding said suspension.

4<sup>th</sup> offense will result in a **5 to 10-day suspension from the morning and afternoon** bus after a full investigation has been completed. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing and by phone regarding said suspension. Parents/guardians will be notified in the event of an additional infraction, the student will be permanently excluded from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.

5<sup>th</sup> offense will result in the student being **permanently excluded from riding the morning and afternoon** bus for the remainder of the school year after a full investigation has been completed. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing, in person meeting will be held or by phone if unavailable to meet regarding said suspension.

**Please note that the nature of some offenses may require immediate suspension and/or permanent exclusion from the bus. Additionally, the nature of some offenses will require suspension from school as well as the bus.**

*At no time during a student's suspension and/or exclusion from the bus, will the BRCPS provide transportation to and from school.*

## **Bullying & Cyberbullying**

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This new law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements will be included in the school's or district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan"), which was finalized in December 2010. The Plan includes the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs. In developing the Plan, BRCPS consulted with school and local community members, including parents and guardians.

### **Definitions**

*Aggressor* is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

*Bullying* is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for

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the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

*Cyberbullying* is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

*Hostile environment* is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

*Target* is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is directed.

*Retaliation* is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

## **Prohibition Against Bullying**

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds,
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a school computer or over the Internet using a school computer),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic devices, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

## **Reporting Bullying**

BRCPS expects students, parents, or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation to report it to the students' Homebase Teacher, Student Support Specialist, Director or other staff member. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of a report. Student Support Specialist will fully investigate all reported incident(s) of bullying before rendering disciplinary action, consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. Students, parents or guardians,

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and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical safe and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, Director or school designee.

When the School Director or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the School Director or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of the aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school Director or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

## **BRCPS Procedure**

The Bullying Prevention policy will prohibit bullying based on sexual orientation, along with other characteristics, such as race, religion, sex and physical appearance. Incidents of bullying may, in addition to being a violation of this policy, constitute a violation of civil rights laws including but not limited to Title II, Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504. Please see the anti-discrimination/harassment policies of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School for further information.

Student(s) identified for bullying will receive consequences and incident reports of bullying will be documented in detail in iPass. Student will be escorted to the Director or School designee's office.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense of confirmed bullying will result in Detention for students in third through sixth grade. K1 through second grade students will receive a suspension warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense of confirmed bullying will result in 3 day Suspension followed by a meeting with parent upon return to school
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense of confirmed bullying will result in 5 day Suspension

## **Professional Development for School and District Staff**

**A.** Annual staff training on the Plan. Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the Director or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.

**B.** Ongoing professional development. The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of the tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- (i) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- (ii) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take

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place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;  
(iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;

*(v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.*

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

Additional areas identified by the school for professional development include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

C. Written notice to staff and school community. The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School has posted the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan on our website:

<https://www.bostonrenaissance.org/> under Family Resources.

## Notification of Rights under FERPA

### Elementary and Secondary Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School Director [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the School Director [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the

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record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

[Optional] Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the *School District* to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

**Family Policy Compliance Office**  
**US Department of Education**  
**400 Maryland Avenue**  
**S.W. Washington, DC 20202-4605.**

## **Title 1 - Parent Involvement Policy**

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School welcomes the participation of parents in support of student learning and recognizes that parent involvement increases the opportunities for student success. It is the policy of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School to foster and maintain ongoing communication with parents concerning their opportunities for involvement, their children's eligibility for special programs, their children's educational process, the professional qualifications of their children's teachers, and the status of their children's school. The Parent Involvement Policy of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School was developed in conjunction with staff and parents of the school to support student academic achievement and strengthen the home-school relationship.

The parents and staff have outlined the following to meet our parent involvement goals:

1. An annual parent meeting will be held to inform parents of their roles in the school.



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2. Parents will be involved with the development and annual review of the school Parent Involvement Policy. The Parent Involvement Policy will be mailed yearly to parents/guardians as well as sent home with students.
3. Parents will be involved in formulating and participating in an annual evaluation of content and effectiveness of the Parent Involvement Policy and the School-Parent Compact.
4. Parents of Renaissance Executive Board members (POR) will be invited to meet regularly with School Directors to discuss issues specific to the particular school (i.e. curriculum, schedules, budget planning, school & bus safety, and discipline).
5. Maintain a Parents of Renaissance Executive Committee to provide advice on matters related to parent involvement.
6. Provide all parents/guardians, including those with limited English proficiency or disabilities opportunities to improve their skills to assist them in effectively working with their children. Opportunities will include but not be limited to: parenting classes, literacy workshops, and ELL, SPED and math workshops. All families of English learners and students with disabilities are invited and encouraged to participate in the ELPAC and SEPAC, respectively.
7. A flexible number of meetings and activities will be offered to formulate suggestions, share experiences with other parents, and participate as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of their children.
8. Parents will be asked to attend at least two Parents of Renaissance Meetings (POR) meetings each year.
9. The dissemination of information relevant to Title 1 and student achievement will be distributed through means such as, but not limited to: Back to School Night, Title 1 annual meeting, Student/Teacher conferences and/or the student handbook.
10. The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School will provide parents/guardians the following:
  - An annual meeting to provide information about the Title 1 program.
  - School performance reports.
  - Parent/teacher conferences to include individual student education plans
  - Child's assessment results.
  - Opportunities for regular meetings related to the education of their children.
  - Information on the right of parents to request information regarding the qualifications of their child's teachers.

If you would like to become involved in the planning, evaluation or implementation of the Title 1 program, please contact Tamairi Rivera at extension 1124

# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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## SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

As **staff** at the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

We agree to:

As a **parent** of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

✓ Come to school prepared to teach every day.

As a **student** of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

✓ Show respect for all students and parents.

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| ✓ Provide opportunities for Parents to participate in school activities   | completed daily and to provide study time in a quiet place.  | ✓ Come to school prepared <u>ready</u> to learn, with provided supplies and wearing the school uniform. |
| ✓ Show appreciation for individual differences of students.   | ✓ Check with my child daily about information that is sent home.   | ✓ Show respect for all staff members and students at BRCPS.   |
| ✓ Improve the performance of every child in the areas of vocabulary, phonemic awareness, listening, speaking, writing, and reading comprehension.                                 | ✓ Help my child to accept that there are consequences for negative behavior.   | ✓ Know that I can learn, and that I will learn.   |
| ✓ Improve the mathematical performance in the areas of problem solving and math concepts.   | ✓ Support school discipline code as outlined in the code of conduct  | ✓ Ask for help when I don't understand.   |
| ✓ Provide frequent assessment and continuous feedback on how your child is progressing both academically and socially and provide the opportunity for parent/teacher conferences. | ✓ Respond to teacher communication within twenty-four hours.   | ✓ Listen to and follow directions.  |
| ✓ Provide a safe and orderly school environment.  | ✓ See that my child is dressed daily in accordance with the school uniform policy. Agree to purchase uniform shirt(s) with the school logo.            | ✓ Allow the teachers/staff to help me work through my challenges.                                       |
| ✓ Respond to parent phone calls within thirty-six hours of receipt.   | ✓ Read with my child and engage in mathematical activities on a nightly basis  | ✓ Share papers with my parents and return signed papers to my teacher.                                  |
| ✓ Communicate issues/concerns to parents as they arise and in a timely manner.  | ✓ Send child to school on time and ready to learn for the full school day.   | ✓ Complete and return homework on the date that it is due.  |
| ✓ Provide an environment that allows for positive communication between the teacher, parent, and student.   | ✓ Show an interest in my child's well-being by attending school functions, supporting school activities, and making every effort to attend Open House. | ✓ Follow the student Code of Conduct.   |
| ✓ Will discuss compact with students at morning meeting prior to teacher signing and sending home.  | ✓ Attend <i>both</i> parent teacher conferences each year.   | ✓ Accept responsibility for my actions.   |
|   | ✓ Attend <i>at least two</i> Parents of Renaissance meetings   | ✓ Pay attention in class and participate in class discussion.   |
|   | ✓ Monitor the completion of vacation and summer assignments.   | ✓ Read at home with my parents.   |
|   |  | ✓ Strive for perfect attendance.  |
|   |  | ✓ Complete and return vacation and summer assignments.  |

*I agree to:*

- ✓ Show respect for All Staff and students.
- ✓ Take an active role in my child's homework to ensure that it is

*I agree to:*

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY AND PROHIBITION AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT - STUDENTS**

The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in

# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. The District's Title IX Coordinator is:

For Staff:	For Students:
Nerlande Mintor HR Director <a href="mailto:nmintor@breps.school">nmintor@breps.school</a> 617-357-0900 x1106	Sarah O'Connor Director of Student Services <a href="mailto:soconnor@breps.school">soconnor@breps.school</a> 617-357-0900 x4200

The District's Title IX Coordinator may delegate specific duties to one or more designees as the Title IX Coordinator finds appropriate.

The District's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located below. The District has adopted these grievance procedures to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints made by students, employees, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in its education program or activity, or by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or the Title IX regulations.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the procedures below.

## Definitions

Discrimination on the basis of sex includes discrimination on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Under state law, sexual harassment is sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment under Massachusetts law when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's advancement (quid pro quo harassment);
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions;
- Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties; or
- The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Under Federal law, sex-based harassment is a form of sex discrimination and means sexual harassment and other harassment on the basis of sex, including on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity, that is:

- *Quid pro quo harassment.* An employee, agent, or other person authorized by the District to provide an aid, benefit, or service under the District's education program or activity explicitly or impliedly conditioning the provision of such an aid, benefit, or service on a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

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- *Hostile environment harassment.* Unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from the District’s education program or activity (*i.e.*, creates a hostile environment). Whether a hostile environment has been created is a fact-specific inquiry that includes consideration of the following:
  - The degree to which the conduct affected the complainant’s ability to access the District’s education program or activity;
  - The type, frequency, and duration of the conduct;
  - The parties’ ages, roles within the District’s education program or activity, previous interactions, and other factors about each party that may be relevant to evaluating the effects of the conduct;
  - The location of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred; and
  - Other sex-based harassment in the District’s education program or activity.
- *Specific offenses.*
  - Sexual assault meaning an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation;
  - Dating violence meaning violence committed by a person:
    - Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
    - Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
      - The length of the relationship;
      - The type of relationship; and
      - The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship;
  - Domestic violence meaning felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a person who:
    - Is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction of the District, or a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim;
    - Is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
    - Shares a child in common with the victim; or
    - Commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction; or
- Stalking meaning engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:
  - Fear for the person’s safety or the safety of others; or
  - Suffer substantial emotional distress

The following additional definitions apply:

“Complainant” means:

- A student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its regulations; or

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- A person other than a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its regulations and who was participating or attempting to participate in the District’s education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.

“Complaint” means an oral or written request to the District that objectively can be understood as a request for the District to investigate and make a determination about alleged discrimination under Title IX or its regulations. The Title IX Coordinator will file this complaint if the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct as alleged presents an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of the complainant or other person, or that the conduct as alleged prevents the District from ensuring equal access on the basis of sex to its education program or activity. The following factors go into the decision by the Title IX Coordinator:

- The complainant’s request not to proceed with initiation of a complaint;
- The complainant’s reasonable safety concerns regarding initiation of a complaint;
- The risk that additional acts of sex discrimination would occur if a complaint is not initiated;
- The severity of the alleged sex discrimination, including whether the discrimination, if established, would require the removal of a respondent from campus or imposition of another disciplinary sanction to end the discrimination and prevent its recurrence;
- The age and relationship of the parties, including whether the respondent is an employee of the District;
- The scope of the alleged sex discrimination, including information suggesting a pattern, ongoing sex discrimination, or sex discrimination alleged to have impacted multiple individuals;
- The availability of evidence to assist a decisionmaker in determining whether sex discrimination occurred; and
- Whether the District could end the alleged sex discrimination and prevent its recurrence without initiating its grievance procedures.

“Disciplinary sanctions” means consequences imposed on a respondent following a determination under Title IX that the respondent violated the District’s prohibition on sex discrimination.

“Relevant” means related to the allegations of sex discrimination under investigation as part of these grievance procedures. Questions are relevant when they seek evidence that may aid in showing whether the alleged sex discrimination occurred, and evidence is relevant when it may aid a decisionmaker in determining whether the alleged sex discrimination occurred.

“Remedies” means measures provided, as appropriate, to a complainant or any other person the District identifies as having had their equal access to the District’s education program or activity limited or denied by sex discrimination. These measures are provided to restore or preserve that person’s access to the District’s education program or activity after a District determines that sex discrimination occurred.

“Respondent” means a person who is alleged to have violated the District’s prohibition on sex discrimination.

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“Retaliation” means intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any person by the District, a student, or an employee or other person authorized by the District to provide aid, benefit, or service under the District’s education program or activity, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or its regulations, or because the person has reported information, made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under the Title IX regulations.

“Respondent” means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

“Supportive measures” means individualized measures offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, without unreasonably burdening a complainant or respondent, not for punitive or disciplinary reasons, and without fee or charge to the complainant or respondent to:

- Restore or preserve that party’s access to the District’s education program or activity, including measures that are designed to protect the safety of the parties or the District’s educational environment; or
- Provide support during the District’s grievance procedures or during an informal resolution process.

“Parental status” means the status of a person who, with respect to another person who is under the age of 18 or who is 18 or older but is incapable of self-care because of a physical or mental disability, is:

- A biological parent;
- An adoptive parent;
- A foster parent;
- A stepparent;
- A legal custodian or guardian;
- In loco parentis with respect to such a person; or
- Actively seeking legal custody, guardianship, visitation, or adoption of such a person

“Pregnancy or related conditions” means:

- Pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation;
- Medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; or
- Recovery from pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, lactation, or related medical conditions.

## **Complaints and Reports of Sexual Harassment**

The following people have a right to make a complaint of sex discrimination, including complaints of sex-based harassment, requesting that the District investigate and make a determination about alleged discrimination under Title IX:

A “complainant,” which includes:

- a student or employee of the District who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX; or

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- a person other than a student or employee of the District who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX at a time when that individual was participating or attempting to participate in the District's education program or activity;
- A parent, guardian, or other authorized legal representative with the legal right to act on behalf of a complainant; or
- the District's Title IX Coordinator

Note that a person is entitled to make a complaint of sex-based harassment only if they themselves are alleged to have been subjected to the sex-based harassment, if they have a legal right to act on behalf of such person, or if the Title IX Coordinator initiates a complaint consistent with the requirements of 34 C.F.R. § 106.44(f)(1)(v).

With respect to complaints of sex discrimination other than sex-based harassment, in addition to the people listed above, the following persons have a right to make a complaint:

- Any student or employee of the District; or
- Any person other than a student or employee who was participating or attempting to participate in the District's education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.

The District may consolidate complaints of sex discrimination against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against another party, when the allegations of sex discrimination arise out of the same facts or circumstances. The District cannot consolidate if it would violate FERPA. Consolidation would not violate FERPA when a District obtains prior written consent from the parents or eligible students to the disclosure of their education records.

The District will address a sex-based hostile environment allegation under its education program or activity, even when some conduct alleged to be contributing to the hostile environment occurred outside the District's education program or activity or outside the United States.

## **Obligation to Report**

All employees must notify the building principal or the Title IX Coordinator when the employee has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX.

## **Informal Resolution**

In lieu of resolving a complaint through the District's Title IX grievance procedures, the parties may instead elect to participate in an informal resolution process. The District does not offer informal resolution to resolve a complaint that includes allegations that an employee engaged in sex-based harassment of an elementary school or secondary school student, or when such a process would conflict with Federal, State, or local law.

Facilitators of informal resolution will be designated by the Title IX Coordinator and must not be biased against any of the parties. Prior to beginning informal resolution, the Title IX Coordinator will send notice to the parties of the process and their rights.

Informal resolution is entirely voluntary. Parties may elect to pursue formal procedures at any step in



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the process of making their complaint, including prior to filing one.

If the complainant and the respondent feel that their grievances have been sufficiently addressed via informal resolution, then no further action needs to be taken. This voluntary conversation must occur within thirty (30) school days after receiving the allegations, unless both parties agree otherwise. The results of an informal resolution shall be maintained by the facilitator, in writing.

## **Supportive Measures**

Upon receiving actual notice of alleged sexual harassment without a formal complaint, staff members must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator must then contact the complainant within five school days of receiving the complaint and do the following:

- Discuss and offer supportive measures;
- Consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
- Explain that supportive measures may be received with or without filing a complaint;
- Determine whether the complainant wishes to file a complaint; and
- Explain to the complainant the purpose of filing a complaint.

The Title IX Coordinator must document in writing the supportive measures offered/provided or why no supportive measures were offered/provided.

A respondent will be offered supportive measures if the District has initiated a Title IX complaint or if the District has offered informal resolution. If the Title IX Coordinator is initiating the complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the complainant prior to doing so and appropriately address reasonable concerns about the complainant's safety or the safety of others, including by providing supportive measures.

Supportive measures may include counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work or housing locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures. The district must maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the District to provide the supportive measures.

If the complainant or respondent is a student with a disability, the Title IX Coordinator will consult with one or more members, as appropriate, of the student's IEP or 504 Team to determine how to comply with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794, in the implementation of supportive measures.

## **Grievance Process Overview**

During the grievance process, the District will treat complainants and respondents equally.

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the District requires that any Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decisionmaker not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. A decisionmaker may be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or investigator.

The District presumes that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged sex discrimination until a determination is made at the conclusion of its grievance procedures.

The District has established the following timeframes for the major stages of the grievance procedures:

- Within five business days, the District will decide whether to dismiss or investigate a complaint.
- Within sixty business days, the District will investigate and decide on the complaint.
- The parties will have ten calendar days to appeal a decision from the decision-maker or of a decision to dismiss the complaint. The District will decide an appeal within thirty calendar days of receipt.

The District will provide all parties with a reasonable extension of timeframes on a case-by-case basis for good cause with notice to the parties that includes the reason for the delay. If a party is seeking an extension, they should request an extension from the Title IX Coordinator in writing, explaining the reasons for the requested extension. The Title IX Coordinator will rule on the extension in writing to all parties. If the District requires an extension for good cause, it will notify all the parties of the reasons.

The District will take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of the parties and witnesses during its grievance procedures. These steps will not restrict the ability of the parties to obtain and present evidence, including by speaking to witnesses; consult with their family members, confidential resources, or advisors; or otherwise prepare for or participate in the grievance procedures. The parties cannot engage in retaliation, including against witnesses.

The District will objectively evaluate all evidence that is relevant and not otherwise impermissible—including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. Credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

The following types of evidence, and questions seeking that evidence, are impermissible (*i.e.*, will not be accessed or considered, except by the District to determine whether one of the exceptions listed below applies; will not be disclosed; and will not otherwise be used), regardless of whether they are relevant:

- Evidence that is protected under a privilege recognized by Federal or State law, unless the person to whom the privilege or confidentiality is owed has voluntarily waived the privilege or confidentiality;
- A party's or witness's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional in connection with the provision of treatment to the party or witness, unless the District obtains that party's or witness's voluntary, written consent for use in its grievance procedures; and
- Evidence that relates to the complainant's sexual interests or prior sexual conduct, unless evidence about the complainant's prior sexual conduct is offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged conduct or is evidence about specific incidents of the

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complainant's prior sexual conduct with the respondent that is offered to prove consent to the alleged sex-based harassment. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the complainant's consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude determination that sex-based harassment occurred.

## **Notice of Allegations:**

Upon initiation of the District's Title IX grievance procedures, the District will notify the parties of the following:

- the District's Title IX grievance procedures and any informal resolution process;
- Sufficient information available at the time to allow the parties to respond to the allegations, including the identities of the parties involved in the incident(s), the conduct alleged to constitute sex discrimination, and the date(s) and location(s) of the alleged incident(s);
- Retaliation is prohibited; and
- The parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence.

If, in the course of an investigation, the District decides to investigate additional allegations of sex discrimination by the respondent toward the complainant that are not included in the notice provided or that are included in a complaint that is consolidated, the District will notify the parties of the additional allegations.

## **Dismissal of a Complaint:**

The District may dismiss a complaint of sex discrimination if:

- the District is unable to identify the respondent after taking reasonable steps to do so;
- The respondent is not participating in the District's education program or activity and is not employed by the District;
- The complainant voluntarily withdraws any or all of the allegations in the complaint, the Title IX Coordinator declines to initiate a complaint, and the District determines that, without the complainant's withdrawn allegations, the conduct that remains alleged in the complaint, if any, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX even if proven; or
- the District determines the conduct alleged in the complaint, even if proven, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX. Before dismissing the complaint, the District will make reasonable efforts to clarify the allegations with the complainant.

Upon dismissal, the District will promptly notify the complainant of the basis for the dismissal. If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the allegations, then the District will also notify the respondent of the dismissal and the basis for the dismissal promptly following notification to the complainant, or simultaneously if notification is in writing.

The District will notify the complainant that a dismissal may be appealed and will provide the complainant with an opportunity to appeal the dismissal of a complaint. If the dismissal occurs after the

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respondent has been notified of the allegations, then the District will also notify the respondent that the dismissal may be appealed. Dismissals may be appealed on the following bases:

- Procedural irregularity that would change the outcome;
- New evidence that would change the outcome and that was not reasonably available when the dismissal was made; and
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that would change the outcome.

If the dismissal is appealed, the District will:

- Notify the parties of any appeal, including notice of the allegations, if notice was not previously provided to the respondent;
- Implement appeal procedures equally for the parties;
- Ensure that the decision maker for the appeal did not take part in an investigation of the allegations or dismissal of the complaint;
- Ensure that the decisionmaker for the appeal has been trained consistent with the Title IX regulations;
- Provide the parties a reasonable and equal opportunity to make a statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome; and
- Notify the parties of the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

When a complaint is dismissed, the District will, at a minimum:

- Offer supportive measures to the complainant as appropriate;
- If the respondent has been notified of the allegations, offer supportive measures to the respondent as appropriate; and
- Take other prompt and effective steps, as appropriate, through the Title IX Coordinator to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the District's education program or activity.

## **Investigation:**

The District will provide for adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of complaints.

The burden is on the District—not on the parties—to conduct an investigation that gathers sufficient evidence to determine whether sex discrimination occurred.

The District uses a single investigator/decision-maker.

The District will provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present fact witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence that are relevant and not otherwise impermissible.

The District will review all evidence gathered through the investigation and determine what evidence is relevant and what evidence is impermissible regardless of relevance.

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The District will provide each party with an equal opportunity to access the evidence that is relevant to the allegations of sex discrimination and not otherwise impermissible, in the following manner:

- the District will provide an equal opportunity to access either the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence;
- the District will provide a reasonable opportunity to respond to the evidence; and
- the District will take reasonable steps to prevent and address the parties' unauthorized disclosure of information and evidence obtained solely through the grievance procedures. Disclosures of such information and evidence for purposes of administrative proceedings or litigation related to the complaint of sex discrimination are authorized.

## **Questioning the Parties and Witnesses:**

The District will require the decisionmaker to question parties and witnesses to adequately assess a party's or witness's credibility to the extent credibility is both in dispute and relevant to evaluating one or more allegations of sex discrimination. The decision maker will question witnesses and parties directly to make this determination.

## **Determination Whether Sex Discrimination Occurred:**

Following an investigation and evaluation of all relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence, the District will:

Use the preponderance of the evidence standard of proof to determine whether sex discrimination occurred. The standard of proof requires the decisionmaker to evaluate relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence for its persuasiveness. If the decisionmaker is not persuaded under the applicable standard by the evidence that sex discrimination occurred, whatever the quantity of the evidence is, the decisionmaker will not determine that sex discrimination occurred.

The decision maker will:

- Notify the parties in writing of the determination whether sex discrimination occurred under Title IX including the rationale for such determination, and the procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal, if applicable;
- Not impose discipline on a respondent for sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX unless there is a determination at the conclusion of the grievance procedures that the respondent engaged in prohibited sex discrimination.
- If there is a determination that sex discrimination occurred, the Title IX Coordinator will, as appropriate:
  - Coordinate the provision and implementation of remedies to a complainant and other people the District identifies as having had equal access to the District's education program or activity limited or denied by sex discrimination;
  - Coordinate the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions on a respondent, including notification to the complainant of any such disciplinary sanctions; and
  - Take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the District's education program or activity.

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- o Comply with the grievance procedures before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions against a respondent; and
- o Not discipline a party, witness, or others participating in the grievance procedures for making a false statement or for engaging in consensual sexual conduct based solely on the determination whether sex discrimination occurred.

Following a determination that sex-based harassment occurred, the District may impose disciplinary sanctions, which may include revocation of privileges, detentions, suspensions or expulsions. The District may also provide remedies, which may include supportive measures, counseling, stay away orders, class switches or any additional measures that are appropriate.

After the grievance process, the District may as appropriate, modify or terminate supportive measures. If the District does so, it will provide the parties to timely seek from an appropriate and impartial employee, modification or reversal of the District's decision to provide, deny, modify, or terminate supportive measures applicable to them. The impartial employee will be someone other than the employee who made the challenged decision and must have authority to modify or reverse the decision, if the impartial employee determines that the decision to provide, deny, modify, or terminate the supportive measure was inconsistent with the definition of supportive measures. The District will also provide a party with the opportunity to seek additional modification or termination of a supportive measure applicable to them if circumstances change materially.

## **Appeal**

The District offers the following process for appeals from a determination whether sex discrimination occurred:

- The parties have the right to appeal the decision of the decisionmaker to the Superintendent in writing within ten (10) calendar days after the decision is formally made. The Superintendent of Schools will offer the other party an opportunity to respond in writing and then will send the parties a decision within thirty (30) calendar days.

Contact information for the Superintendent:

Alexandra Buckmire

[abuckmire@brcps.school](mailto:abuckmire@brcps.school)

(617)357-0900

## **Training**

All employees will be trained annually and upon hire on:

- the District's obligation to address sex discrimination in its education program or activity;
- The scope of conduct that constitutes sex discrimination, including the definition of sex-based harassment; and
- All applicable notice and information requirements.

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All investigators, facilitators of informal resolution, decision makers and other persons responsible for supportive measures/Title IX process will have additional training on:

- The District's grievance procedures;
- How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias;
- The meaning and application of the term "relevant" in relation to questions and evidence, and the types of evidence that are impermissible regardless of relevance; and
- rules and practices associated with the district's informal resolution process and on how to serve impartially, including by avoiding conflicts of interest and bias.

In addition, the Title IX Coordinator and designees will receive training on their specific responsibilities, recordkeeping and any other training necessary to implement Title IX.

## **Records**

A record will be maintained for a period of seven years of any actions, including supportive measures or informal resolution, taken in response to a report or complaint and district staff will document the basis for the district's conclusion that its response was not deliberately indifferent.

## **External Grievance Procedure**

Any student, parent or employee who chooses not to use the District's internal grievance procedures or who is not satisfied with the District's internal grievance procedures may file a complaint of discrimination or harassment with an appropriate state or federal agency.

For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of students:

The Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education

5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111, FAX: 617-289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172

OR

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination

One Ashburton Place

Sixth Floor, Room 601

Boston, MA 02108

Phone 617-994-6000, TIY: 617-994-6196

For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of parents:

The Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education

5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111, FAX: 617-289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172

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For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of employees:

The Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education

5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111, FAX: 617-289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172

OR

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination

One Ashburton Place

Sixth Floor, Room 601

Boston, MA 02108

Phone 617-994-6000, TTY: 617-994-6196

OR

The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission

John F. Kennedy Federal Building

475 Government Center

Boston, MA 02203

Phone: 1-800-669-4000

## **Referral to Law Enforcement, Other Agencies**

Some alleged conduct may constitute both a violation of District policies and criminal activity. The building Principal, coordinator, Superintendent, or designee will refer matters to law enforcement and other agencies as appropriate under the law or District policy, and inform the complainant/ alleged victim of the right to file a criminal complaint.

## **Retaliation**

Complainants and those who participate in the complaint resolution process or who otherwise oppose in a reasonable manner an act or policy believed to constitute discrimination are protected from retaliation by law and District policy. The coordinator or designee will inform all involved individuals that retaliation is prohibited, and that anyone who feels that they have experienced retaliation for filing a complaint or participating in the resolution process should inform the coordinator. The coordinator will investigate reports of retaliation and, where retaliation is found, take separate remedial and disciplinary action.

## **DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental, academic or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, homelessness or prior academic achievement in its educational programs, activities or employment.



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## INTRODUCTION

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School has designated a district administrator as coordinator for each federal and state statute regarding discrimination. Complaints under Title IX have their own special procedure; see the District's separate Title IX procedures. Their responsibility is to act as an advisor to any/all parties at any stage of these procedures to ensure that proper steps are followed. The coordinator may also act as mediator when requested to do so by both parties.

The District does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of or otherwise discriminate against, individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law ("protected categories") in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to engage in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or to violate any other civil right of any member of the school community. We recognize that discrimination can take a range of forms and can be targeted or unintentional; however, discrimination in any form, including harassment and retaliation, will not be tolerated.

It shall also be a violation of this policy for any school community member to subject any other member of the school community to any form of retaliation, including, but not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report such conduct or file a complaint, or opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy.

Any member of the school community who is found, after investigation, to have engaged in any form of discrimination, including harassment or retaliation, against any other member of the school community, will be subject to consequences determined appropriate by the administration. Such consequences may include restorative measures and corrective action, and/or student discipline or staff disciplinary action, up to and including student suspension and expulsion or employee termination.

Everyone in the school community is responsible for immediately reporting incidents of harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation, by anyone, in any form, that are directed at or witnessed by them at school or at a school sponsored event or of which they otherwise learn. Failure to cooperate with an investigation of such an incident will result in disciplinary action. Deceptive reporting may also be subject to a disciplinary response.

An individual may report incidents that they believe involve harassment or discrimination to their guidance counselor, any teacher, administrator or any member of the support staff, and the staff member will refer the complaint to the director or the coordinator. If a School Guidance or Adjustment

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Counselor, School Nurse, is contacted concerning a complaint or possible complaint, or any member of the teaching staff, he/she should refer the matter to their Director immediately. Staff who observe conduct which violates this policy are to report the conduct to their Director immediately.

If one of the coordinators is the person alleged to be engaged in discrimination/harassment, the complaint may be filed with one of alternate officials or any other school employee the student or employee chooses.

## **Coordinators**

The Coordinators for the District are the following individuals:

Title II, Title VI, Title VII & Title IX: Sarah O'Connor

Section 504 : Ronnie Bevis

## **Definitions**

"Discrimination" is defined as the adverse treatment of an individual or group of people based on any individual's actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law.

"Harassment" is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on any individual's actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law. Discrimination and/or harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above.
- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of, an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group described above to participate in or benefit from employment or a program or activity of \_\_PS; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational or working environment.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any unwelcome, inappropriate, or illegal physical, written, verbal, graphic, or electronic conduct, and that has the intent or effect of creating a hostile education or work environment by limiting the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the district's programs and activities or by unreasonably interfering with that individual's education or

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work environment or, if the conduct were to persist, would likely create a hostile educational or work environment. Examples of such conduct may include any of the following:

- Written, verbal, or physical (including texting, blogging, or other technological methods);
- harassment or abuse;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matter;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at a target; and
- In the case of employee-to-student harassment, conduct that is designed to embarrass, distress, disturb or trouble students when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs or activities, or submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a basis for decisions affecting students.

“Retaliation” is defined as taking an adverse action against a member of the school community for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report such conduct or file a complaint, or opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, and harassment.

## **A. INFORMAL PROCEDURES**

When you think you have a complaint you may follow these informal steps. If you feel that someone has discriminated against you because of your protected category, you can talk to a student advisor who can inform you of your rights and may go with you when you discuss your concerns. A student advisor is any teacher, counselor, or administrator employed by the District. The informal process will be a voluntary conversation between the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator, which is facilitated by a school employee or by a designated coordinator. If, the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator is a student under the age of eighteen (18), the facilitator **will** notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) if, after initial consultation with the student, it is determined to be in the best interest of the student. If the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator feel that a resolution has been achieved, then the conversation remains confidential and no further action needs to be taken. The voluntary conversation must occur within five (5) workdays after receiving the complaint of discrimination or harassment. The results of an informal resolution shall be maintained by the facilitator, in writing.

If the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator chooses not to utilize the Informal Procedure, or feels that the Informal Procedure is inadequate or has been unsuccessful, he or she may proceed to the Formal Procedure. The informal process is completely voluntary and individuals can opt-out at any time.

## **B. FORMAL PROCEDURES**

Write a clear statement of your complaint including all the facts as you see them. A written report though is not required. Oral reports will be considered complaints as well. The following

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information may be included:

1. Your name and home address.
2. A description of what happened including name and address of the person involved, time, date and as many other details as you can remember.
3. Any other information you think is important to help people understand your concerns.

Give a copy of your written complaint to the person charged with the discrimination and the Superintendent/Director. During the investigation, an investigator/decision maker will be assigned who will:

- Ensure that the complainant and the alleged harasser have the right to representation if he/she desires or requests at all discussions regarding the case;
- Keep the investigation group as small as possible to protect the rights of both parties and to prevent the investigation from becoming overly publicized and to protect the complainant from retaliation;
- Complete the investigation as soon as possible from the date that it is reported, but no later than thirty (30) work days from the date of the complaint or report, unless impracticable. The investigation will include interviewing the complainant, the alleged harasser and such other person(s) named by the complainant or the alleged harasser who may have witnessed or have information pertaining to the incident. An opportunity will be provided for all parties to be heard and present witnesses.
- Throughout the investigation the District will maintain on-going contact with the alleged victim. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the investigator/decision maker shall consider the age and level of understanding of the student(s) involved, surrounding circumstances, any relevant documents, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of the District's policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment or violence based on the actual or perceived protected class status of a student, employee or third party, requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances. Given that victims often experience continuing effects of harassment in the educational setting, during the investigative process the District will consider the off-campus conduct to determine whether there is a hostile environment on campus.

After completing the investigation, conclude whether a violation of the policy has occurred or not; complete the written investigation report form and send copies of the report to the coordinator, the superintendent, the alleged victim and the alleged harasser. The report shall include:

- a statement of the allegations investigated;
- a summary of the steps taken to investigate the allegations;
- the findings of fact based on a preponderance of the evidence gathered;
- the District's conclusion of whether discrimination, harassment or violence did or did not occur;
- the disposition of the complaint;

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- the rationale for the disposition of the complaint; and
- if the District concluded discrimination, harassment or violence occurred, a description of the District's response.

The investigator/decision maker shall determine whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual and whether they appear to be violations of this policy, using a preponderance of the evidence standard. A "preponderance of the evidence" means that it is more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred.

If the complaint is supported, the report should recommend what action, if any, is required and will identify what steps the District is going to take to prevent recurrence of any harassment and to correct its discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, if appropriate.

- Formal disciplinary actions may be imposed in the event that the preponderance of the evidence indicates an alleged violation. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with due process rights under State law and any applicable collective bargaining agreement. The seriousness of the offense, including the nature and degree of harm caused, shall be considered when deciding the appropriate disciplinary action.
- If the person alleged to have violated this policy is a staff member, possible discipline includes, but is not limited to, letters of reprimand, reassignment, and other disciplinary actions, including suspension or job termination.
- If the person alleged to have violated this policy is a student, possible discipline includes reprimand, an education component, counseling, class transfer, detention or suspension, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.
- Any discipline of students will focus on changing behavior and ensuring that students learn about the impact of their behaviors and attitudes. Possible remedial action includes:
  - o Interventions for the student targeted, such as counseling, academic support, health services, assigning an escort to allow the student to move safely between classes, and instruction on how to report other incidents of harassment or retaliation.
  - o Training or other interventions for the larger school community to ensure that students, staff and parents understand the types of behavior that constitute harassment, discrimination or violence, and how to report it.
  - o Interventions for the individual who engaged in the conduct, such as parent notification, counseling, guidance, education about the impact of the conduct, positive behavior support, referral to a student success team, transfer to alternative programs, denial of participation in extracurricular or co-curricular activities or other privileges, and discipline.
- If it is established that the conduct involves a violation of law, report the matter immediately to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

The parties have the right to appeal the decision of the decisionmaker to the Superintendent in writing within ten (10) calendar days after the decision is formally made. The Superintendent of Schools will

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offer the other party an opportunity to respond in writing and then will send the parties a decision within thirty (30) calendar days.

Contact information for the Superintendent:

Alexandra Buckmire

[abuckmire@brcps.school](mailto:abuckmire@brcps.school)

(617)357-0900

The above time frames may be extended by mutual agreement.

## Right to Alternative Complaint Procedures

In addition to the remedies set forth above, if you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with the government agency or agencies set forth below. Using the District complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim.

If you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Program Quality Assurance Services

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906

Phone: (781) 338-3700

FAX: (781) 338-3710

Email: [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu)

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The time period for filing a claim is one year from the action.

United States Department of Education

Office for Civil Rights("OCR")

5 Post Office Square

Boston, MA 02109

tel. (617) 289-0111

The time period for filing a claim with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights is 180 days.

2. Massachusetts Commission

Against Discrimination ("MCAD")

Boston Office

One Ashburton Place, Rm. 601

Boston, MA 02108

(617) 994-6000

Springfield Office

436 Dwight Street, Rm. 220

Springfield, MA 01103

(413) 739-2145

The time period for filing a claim with the MCAD is 300 days.

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## FAMILY HANDBOOK TRANSLATION REQUEST

### ***English***

Please check here \_\_\_\_\_ if you would like a hard copy of the English translation.

### ***Haitian French Creole***

“Si w ta renmen pou nou tradui dokiman sa a nan lang natifnatal ou, tanpri tcheke la \_\_\_\_\_ epi retounen fòm sa a nan lekòl la.”

### ***Spanish***

"Si desea que este documento sea traducido a su lengua Director, marque aquí \_\_\_\_\_ y devuelva este formulario a la escuela".

### ***Cape Verdean Creole***

Si bo cre es documento traduzido na Criolo por favor po un seta nes espacio \_\_\_\_\_ e devolve es formulario pa escola.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_



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## Family Handbook 2024-2025

### Parent/Family Signature Page

I have received a copy of the 2024-2025 Boston Renaissance Charter Public School Family Handbook (“the handbook”). I have read the handbook and understand its contents.

I have read and reviewed the contents of the handbook with my child/children. I understand that my child/children is/are bound by the provisions in the handbook and I have explained to my child/children that he/she/they is/are bound by the provisions in the handbook.

❖ **I understand that BRCPS is a school of choice and I agree to adhere to all school policies.**

❖ ***A signed copy of this page is to be returned back to the Boston Renaissance Public Charter School within one week of receipt of this Family Handbook.***

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

❖ **PARENTS’ PERMISSION FOR PUBLICATION OF STUDENT WORK/PICTURES:**

I understand that the Renaissance may wish to publish examples of student work and photographs of students on the BRCPS website, in BRCPS publications, and through the media.

I hereby authorize the school to publish my child's photograph and examples of my child's work.

Yes No (circle one)

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***Please complete, sign and return this signature page  
to your child’s homeroom teacher.***

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