

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Reference Manual



"The Bridgeport Public Schools is committed to providing clear and explicit shared expectations in creating safe and healthy learning and working environments for all community members."

2012-2013

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"It is the policy of the Bridgeport Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, mental disorder or mental retardation, in any of its educational programs, activities or employment policies."

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SUMMARY OF DISTRICT POLICY REGARDING BEHAVIOR

It is the goal of the Bridgeport Public School system to provide a positive educational setting for every student. The Student Code of Conduct is to be implemented in a fair and equitable manner, which is mindful of the rights of students as well as the security, safety and educational interests of the school. The Student Code of Conduct establishes a zero tolerance policy for conduct that endangers the safety of the schools and/or disrupts the educational experience for other students with the recognition that students of different grades and ages are at different developmental levels, thus their behavior will be different and may call for different responses. In determining the appropriate level of interventions and consequences, in addition to mitigating circumstances, school officials should consider the grade level and age of the student. With this in mind, every effort is made by school personnel to resort to in-school and out-of-school suspension when all other consequences have been exhausted.

The Student Code of Conduct embodies the principles of Restorative Justice. Restorative Justice may be defined as a way of thinking and responding to conflict and problems that involve all participants determining what took place and how to create a logical and balanced resolution which is aligned with the rules of the law. The goals include: repairing, restoring or providing restitution for any damaged or stolen property.

Every student must follow all of the rules of the Student Code of Conduct before, during and after school. The Code applies to students on school grounds and at school-related activities on or off school grounds. Students must follow these rules while awaiting transportation or traveling on a school bus or other form of school-provided transportation en route to or from the school for a school-sponsored activity. The Code also applies to students off school grounds and during non-school time when the conduct is violating publicized policy of the Board of Education and the return of the student(s) committing the offense would contribute to a disruptive effect in the school and its educational process. These acts must be of a serious nature, e.g. dangerous weapon offenses, drug offenses or crimes accompanied by violent conduct such as robbery or sexual offenses.

The success of school discipline depends upon shared responsibility among home, school and community. Parents and guardians should be familiar with and understand the Student Code of Conduct.

FORWARD THINKING CONDUCT

The Bridgeport Public School system encourages, supports and recognizes acceptable behavior in our students through a variety of positive practices. Our disciplinary model is an approach that makes use of a continuum of interventions, supports and consequences, building upon strategies that promote positive behaviors.

We encourage students to take responsibility for their behavior and to accept the consequences of their actions. A research-based, forward-thinking approach will be used to deal with inappropriate behavior. This may include: verbal reminders, review of expectations, contact with parent(s)/guardian(s), written reflection, volunteer service to the school community, conflict mediation/resolution, peer mentoring and referral for support services and/or exclusion from school privileges.

We recognize that each student is a unique individual and that every situation which requires disciplinary action has its own set of extenuating circumstances. All factors that may have affected the student's behavior will be considered before discipline is determined. Students who behave inappropriately will receive developmentally appropriate consequences. For a student with special education or disability-related needs, all approaches will be consistent with his/her Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Student Accommodation Plan and his/her demonstrated abilities.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Students previously identified as having a disability under the IDEA and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who engage in behavior that violates any rule of the Student Code of Conduct can be disciplined by suspension, transfer to an appropriate interim alternative education setting or other setting or expulsion; disciplinary action would also apply to students without disabilities with the following stipulations:

- A student with disabilities must not be suspended for more than ten (10) days per school year without the district's conducting a review of/or development of a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). In the case of a recommendation for expulsion or suspension for more than 10 school days per school year, the district shall convene a PPT within 10 school days after the recommendation for such discipline was made in order to review the relationship between the student's disability and the disciplinary infraction(s) behavior and to determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability. During the process of a manifestation review, a student may be suspended for up to 10 school days. Subsequent suspension days must be closely monitored by the building administrator in order to ensure the accumulated total days do not constitute a change in placement. A PPT should be convened in all cases upon the 16-17 day of suspension in order to review the appropriateness of the student's placement.
- If a manifestation review PPT concludes that the student's behavior was **not** a manifestation of the student's disability, the district may proceed with the recommended expulsion or suspension for more than 10 days, to the extent that a student without a disability would be subject to such discipline. Under these circumstances, the Board of Education must continue to provide a free appropriate public education to the student with disabilities. During any period of suspension greater than 10 days per school year, a student with disabilities under IDEA shall receive an alternative educational plan in accordance with the IEP as modified by the PPT in light of the student's exclusion.
- If the PPT finds that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the district shall not proceed with the recommendation for expulsion or suspension of greater than 10 days, shall consider the misconduct and revise the IEP/behavior intervention plan to prevent a recurrence of the misconduct and provide for the safety of other students and staff. If the IEP does not include a Behavior Intervention Plan, the PPT must develop a plan to address the behavior that led to the disciplinary action. When disciplinary action is contemplated, which would result in a penalty not addressed by the student's Behavior Intervention Plan, the parents must be notified of the decision to take disciplinary action on the date the decision was made and must also receive notice of all special education procedural safeguards.
- The special education and disciplinary records of the student must be transmitted to the individual(s) who will make the final determination regarding a recommendation for exclusions of greater than 10 school days per school year.

- In cases of possession of a dangerous weapon or an illegal drug or the use, sale or solicitation for sale of controlled substances on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity, the student can be transferred to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 calendar days.
- For the discipline of students not yet identified as special education students, a student is entitled to procedural protections even if he/she has not been determined to qualify for special services under IDEA if the local board had knowledge that the student was disabled before the misconduct occurred. 34 C.F.R. Connecticut General Statutes § 300.534.

The local board will be considered to have knowledge if:

1. The parent has expressed concern to supervisory or administrative personnel in writing or to a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education/related services
2. The parent requested that the student be evaluated under IDEA
3. The child's teacher or other staff member expressed specific concern about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the Executive Director of Specialized Instruction or to other supervisory personnel of the agency

IDEA 2004 makes clear that the local board will not be deemed to have knowledge if:

1. The parent has not allowed an evaluation of the child
2. The parent has refused services
3. The child has been evaluated and it was determined that the child did not have a disability

If the local board did not have knowledge of the possibility that the student had a disability, the student can be disciplined as if he/she were not a student with a disability. If a request for an evaluation is made during the time period when the child is subject to disciplinary measures, the school district must expedite the evaluation. If the child is subsequently deemed eligible, the school district shall provide special education to the child; however, pending the results of the evaluation, the child remains in the setting determined by school personnel.

Special Note:

Connecticut State Regulations, Section 10-76d-7(c), requires each school district to promptly refer to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) all children who have been suspended repeatedly or whose behavior, attendance or progress in school is considered unsatisfactory or at a marginal level of acceptance. For children who experience multiple in-school suspensions, a referral must be made to the PPT to consider whether evaluations should be conducted to determine the child's eligibility for special education services.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES CHART

	Students have the right:	Students have the responsibility:
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a meaningful learning experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To attend school regularly in accordance with the district attendance policy.
Respect for persons and property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use school property as approved by the district. • To use personal property on school grounds as approved by the district. • To privacy per applicable laws. • To be respected and accepted as individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respect the rights of others and not to interfere with their learning. • To adhere to the rules and regulations of the school district. • To report evidence of an illegal act or violation of the Code of Conduct to district personnel. • To dress appropriately in accordance with the uniform policy.
Knowledge and observation of rules and conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know the rules and regulations regarding their conduct. Students have the opportunity for input in the development of these rules and regulations through school and district forums as members of the School Governance Council and other ad-hoc meetings as arranged. • To be assured a safe and healthy school environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To follow the rules and regulations of the district as approved by the school board. • To follow the rules and regulations of the school and district.

	Students have the right:	Students have the responsibility:
Right to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn and pursue an education. • To a school climate and culture that is conducive and appropriate for learning. • To equal access to an education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To pursue an education to the best of their ability. • To be present, on time, prepared, attentive in class and ready to learn. • To contribute to a positive school climate conducive to learning.
Right to free speech and publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To freedom of expression of their views unless there are legal reasons to regulate their speech or publications as stipulated by statute and relevant case law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a clear understanding of the meaning of freedom of speech within a school context. • To assemble according to the prescribed rules and regulations approved by the school board.
Participation in school activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To participate in school programs and activities in accordance with eligibility requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to these activities in a constructive manner.
Right to due process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To due process as prescribed by laws and school board policy including: 1. an impartial investigation of the incident, 2. to be represented by counsel as may be appropriate and 3. to have parents or guardians notified and present at all proceedings according to law and district policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To cooperate in all due process proceedings by providing truthful and accurate information.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Procedures Involving Use of Physical Force

School personnel may use reasonable and prudent physical force upon a student when necessary to:

- Protect themselves or others from immediate injury
- Take a dangerous instrument or illegal drugs away from a student
- Protect property
- Restrain or remove a student to maintain order

Procedures for Searches and Confiscation

All lockers and desks are the property of the Bridgeport Board of Education and their use by students is a privilege. Students shall not place, keep or store in their lockers or desks any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous objects or any items prohibited in the Code of Conduct. Students shall not have any exception of privacy relative to the contents of their lockers or desks. Accordingly, school officials retain the right to open and search lockers and desks at any time to enforce school policies, rules/regulations or for any other reason. Any search may include the use of electronic and/or mechanical devices. If in the course of a valid search or while conducting other legitimate school business, school officials observe any object or substance prohibited by this Code, they shall confiscate that object or substance. In schools where locks are school property, no other locks shall be used. All such locks remain the property of the Board of Education and may be opened at any time by school officials in accordance with this policy. In schools where students provide their own locks, this shall not create any reasonable exception of privacy in the contents of their lockers as all such lockers may be opened at any time by school officials in accordance with this policy.

Procedures for Reporting Crimes to the Police

It is the policy of the Bridgeport schools not to shelter students from the police when a violation of Connecticut criminal laws has occurred. Accordingly, whenever school officials become aware of criminal conduct in the schools, they will notify the police and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Bridgeport Board of Education is committed to working with students and their families to promote regular attendance, which in turn, encourages personal growth by preparing the student to accept similar responsibilities in the world outside of the school setting. The attendance regulations are designed to help students understand that the benefits of regular attendance will be gained through responsibility and commitment.

Connecticut State Board of Education Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences (Adopted June 27, 2012)

The following definitions are for use by Connecticut school districts and schools for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of section 10-198a of the Connecticut General Statutes (policies and procedures concerning truants) and for the purpose of reporting truancy pursuant to subsection (c) of Section 10-220 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The use of these definitions for state purposes does not preclude districts from using separate definitions of excused and unexcused absences for their internal uses (including decisions on promotion/retention, grading and disciplinary action).

Excused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered excused if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school or in accordance with Section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes and meets the following criteria:

- For absences one (1) through nine (9), a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation.

For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:

1. A student's illness (Note: all student absences due to illness must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused regardless of the length of absence)
2. A student's observance of a religious holiday
3. A death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family
4. A mandated court appearance (additional documentation required)
5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason)
6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance

Unexcused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the following criteria:

1. The absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation requirements)
2. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence

Disciplinary Absences

Absences that are the result of school or district disciplinary action are excluded from these definitions:

1. The Connecticut State Board of Education policy states that "*A student is considered to be 'in attendance' if present at his/her assigned school or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent.*" A student not meeting the definition of 'in attendance' is considered absent.
2. Such documentation should include a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent/guardian regarding the absence or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional as appropriate. Documentation should explain the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. Separate documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absenteeism. For example: if a student is out sick two (2) consecutive days, that student must submit the appropriate documentation covering both sick days. If a student is out sick two (2) nonconsecutive days, that student must submit the appropriate documentation following each absence. Schools should take steps to allow non-English speaking parents/guardians to submit documentation in their native language.

High school students must be present in school for a minimum of 160 days to receive graduation credit (toward the 225 credits required for graduation from high school) for full year courses and for a minimum of 80 days for semester courses.

Students who do not meet this minimum requirement may appeal their loss of graduation credit to an Attendance Review Team comprised of administrators, teachers and student support staff. The Team will review the student's attendance record and may consider reasons for absences such as the following:

1. Medical problems (documentation may be required; an attempt to schedule doctor appointments after school is accepted)
2. Family emergencies
3. Court appearances
4. Death in the family
5. College interviews or visits
6. Religious holidays
7. Other specific excuses such as serious medical illness or other serious extenuating circumstances dependent on the judgment of the building administrator.

Students in Grades K-8 are mandated by the Connecticut legislature to have no more than twenty (20) unexcused absences in any school year. Students who exceed that number shall be referred to Juvenile Court as required by state law. In addition, parents of those students with more than twenty (20) unexcused absences may be referred to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) for educational neglect.

High School Summer School Program

Students will be permitted to attend summer school if they have been in attendance a minimum of 150 days for full year courses and 75 days for semester courses. **Students who do not meet this minimum requirement may appeal their loss of summer school enrollment to the Attendance Review Team.**

Class Cutting

It is imperative for students to be present in class in order to benefit from the process of teaching and learning. It is the student's responsibility to be present for every class when present in school. The following regulations are intended to promote the development of this responsible attitude:

1. A class cut is a day's absence from class.
2. A class cut to study period will be referred within one (1) day to the administrator for the appropriate action.
3. The classroom teacher will refer any class cut in excess of two (2) in the marking period to the administrator.
4. Five (5) points will be deducted from the student's grade for each of the first three (3) class cuts in a marking period. High school students will lose course credit for classes in which they have four (4) or more cuts.
5. High school students who lose course credit in a class due to excessive class cuts will be given the option of agreeing to a contract that will allow passing grades to be restored if they do not cut class for the remainder of the school year. This contract must be in force prior to May 1 of each school year.

Any discipline imposed on a student as a result of class cutting will be accomplished in a manner consistent with procedural safeguards described elsewhere in this manual, for example: suspension may be imposed for class cutting only if the student is offered the opportunity for an informal hearing.

Tardiness

Tardiness to school is a serious concern. Consistent with the tenets of Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS), it is our belief that the most effective way to change student behavior is to reinforce and maximize appropriate conduct such as coming to school on time. The following procedures and guidelines have been developed in support of this goal.

Tardiness to Class

1. Tardiness to class will be managed by classroom teachers. If a student is tardy three (3) times to an individual class during the marking period, it may result in the student's referral to the administration for further disciplinary action.
2. Any student entering class unexcused after ten (10) minutes will be given a class cut.
3. Each marking period is to be considered a separate entity.

Tardiness to School

1. Tardiness to school will continue to be an administrative responsibility. If students are tardy to school, the administrator will offer intervention programs such as referrals to the guidance counselor and before-school or after-school detention. If these programs do not improve the student's attendance, the principal may make a referral to the Student Assistance Team.
2. Students who come to school 45 minutes after the start of the school day will be required to be accompanied by a parent or guardian or the parent or guardian must telephone the school or provide a written note. If contact is not made with the parent, the student will be admitted to school but subject to disciplinary action by the administrator. Chronic tardy behavior must be referred to the SRBI Team

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

1. Students who are tardy must follow school established procedures for admittance. In the case of an absence, parents or guardians must call their child's school on the day of the absence no later than 10:00 a.m.
2. In the event of no notification of absence by the parent or guardian, the school will make a reasonable attempt by phone to contact the parent or guardian at home or work concerning the student's absence on the day of the absence.
3. On the morning a student returns to school, it is expected that the student will bring a written note signed by a parent/guardian with the reason for the absence(s); without a note, all absences become unexcused absences. Notes must be submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school to be considered excused.
4. Each school must alert parents to the possibility of failure because of a serious absence record.
5. Staff will immediately notify the office with any questions concerning a child's absence especially when the staff or another student may recall seeing the child at school or on school grounds.
6. Every effort should be made to make appointments for students after school hours. No child will be dismissed early without prior written notification to the school with approval of the administrator.

At the start of each school year, Principals must inform all parents/guardians, via a letter, of the above attendance procedures. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school.

The letter must also request that a parent/guardian include updated emergency information on each child, e.g. where parents work, home address, current home telephone number, work telephone number, cell phone number, pager, as well as the names of individuals who will be picking up student(s).

ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCEDURES

The process of gathering information and attempting interventions must begin at the student's 4th unexcused absence and must continue until the student has accumulated 20 unexcused absences. When students between the ages of 7 and 16 accumulate 20 unexcused absences, a Family with Service Needs Referral must be completed and submitted to the Executive Director of Student Support Services.

The following benchmarks should be followed:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Four (4) unexcused absences in one month | Phone call to parent and letter sent home |
| 2. Six (6) unexcused absences | First home visit; first parent conference |
| 3. Eight (8) unexcused absences | Phone call to parent, letter sent home |
| 4. Ten (10) unexcused absences | Parent conference, SRBI Team referral, case manager assigned |
| 5. Twelve (12) unexcused absences | Second home visit; phone call home |
| 6. Fifteen (15) unexcused absences | PPT referral indicating truancy concerns |
| 7. Sixteen (16) to nineteen (19) unexcused absences | Phone call home each day student is absent |
| 8. Twenty (20) unexcused absences | FWSN/Youth in Crisis/DCF referral filed |

Completion of Class Work

Any student who is suspended from school has the opportunity to complete class work missed during the suspension; however, it is the student's responsibility to request assignments for the missed class work. Teachers do not have the responsibility of seeking out the students who have missed class work, as a result of suspension, to give them the assignments. In addition, students must complete all missed class work within two (2) weeks after returning to school.

DAILY PROCEDURES FOR TAKING ATTENDANCE

In order to provide efficient attendance monitoring, a computerized student information system, PowerSchool or a comparable system, will be used for all aspects of student attendance. At each benchmark listed in our Code of Conduct, entries will be made in the student information system to document our monitoring procedure.

For Daily or Period Attendance

1. Teachers will take attendance in PowerTeacher to enter absences and tardiness. If there are no absences, a teacher must still log into PowerTeacher and complete the steps of taking attendance. If a student enters class late after being marked absent, it is the teacher's responsibility to correct attendance the same day.
2. Students who are tardy (10 minutes after the official start of school time) must first report to the administrative office to sign in and receive a pass for classroom entry. Teachers should not allow a student entry into the class without a late pass. Administrative office personnel will be responsible for changing absences to tardy in PowerSchool.
3. On the morning a student returns to school, it is expected that the student will bring a written note signed by a parent/guardian with the reason for the absence(s). Without a note, all absences will be considered unexcused absences. Upon approval by the school administrator, administrative office personnel will be responsible for changing unexcused absences to excused absences in PowerSchool.
4. At approximately 9:30 a.m. an automated phone message system will generate phone calls to notify parents that their child is not in school.
5. Each Principal may check the status of teachers who have not taken attendance utilizing the PowerTeacher Attendance report.
6. If a teacher is absent from school, substitute teachers may take attendance utilizing the PowerTeacher Substitute Portal.

For Students with Truancy Issues

There will be a Special Attendance Register in PowerSchool with fields that correspond to benchmarks outlined in the Code of Conduct regarding students with excessive absences. It is in these fields that staff will indicate actions taken, for example:

1. Teachers will call parents after four (4) and eight (8) unexcused absences in one month. Teachers will be required to enter the date when they called and use the drop down menu to indicate to whom they spoke. The status field will be set by the teacher to designate if the issue was resolved or not.

2. Letters will be sent home at six (6) and eight (8) cumulative unexcused absences. The principal will designate home school coordinators, office staff or high school attendance officers to send letters at each benchmark and enter their mailing dates in PowerSchool.
3. Principals will authorize home school coordinators, clerical personnel or designated attendance officers to provide truant officers with the names of students who require home visits as indicated in the Code of Conduct at six (6) and twelve (12) cumulative unexcused absences. Home visit results must be entered into PowerSchool by the person making the visit.
4. SRBI referrals will be made by the teacher after ten (10) unexcused absences. The date SRBI referral was made must be entered into PowerSchool by the person making the referral. Phone calls and documentation in PowerSchool at twelve (12) absences and beyond will be the responsibility of the SRBI Case Manager assigned.
5. PPT referral will be made indicating truancy concerns by the SAT (SRBI) team after fifteen (15) unexcused absences.
6. After twenty (20) unexcused absences, attendance officers will file FWSN/DCF referrals. Submission date of the FWSN/DCF will be entered into PowerSchool by the administrative office personnel.

BULLYING POLICY

The Bridgeport Public Schools is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe and thus free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. In accordance with state law and the Bridgeport Public Schools bullying prevention policy, the Bridgeport Public Schools expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior:

- on school grounds
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Bridgeport Public Schools

Students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with this Handbook on student discipline, suspension and expulsion and consistent with state and federal law.

For purposes of this policy, "**Bullying**" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyber-bullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

1. Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property
2. Places such student in reasonable fear or harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property
3. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student
4. Infringes on the rights of such student at school
5. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to:

1. A written, verbal or electronic communication
2. A physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, e.g. race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability
3. Association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics

For purposes of this policy, "**Cyberbullying**" means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic device or any electronic communication.

Please refer to Series 5000 for full Bullying Policy.

HAZING POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school district and are prohibited at all times.

Statement of Policy/Definition

Hazing is regarded as a Student Code of Conduct Type III offense and will subject the student to punishment appropriate for Type III offenses. In addition, students should be aware that hazing can also constitute a violation of Connecticut Criminal Statutes as a form of assault and can make the student liable for arrest and prosecution, as well as civil liability.

Hazing is defined as any form or type of physical, verbal, and/or emotional mistreatment, abuse, and/or harassment of a student in connection with a student's participation in or membership of an interscholastic athletic team or in any school-sponsored activity and/or forcing, coercing or intimidating any student to participate in any illegal or inappropriate activities in connection with the students' participation or membership in the foregoing. Hazing is prohibited whether it occurs during, prior to or after the season or school day.

Responsibility of Coaches/Advisors

Attached is the Bridgeport Public Schools Hazing Policy, which will be included in the Student Code of Conduct. Compliance with this policy is a mandatory requirement of participation in interscholastic athletic activities and school-sponsored activities. Coaches or advisors are required, prior to the commencement of the season/activity, to meet with team/club members and assistants. Coaches are responsible for ensuring player/member and assistant coach/advisor compliance with this policy.

In the event that a coach becomes aware of any violations of this policy, he/she must immediately notify the Director of Athletics and/or the school principal. Your failure or the failure of assistant coaches/advisors to ensure total compliance with this policy may result in conduct, up to and including termination. In addition, coaches/advisors should be aware that hazing in its various forms often constitutes violation of Connecticut Criminal Statutes on the basis that activities regarded as hazing constitute some form of assault and/or participation in other illegal activities. Knowingly allowing any such hazing activities to exist, and/or condoning such activities, may result in personal liability for criminal or civil sanctions.

Training

The Director of Athletics will meet with all coaches prior to the season to review the hazing policy. All coaches will receive copies of the policy. The school principal will meet with all teachers at the beginning of the school year and at other times when appropriate, to review the hazing policy. All teachers will receive a copy of the policy.

Reporting Procedures

1. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to the school principal and Director of Athletics.

2. The building principal and the Director of Athletics are the persons responsible for receiving reports of hazing at the building level.
3. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

School District Action

1. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, the school district shall immediately undertake an investigation.
2. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action, if warranted, in accordance with the Bridgeport School District's Code of Conduct and/or District policies and/or procedures.

NETWORK/INTERNET/E-MAIL POLICY

The Bridgeport Public School District has an acceptable use Internet Policy to promote the exchange of information that supports learning and encourages research. This goal is accomplished by providing users access to software located on the District's file server and Internet and providing the ability to send e-mail. This is consistent with the mission of the Bridgeport Public School District. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a student right, and should be used for education purposes only. Students who abuse this privilege will have their access revoked and may face disciplinary action.

Rules

1. Each student requesting access to the Bridgeport Internet link must complete the Student Account Agreement Form and have it signed by a parent or guardian. Any use of the network without authorization is prohibited.
2. Neither Bridgeport's instructional network nor Internet access is to be used for commercial business use, political, religious advocacy or illegal purposes.
3. Users may not use the system in any way that is insulting, disruptive, offensive, objectionable or contrary to the educational goals of the District.
4. Use of Bridgeport's Internet to access or send obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit messages, cartoons, jokes, unwelcome propositions or love letters, messages advocating violence or threats of any kind, racial, ethnic or religious slurs or any other message that can be construed to be harassment or disparagement of others based upon their sex, race, sexual orientation, age, national origin or religious or political beliefs is prohibited.
5. Sending material critical of school administration, teachers, staff, students or anyone associated with the school district is prohibited.
6. Harassing network users, infiltrating computer systems and/or damaging of software components is prohibited.
7. Subscriptions to list servers, news groups, bulletin boards or any other on-line promotional services will be subject to review and approval by District staff.
8. Deliberate misuse of the network and its equipment will be considered an act of vandalism and subject the user to disciplinary action. The District will hold the user financially responsible for any damage incurred.
9. No individual shall make any unauthorized entry or alteration of any document, either paper or electronic, not created by such individual(s).
10. E-mail messages should be deleted regularly by each user to conserve storage space.
11. The installation of software on District computers must be pre-approved by the Director of Information Technology and only performed by technical support staff.
12. Profanity or obscenity will not be tolerated. All community members shall use language which is appropriate for school situations as indicated by the Bridgeport Schools' Code of Conduct.
13. Impersonations, anonymity or pseudonyms are not permitted. Individuals shall be held responsible for their actions and words.
14. No individual shall use the District Network for the purpose of on-line shopping.

Penalties for Inappropriate Use

1. Any user violating these rules and applicable state and federal laws is subject to loss of network privileges and any other District disciplinary options provided by State Statute, Board Policy or Bridgeport Public Schools' Code of Conduct, including, but not limited to: loss of network/Internet privileges, suspension and/or expulsion.
2. Users who intentionally damage equipment, attempt to load or download unauthorized software, access another user's account or school accounts or show disregard for these regulations, shall be subject to disciplinary action.
3. Damage caused to other networks accessed will subject the user to the same disciplinary action as damage to the Bridgeport Network/Internet, as well as any possible criminal charges.

STUDENT/STAFF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Policy

It is the policy of the Bridgeport Public Schools that unlawful gender discrimination in any form, including sexual harassment of staff or other forms of gender discrimination as referenced by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, is prohibited in the workplace and in the recruitment, appointment and advancement of employees. Gender discrimination of students, including sexual harassment, as referenced by Title IX, is prohibited in and out of the classroom and in the evaluation of students' academic work performance. This policy is in keeping with the spirit and intent of various federal guidelines which address the issue of fair employment practices, ethical standards and enforcement procedures.

It is the policy of the Bridgeport Board of Education that sexual harassment is unlawful conduct and wrongful discrimination against the rights of others. The Board will not condone or tolerate any verbal or physical conduct by students, employees or other individuals doing business or volunteering in the Bridgeport Public Schools, male or female, which would constitute sexual harassment. Individuals who engage in sexual harassment will be subject to appropriate action, including but not limited to: educational counseling, reprimand, probation, suspension, expulsion, termination from the Bridgeport Public Schools or civil or criminal action.

Employees and students are encouraged to prevent, report and correct any occurrences of sexual harassment within the Bridgeport Public Schools. Students are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to fellow students. Further, any romantic or sexual relationship between employees of the Board and students is highly inappropriate and unacceptable, whether or not such conduct constitutes sexual harassment as defined in this policy.

Definitions

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone within the work or educational setting. Sexual harassment occurs when:

1. Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic status or progress
2. Submission to or rejection of the conduct by the individual when used as the basis for employment and/or educational decisions affecting the individual
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment
4. Sexual harassment, as set forth in Section II-A, may include but is not limited to the following:
 - Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, derogatory comments, slurs, jokes, epithets, spreading sexual rumors, obscene gestures, display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons or graffiti
 - Unwelcome or unwanted sexually oriented verbal comments, suggestions, requests, physical contacts or attention
 - Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence or threaten other students to participate in activities

- Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the educational opportunities, grades, and/or learning environment of a student
- Students in predominantly male/female classes being subjected to sexual remarks

Complaint Procedures

1. Any employee, student or other individual within the school community who is the victim of sexual harassment by a student should promptly report the matter to a teacher, guidance counselor or administrator who will direct them to the designated Title IX Coordinator/Officer. The complainant will be requested to complete a complaint form.
2. If the complainant is a minor student, the Title IX Coordinator/Officer will assess whether the conduct constitutes the basis for a child abuse report and, if so, will follow District child abuse reporting procedures. The Title IX Coordinator/Officer shall conduct any necessary investigation and refer the alleged harasser to the administrator for further action, which may include referral to counseling or disciplinary procedures.
3. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. As a general rule, verbal or written sexual harassment shall constitute a Type I Disciplinary offense and physical sexual harassment shall constitute a Type II or Type III Disciplinary offense, depending on severity of the misconduct. Repeated misconduct may constitute a Type III Disciplinary offense.
4. The Title IX Coordinator/Officer shall make a written report summarizing the results of any investigation and the action taken within fifteen (15) days and the complainant and the alleged harasser shall be advised of the outcome of any investigation and action taken.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, he or she shall file a written appeal to the Chief Academic Officer or Designee, who shall review the Title IX Coordinator/Officer's written report and may conduct further investigation. The Chief Academic Officer or Designee shall determine if further action is warranted and shall file a report as to action taken on the appeal. A copy of the report shall be provided to the complainant and the alleged harasser.
6. Any student who is the victim of sexual harassment by an employee or other individual doing business or volunteering in the Bridgeport Public schools should promptly report the matter to a teacher, guidance counselor, administrator or the Human Resources Office of the Bridgeport Public Schools. If the complainant is a minor student, the Executive Director of Human Resources will determine whether the conduct constitutes the basis for a child abuse report and, if so, will follow District child abuse reporting procedures. All such complaints shall be promptly investigated by the Executive Director of Human Resources or his/her designee and appropriate action taken. The complainant shall be advised of the outcome of the investigation and action taken by the administration.

7. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, he or she may file a written appeal within ten (10) working days to the Superintendent of Schools who shall review the record of investigation and may conduct further investigation. The Superintendent shall prepare a report of investigation and recommend a decision to the Board of Education. In all cases, any retaliation against an individual making a complaint is prohibited.

Developmentally Age Appropriate Conduct

The Board recognizes that students of different grades and ages are at different developmental levels, thus their behavior will be different and may call for different responses. In determining the appropriate level of interventions and consequences in addition to mitigating circumstances, school officials should consider the grade, age, and developmental level of the student. This approach may result in a less severe intervention and consequence for a lower grade or younger student as compared to a higher grade or older student.

UNIFORM POLICY

All students in grades PK-12 will wear mandatory uniforms every school day. Any student transferring into the Bridgeport School District from another school district during the course of the school year will be allowed a seven (7) day grace period during which students will not be disciplined for failing to wear the mandatory uniform. The mandatory school uniform includes:

- **Pants:** Dress or Docker style pants worn with a belt at the waist; specific colors of the uniform pants will be determined by the specific school.
- **Skirts, Jumpers or Skorts:** Should be knee level or longer. Blouses or polo shirts must be worn under the jumper.
- **Shorts:** Knee length or Docker style shorts must be worn with a belt. Shorts may only be worn between April 1 and November 1.
- **Shirts:** White plain collared polo shirt or dress shirt (long or short sleeve). Additional colors, representative of the individual Bridgeport school students attend, will also be acceptable. Shirts should be tucked into pants.
- **Sweatshirt/Sweaters:** Pullover, zippered or cardigan, in solid colors specific to the school, without patterns, hoods, decorations or wording. A vest or blazer in the color representative of the individual Bridgeport school will also be permitted.
- **Shoes/Sneakers:** Shoes are strongly recommended over sneakers. In addition to shoes, white or black sneakers are permitted and appropriate every-day boots. Laces on shoes, sneakers or boots must be tied.
- **Physical Education Day Attire:** Students may wear sweat pants/shirts to school on scheduled physical education days. School-approved tee shirts and shorts are permitted. Colors of physical education attire will be chosen by individual schools.

School personnel should ensure that all students adhere to the School Uniform Policy. When a student fails to comply with the school uniform policy, the following discipline procedures will apply:

First Offense: Verbal warning and notification to parent/guardian

Second Offense: Written warning and notification to parent/guardian

Third and Subsequent Offense: Attendance at special programs and activities will be forfeited or withheld until the student comes to school in uniform. If the foregoing disciplinary measures do not achieve compliance with the uniform policy, the principal may impose stronger discipline.

Any school dress, jewelry or accessories which impairs safety or increases the risk of injury to self or others or causes discomfort to others, (e.g. un-cleanliness, obscene, offensive language, symbols, gang insignia) advertises or advocates the use of alcohol or drugs, pornographic, libelous is inherently likely to upset others is prohibited.

To ensure the security, safety and educational interests of the schools, the following **may not** be worn in school: coats designed for outdoor wear, halters or bare midriff, headwear, head/face coverings, transparent clothing, pants with visible undergarments or any non-prescription eyewear.

PARENT APPEAL PROCESS

It is the policy of the Bridgeport Public Schools that all students and/or parents shall have the right to appeal any problem arising within their status as students and parents and shall be encouraged to exercise this right without fear of recrimination. It is for this purpose that a parent appeal procedure is established. To ensure that any problem is corrected as soon as possible, time limits have been established to assure prompt attention to each problem. If the student/parent does not process his appeal within the set time limit, it shall be considered settled and no longer open to appeal.

Student Appeal Procedure

The appeal process may be used to address any situation occurring within the operation or normal procedures of the school, which causes a student and/or parent to believe he/she has been wronged. Students and their parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns informally with the person(s) involved before invoking formal appeal procedures.

Initiation

A parent or student may initiate an appeal proceeding when either the student or his/her parent/guardian believes that a violation or misapplication of the Student Code of Conduct, Board of Education Policy, state or federal law/regulation has occurred.

Procedure

The procedure for initiation of a formal appeal will be:

Principal Conference (Step 1)

A student, parent/guardian wishing to invoke the appeal procedure shall make a written request for a conference with the principal to discuss the complaint and seek resolution. The following guidelines shall be observed in Step 1:

- An appeal shall be filed as soon as possible, but in no event longer than thirty (30) days after disclosure of the facts giving rise to the complaint.
- The principal shall grant the conference within five (5) school days following receipt of the request.
- The request shall include a statement describing the complaint and naming the specific policy, rule or law believed to be violated.
- The principal will state his position of the question in writing to the student/parent within five (5) school days following the conference.
- Only the parent/guardian or someone acting in *loco parentis* shall be permitted to join or represent the student in the conference with the principal.

Appeal to the Chief Academic Officer or Designee (Step 2)

If the appeal is not resolved at Step 1, the student may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the appropriate Chief Academic Officer or Designee. The appeal must be made within five (5) school days following receipt of the principal's position statement in Step 1. The Chief Academic Officer or Designee shall review the appeal within five (5) school days following receipt of the appeal. A written response shall be made to the student, parent/guardian and the principal from the Chief Academic Officer or Designee within ten (10) school days following the Chief Academic Officer or Designee's review.

Appeal to the Superintendent of Schools (Step 3)

If the appeal is not resolved at Step 2, the student may appeal the Chief Academic Officer or Designee's decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools. The appeal must be made within five (5) school days following receipt of the Chief Academic Officer or Designee's position statement on Step 2.

The Superintendent or his designee shall review the grievance within five (5) school days following receipt of the appeal. A written response shall be made to the student, parent/guardian and the principal from the Superintendent or his designee within ten (10) school days following the Superintendent's review.

Appeal to the Board of Education (Step 4)

If the grievance is not resolved at Step 3, the student may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Bridgeport Public Schools in writing within ten (10) school days following the response from the Superintendent at Step 3. The Board's decision shall be determined to be final.

Annual Notification of Parental Rights Related To School Records under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, et seq. affords parents and eligible students, e.g. students over 18, emancipated minors and those attending post-secondary educational institutions, certain rights with respect to the students' educational records. These rights are as follows:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within forty-five (45) calendar days of the day the school receives a request for access.
2. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
3. The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records in cases wherein the parents/guardians or eligible students believe information is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise violates the student's privacy rights. This request should be made in writing to the school principal and should clearly identify the information in question and specify the reason the information is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise violates the student's privacy rights.
4. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
5. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personal, identifiable information (PII) from the student's educational records except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

Note: 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) or a person serving on the school Board. A school official may also include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as: an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist. A parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or a parent, student or other volunteer 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.

Upon request, the school discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

6. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

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

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' educational records without consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information and disclosures to the parent/guardian or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations, requires the school to record the disclosure. Parent/guardians and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the educational records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parent/guardian or the eligible student:

- To other school officials including teachers within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes: contractors, consultants, volunteers or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system or institution of post-secondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education or state and local educational authorities, such as the state educational agency in the parent/guardian or eligible student's state (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of federal or state-supported education programs or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To state and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a state statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

TYPE I DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES

Type I disciplinary offenses are the least serious of the three categories of offenses described in the Student Code of Conduct. Generally speaking, these offenses are not the malicious or dangerous types of behavior deserving punishment by harsher measures. Intent is the factor which distinguishes these offenses from the more serious offenses treated as Type II or Type III. To determine the category in which to place the offense, the staff member will have to evaluate the student's intent. A more complete description of each of the Type I disciplinary offenses are presented below:

1. Engaging in Pranks which do not Endanger Persons or Property

A prank is usually a practical joke or mischievous trick designed to embarrass another person, but normally not intended to endanger persons or property. Some discretion will be needed in evaluating behavior to determine if it was a prank or intended to intentionally cause harm. If a student merely intended to embarrass others, the behavior is best classified as a Type I Disciplinary Offense.

2. Throwing Food or Other Objects

Similar to pranks discussed in number one (1) above, this offense is classified as Type I because normally students do not intend personal injury or property damage when they throw food or other objects. Nonetheless, the throwing of any object is behavior that is sufficiently dangerous by its very nature to warrant some staff response whenever it happens. Besides food, the throwing of the following objects are examples of behavior which may be punished under this section: snow, ice, spitballs, rubber bands, tools, rocks, bottles, cans, cosmetics, pencils, pens or books. Of course there are many instances where the throwing of an object would be treated as Type II or Type III disciplinary offenses. For example, if a student were to throw a knife or an explosive, that would be a Type III offense. Likewise, if a student threw an object with intent to cause serious injury to another person or for the purpose of coercing or extorting from another person, that would be a Type III offense.

3. Disrupting Class, Including But Not Limited to Electronic Devices

There are types of behavior which are disruptive to the classroom. Examples of such behavior are: loud talking, refusing to sit in a chair or at a desk, failing to bring pencils, books, paper and other essential classroom study material or pushing, moving or banging on furniture. *This will include the use of wireless devices, e.g. cameras, Ipods, MP3s, cellular phones, digital recorders.* When such behavior is disruptive to the educational process within a classroom or study hall, school officials should respond in the way prescribed by the Student Code of Conduct.

4. Using a Cellular Phone or Mobile Device While in School or while Attending any School-Sponsored Function On or Off School Property

Students shall not use a mobile device or a cellular phone, e.g. MP3, IPOD, Smartphone or Tablet during school hours. If students are found using such devices, the principal can confiscate and return the device at the end of the

day and warn that repeated offenses will result in the device being confiscated for a month's time.

5. Leaving a Classroom Without Permission

There are many problems that can arise when students are outside authorized areas during the school day. Examples include: risk of injury, juvenile delinquency and increased opportunities for destruction of school and personal property.

To minimize the chance of these incidents occurring, the Student Code of Conduct treats entering unauthorized areas and leaving the school as Type I disciplinary offenses. In responding to these disciplinary offenses, school staff should be particularly sensitive to the causes of the students' desire to leave the classroom or building. In this regard, if students are trying to escape academic troubles or are attempting to leave the building to participate in some anti-social behavior, staff members should carefully analyze offenses under this category to determine the underlying antecedent.

6. Refusing to Identify Oneself to School Personnel

In order to maintain control and conduct within a building, school officials must be permitted to obtain the identification of students. Accordingly, students are under an obligation to identify themselves properly when requested to do so by a school staff member. School staff members should not abuse this section by arbitrarily requesting students to identify themselves. It is only when staff members have a valid reason to know the student's identification that such an identification should be requested.

7. Turning off Corridor, Classroom or Stairwell Lights

The purpose of this rule is, of course, to prevent injury to students and staff that might result from the unauthorized switching off of lights in the school building. Obviously, if students turn off lights pursuant to the valid instructions of a staff member for the purpose of showing a movie or doing a scientific experiment, then the action would not be punishable under this rule.

8. Improper Use of School Entrance and Exit Doors

All school doors are to be locked from the outside and only designated door(s) will be used to enter and exit the school building. All visitors desiring to enter the school building shall enter through the designated door(s). It shall be considered a disciplinary offense for students to open any designated school door(s) from the inside to unauthorized visitors or students. Further, it shall be considered a disciplinary offense for students to enter or leave the school building through any door other than the designated official school entrance. Students coming to school late must enter through the designated door. Students authorized to leave the school building prior to dismissal must be signed out and exit through the designated door.

9. Entering or Remaining in a Classroom, in a School Building, or on the Grounds Without an Authorized Purpose

School staff should be active in preventing students from entering unauthorized areas of the building and grounds. If students are found in an unauthorized area they should be asked to leave. If they refuse to comply with a valid and

reasonable request to leave the unauthorized area, then disciplinary action under this section would be appropriate.

10. Blocking or Interfering the Flow of Traffic in Corridors

Students would violate this section if they blocked or otherwise interfered with the flow of other students or staff through the corridors. Obviously, there is a certain behavior in the corridors which, while it could be said to interfere slightly with the smooth flow of traffic, does not significantly disrupt the activities of the school to warrant punishment under the Student Code of Conduct; however, whenever students materially interfere with or disrupt the movement of persons through the corridors before school, between classes or after school in such a way as to have an impact on the educational process of the school, then that would be a violation of this section, e.g. if a student interfered with the flow of traffic in the corridor in such a manner that other students were tardy for their next class. Examples of behavior in this category would be: pushing, tripping, littering or participating in disruptive sit-downs, walkouts or boycotts.

11. Displaying Inappropriate Affection (Kissing, etc.)

Students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a responsible, mature manner in school and around campus. Under this section, any inappropriate display of affection that interferes with the promotion of an educational climate, free from interference and interruptions, will be addressed with a warning to students and notice to the parent/guardian. The warning to the student may be oral, but the notice to the parent/guardian should be in writing. It is important that adequate records be maintained so that it can be documented, if necessary, that the warning was given.

12. Violation of the Uniform policy

Students in grades PK-12 are required to follow the "Mandatory School Uniform Policy." Students dress may be regulated and students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate to the school situation. Restrictions on freedom of expression may be applied whenever the mode of dress is unsafe, disruptive or contrary to law. Further, where religious practices or beliefs or health needs of the student conflict with the above, the school will provide reasonable accommodations upon written request to the principal.

PENALTIES FOR TYPE I DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES

The Student Code of Conduct describes a series of penalties that may be imposed for committing Type I offenses. It cannot be emphasized enough that the penalties in this section, such as removal from class and suspension, which require certain procedural safeguards, may not be imposed unless those procedural safeguards have been provided to the student. The one exception is in emergency situations discussed later in the Code of Conduct.

It is also important to point out that penalties described in this section may not be exceeded by a principal in the event of a Type I offense; however, it should be evident that the principal still has considerable discretion in addressing Type I offenses. The principal may impose one or several of the penalties listed below:

1. Students Will Be Removed from Class if the Offense Took Place During the Class

The provisions of the removal from class are discussed in greater detail in the Procedural Safeguards section of this Student Code of Conduct; however, several of the limitations imposed by state law will be touched upon here. First, state law provides that students may be removed from class only when they “deliberately cause a serious disruption of the educational process within the classroom.” Accordingly, staff members should be aware that this is an appropriate response to a Type I disciplinary offense only when the student has caused a serious disruption of the classroom. For example, it is difficult to imagine how reckless driving on school property could justify removal from class; however, throwing food or other objects or turning off classroom lights might be considered offenses where removal would be appropriate. Second, it is important to know what state law limits the duration of such a removal to “all or part of a single class...” Therefore, students cannot be removed from class and kept out of their next class under the provisions of this section. Third, state law provides that removal from class may not exceed 90 minutes. Therefore, if students were in a class which, for example, lasted two hours, they could not be removed from class for more than 90 minutes. After 90 minutes they would have to be permitted to return to class.

2. The Principal May Warn Students and Send a Notice to the Parents

It is recommended that, whenever possible, the first Type I disciplinary offense committed in the school-year should result in a warning to students and notice to the parent/guardian. The warning to students may be oral, but the notice to the parents should be in writing. The principal should make a record of the disciplinary offense and should retain a copy of the notice that was sent to the parents. It is important that adequate records be maintained so that it can be documented, if necessary, that the warning was given.

3. The Principal May Deprive Students of School Privileges for a Period not to Exceed Three School Days

This is an optional response to a Type I disciplinary offense which will be imposed at the discretion of the principal. For the purposes of this section, school privileges will be defined as those aspects of school life which do not involve bus transportation, cafeteria meals or courses taken for academic credit. Examples

of such privileges might be: extracurricular activities, interscholastic or intramural athletics, school dances and recreational movies. Before this penalty is imposed, the student must be informed of the reasons for the action and given an opportunity to explain the situation.

4. The Principal May Refer Students for Appropriate Counseling

While the imposition of this penalty is within the sole discretion of the principal, it is strongly suggested that counseling be utilized only with the permission of the student and parent/guardian. A student who is forced to undergo counseling is unlikely to benefit from it. Accordingly, before mandating counseling as a response to a Type I disciplinary offense, principals should actively seek parental and student permission to do so. While a principal should not secure such permission through threats of imposing harsher penalties, a student and parent may respond favorably to the option of participating in counseling rather than losing school privileges.

5. The Principal May Assign Students to Detention

Detention is an intervention used in schools where students are required to spend extra time in school. A detention usually takes place during a period after the end of the school day or before school begins. However, other times may also be used such as before the school day, weekend (traditionally known as Saturday school or Saturday detention), special activities and breaks in the school day, such as lunch or homeroom. A detention is typically carried out in a room that offers little to no amenities for pleasure so that students serving detention will have no outlet to distract. The students are usually monitored by a teacher and may be required to bring homework, sit quietly or perform some task. Such tasks may take the form of housekeeping, such as: clapping blackboard erasers or picking up rubbish; academics such as: writing an essay or answering questions or drawing. Detentions do not allow students to communicate with one another or use electronic devices, e.g. cell phones.

Uniform Policy Penalties

- **First Offense:** Verbal warning and notification to parent/guardian
- **Second Offense:** Written warning and notification to parent/guardian (The principal of each school will provide standardized letters to be utilized for student warnings and notifications to parent/guardian.)
- **Third Offense and Subsequent Offenses:** Attendance at special programs and activities will be forfeited or withheld until students come to school in uniform. **If the foregoing disciplinary measures do not achieve compliance with the Uniform Policy, the principal may impose stronger discipline.**

Note: Students transferring into the Bridgeport School District from another school or from one Bridgeport school to another during the course of a school year will be allowed a five (5) school-day grace period during which time students will not be disciplined for failing to wear the school's mandatory uniform. During this grace period, students will be encouraged to obtain and wear clothing that meets the uniform requirements. After the completion of this one-time grace period, the foregoing disciplinary procedures will go into effect to address any continuing non-compliance.

TYPE II DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES

Type II disciplinary offenses are considered more serious, malicious or dangerous than Type I offenses. These types of behavior result in more intensive interventions. A more complete description of each of the Type II disciplinary offenses are presented below:

1. **Cheating and Plagiarism**

Any form of cheating or plagiarism is not acceptable. The misrepresenting by students of homework, class work, tests, reports or other assignments, as if they were entirely their own work, shall be considered forms of cheating and/or plagiarism. Consequences of cheating shall be academic in nature unless repeated incidences require disciplinary action.

2. **Fighting**

Fighting occurs when two or more students are actively engaged in hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping or otherwise attempting to hurt each other. Even though one student may "start the fight," one or more students may be guilty of fighting if they offer more than passive resistance against the instigator and aggressively attempt to harm the instigator. Students who are attacked by another student can avoid violating this section by retreating or offering only enough resistance to avoid self-injury without inflicting harm on the instigator.

3. **Intentionally Defying a Valid Request of a School Staff Member**

This offense is often called "insubordination." For the purpose of the Student Code of Conduct, it is defined as deliberate defiance or repeated refusal to comply with reasonable requests of school administrators, teachers or other personnel. Examples of such reasonable requests are: to disperse, identify oneself, be seated, be quiet or report to assigned areas or rooms for disciplinary or educational purposes. No student shall be guilty of this offense for refusing to comply with a request of a school official which is not connected with the staff member's official responsibility. However, whenever students refuse to comply with a reasonable and valid request in a staff member's official capacity, students will be guilty of violating this section.

4. **Intentionally Threatening another Person with Physical Injury or Property Damage**

Students are guilty of a violation in this section whenever they use a threat to intentionally place or attempt to place another person in fear of physical injury or property damage.

5. **Forcing other Persons to Engage in Conduct in which They Have a Legal Right to Refuse to Participate**

Students violate this section when they compel or induce other persons to engage in conduct from which the latter has a legal right to abstain and when they compel or induce those persons to abstain from engaging in conduct in which they have a legal right to engage. Accordingly, this section not only prohibits students from forcing another to participate in an activity, but also prohibits students from blocking or forcing another student to forgo activity that is otherwise lawful. An example of the former might be a student who forces

another student to provide answers to an exam. An example of the latter might be a student who forces another student not to participate in a particular activity so that the first student has a better chance to make a team or otherwise succeed.

6. Directing Profane, Vulgar or Disrespectful Language at School Staff Members or Other Students

Although the Student Code of Conduct provides adequate response to students' behavior that is disruptive, Bridgeport Public Schools believe it is essential that students are not permitted to insult and degrade staff members and therefore prohibit profane and abusive language directed at staff members.

7. Disrupting the Educational Process in an Area Other than a Single Classroom

Students violate this section when they disrupt the educational process in an area other than a classroom, for example: engaging in disruptive behavior in a corridor which disrupts the learning atmosphere in several classrooms. Other areas would be a school auditorium where several classes may have gathered for an educational program or a school library where many students may be reading or studying. Since violations of the section disrupt the learning of more students than would be affected by disruption of a classroom, the possible penalties are more severe.

8. Harassing Conduct, Written or Verbal Conduct, Directed at a Person Because of His/Her Sex, Race, Ethnicity or Sexual Preference

Students violate this section where their behavior is intimidating, hostile, demeaning or offensive. If the harassment includes threats of violence, it would be flagrant and aggravated and disciplinary action would need to reflect severity; that also includes harassment using an electronic device.

9. Stealing, Damaging or Defacing School Property or the Property of Others

Students violate this section whenever they damage, deface or take possession of school property or the property of others, without the permission of the owner or person in legal custody of that property. This section also prohibits the taking of school property or the property of others through embezzlement or under false pretenses.

10a. Vandalism: By Minors

The parents/guardians of minor/un-emancipated children, who willfully cut, deface or otherwise injure in any way, any real or personal property belonging to the school district, will be held liable for all such damages up to the maximum amount allowed by state law. The liability provided under Connecticut General Statutes 52-572 does not relieve the minor of personal liability for such damage or injury or relieve the parents/guardians for damages done by minor child and is in addition to any other liability which exists in law. The parents/guardians of minor children will also be held liable for all property belonging to the school system lent to the minor and not returned upon demand of the school district. The minor may also be subject to disciplinary action.

10b. Vandalism: By Adult Student

Adult students shall be held personally liable for any damage done to any property, real or personal, belonging to the school district. The students may be subject to disciplinary action.

11. Violating Emergency Evacuation Regulations

Students violate this section whenever they breach emergency evacuation regulations by talking, pushing, shoving, tripping, blocking doors or corridor lanes, committing acts interfering with the evacuation and smooth flow of traffic or create a substantial rush of panic by preventing others from hearing evacuation orders during a fire, air raid or other emergency drill. Satisfactory evacuation procedures are essential to the safety of every student in the schools.

12. Recklessly Driving on School Property, in Parking Lots or in Areas Directly Adjacent to the School

It is not only a violation of the Student Code of Conduct but a violation of state law to drive a motor vehicle in a reckless manner on any road, sidewalk, parking area or school property. Examples of such reckless driving would be: driving at high rates of speed, racing or failing to observe pedestrian crosswalks.

13. Being Found with Any Type of Paraphernalia Normally Associated with the Use of Drugs, e.g. Tobacco Rolling Papers, Bongs, Clips, Pipes and Needles

When such paraphernalia is found in the possession of a student, it will be submitted to the police for analysis. If any analysis shows drug use or possession, the students will be charged with having committed a Type II disciplinary offense.

14. Leaving School Building or Grounds Without Permission

This section has the same concerns as Type I, # 5 - Leaving a Classroom without Permission. In leaving the school building or grounds without permission, students place themselves in danger, as well as increasing the opportunity for destruction of school and personal property.

15. Engaging in Inappropriate Sexual Behavior

Students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a responsible, mature manner in the school and around the campus. Under this section, inappropriate sexual behavior will be defined as conduct which has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the educational climate.

16. Smoking On School Grounds/School Buses

State law prohibits lighting or carrying a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe or similar item in any school area including school grounds. The Student Code of Conduct reinforces state law by prohibiting students from smoking in any area in the school or on school grounds. State law and the Student Code of Conduct also prohibit smoking during traveling on a school bus. It is the policy of the Bridgeport Public Schools that there is no smoking, use or possession of tobacco in any form, anywhere in school buildings, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. Violations for this Type II offense also occur whenever students possess matches, lighters or other items that promote combustion that are of no reasonable use to students at school.

As noted in the Student Code of Conduct, the term “possessing” is defined as holding, carrying or storing a prohibited object or substance on or in students’ body, clothing, hat, purse, wallet, handbag, carrying case of any type, locker, desk, chair, automobile, bicycle, motorcycle, book, tablet, pen or pencil or in any way or manner whatsoever holding, carrying or storing a prohibited object or substance.

PENALTIES FOR TYPE II DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES

The Student Code of Conduct describes a series of penalties that may be imposed for committing Type II offenses. It cannot be emphasized enough that the penalties in this section, such as removal from class and suspension, require certain procedural safeguards, previously described. Penalties may not be imposed unless those procedural safeguards have been provided to the student. The one exception is in emergency situations discussed later in the Student Code of Conduct - Type III Disciplinary Offenses. It should be evident that the principal still has considerable discretion in dealing with Type II offenses. The principal may impose one or several of the penalties listed below:

- 1. The Student Will be Removed from Class if the Offense Took place During Class**
See discussion above regarding penalties for Type I disciplinary offense and the section on Procedural Safeguards.

- 2. The Principal Will Request a Conference with the Student and Parent/Guardian**
Under the Student Code of Conduct, a principal is required to request a parental conference with the student present whenever the student commits a Type II offense. There are two important points about this conference: first, the conference need not precede or replace other penalties which may be imposed for Type II offenses and second, the principal is required only to request the conference (conferences need not take place if the student and/or parent/guardian decline the request. The principal should do what is reasonable to schedule the conference at a time and place that are convenient to the student and parent/guardian, but there is no requirement that the conference take place outside the school building or beyond the regular school hours.

- 3. The Student Will Repair, Restore or Provide Restitution for Any Damaged or Stolen Property**
Restorative justice principles involve those who have a stake in a specific offense in collectively identifying and addressing the harm done and the needs and obligations of all involved in order to heal and correct the situation as fully as possible. Bridgeport Public Schools encourages principals and administrators to adopt and implement restorative justice philosophies and practices as additional tools to address student misconduct.

Note: Students must learn the consequences of their behavior. A good vehicle for reinforcing that responsibility is to require that students do whatever is necessary so that the loss occasioned by their theft or damage is as minimal as possible. For example, when in the course of committing a Type II disciplinary offense, a student damages or steals school property or the property of another,

the principal is required to establish procedures so that the property is repaired or restored or restitution is provided for the property. The issue of whether the student should restore or provide restitution for stolen or damaged property is one that will have to be worked out between the student and the principal. The student and principal should also work out a timetable for accomplishing the repair or restitution.

Refer to Appendix C for further clarification regarding the goals of Restorative Justice.

4. The principal may assign in-school suspension.

5. The Principal May Deprive the Student of School Privileges Not to Exceed Five School Days

In penalties for Type I offenses #3 regarding the deprivation of school privileges is relevant here as well, with the exception that the penalty may last five (5) school days rather than three (3) school days as imposed for a Type I disciplinary offense. Before this penalty may be imposed, students must be informed of the reasons for the action and given an opportunity to explain the situation.

6. The Principal May Require the Student to Serve Detention

Detention may be imposed at the discretion of the principal provided the charges are stated to students and students are given an opportunity to explain the situation. If detention is unlikely to have any substantial impact on the students' behavior or is disadvantageous for other reasons, such as dependence on school transportation, then the principal may decline to impose detention. However, rather than foregoing detention simply because a student plays a sport or has a job after school, the principal may consider requiring the student to report to school before the beginning of the school day.

7. The Principal May Refer the Student to School Security Staff, Community Counseling Program and/or Law Enforcement

Students' developmental levels should be taken into consideration. In so far as many of the Type II disciplinary offenses may also constitute violations of the state criminal law, principals have the option of referring students who have committed Type II disciplinary offenses to local law enforcement officials and/or the school security staff. When, in the opinion of the principal the student has committed a criminal act, the principal should seriously consider referring the student to law enforcement or school security personnel. While such referral is not required by the Student Code of Conduct, principals should exercise caution when they fail to report activity that is clearly in violation of the state criminal law. School officials will respect confidential communication as defined in Connecticut General Statutes 10-154a in matters concerning drug violations.

8. The Principal May Suspend the Student Out of School or, in the Event of Repeated, Aggravated or Flagrant Offenses, May Recommend the Student for Expulsion

Under the Student Code of Conduct, suspension is an optional penalty for Type II disciplinary offenses and may be imposed if the principal determines that the behavior was an endangerment to persons or property or was a serious

disruption to the educational process and if all procedural safeguards have been observed.

For repeated, aggravated or flagrant Type II disciplinary offenses, the principal has the additional option of referring students for expulsion. This referral may be made within the sole discretion of the principal as long as all procedural safeguards are observed. The procedural safeguards for an expulsion are more elaborate than those for suspension. For example: students are entitled to written notice of the charges, a formal hearing before the Bridgeport Board of Education or its Hearing Officer, where students have the right to question live witnesses and receive a written decision within 10 days of the hearing. A referral for expulsion will be made only with the concurrence of the Superintendent or his/her designee. The full details of the suspension procedures are discussed later in this Student Code of Conduct.

Note: It will not always be easy to determine when an offense is aggravated or flagrant. Generally speaking, a Type II offense is aggravated or flagrant if it is done with outrageous and conspicuous disregard for the safety of others.

Schools are often the first to identify students who are experiencing severe emotional, behavioral or family problems; when such needs are identified, school staff can make referrals to support services for truancy intervention and/or behavioral concerns.

The SRBI Team, consisting of administrators and support staff, will meet and review the student's situation before making a referral. In many instances, the school-based team will meet with the parent/guardian at school to describe the services that are available and attempt to engage the parents in a voluntary case plan.

Re-focus Room

When students violate the Student Code of Conduct, an opportunity to learn from their mistakes may be employed. A re-focus room will be used as a way to help students solve the problem and develop new skills. For example: students will have an opportunity to reflect on what they did and why, develop and understand appropriate behavior and develop a sense of personal goals. The three main components of the re-focus room will be academic, process-oriented and social-emotional. These three components will work together to help students develop the skills they need to be successful in school.

TYPE III DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES

Type III disciplinary offenses are the most serious of the three categories of offenses described in the Student Code of Conduct. These offenses are of a malicious or dangerous nature and subject to the most intensive measures. The Bridgeport Public Schools has a **zero tolerance** policy for all Type III Disciplinary Offenses. Students who commit a Type III offense will be subject to a ten (10) day Out-of-School Suspension and may be referred for Expulsion. Please refer to the Developmentally Age Appropriate section – Appendix B. A more complete description of each of the Type III disciplinary offenses is listed below:

1. Using Threats or Force to Make Other Persons Give Up Money or Property They Have a Right to Possess

This is commonly known as extortion. State law defines extortion as “obtaining property through coercion or by means of instilling fear that if property is not delivered, the person will cause physical, property or reputational damage.” Connecticut General Statutes § 10-233d.

2. Stealing School Property or the Property of Others by Using Force Against Another Person

Students are in violation whenever actual force is used to steal school property or the property of others. Of course there may be some situations, particularly in the elementary and middle schools, where the principals, at their discretion, may decide that the offense does not rise to the level of a Type III offense.

3. Starting a Fire or Causing an Explosion with Intent to Damage School or Personal Property

Students are in violation of this section when they commit an act of arson. Intent is a critical element in proving this offense; however, if based on the preponderance of evidence, school officials conclude that a fire or explosion was caused with the intent to destroy or damage the building, school or personal property, students may be penalized under this section.

4. Sounding or Reporting a False Emergency Alarm

Students are in violation of this section whenever they intentionally set off a false alarm or falsely report or warn of fire, explosion, crime or other emergency that could require closing or evacuation of the school for any period of time. It is not necessary that such closing or evacuation actually occur.

5. Intentionally Causing Serious Injury or Physical Assault to Another Person

Serious injury is defined as an injury that requires the injured person to miss one or more days of school or causes a temporary or permanent impairment of one or more major life functions. Physical assault is defined as having intentional physical contact with another person without consent and causing personal injury by any show of force.

6. Threatening or Assaulting a Staff Member

Students are in violation of this section whenever they: threaten to intentionally place or attempt to place a staff member in fear of property damage, in fear of

personal injury by any show of force or have physical contact with a staff member with intent to cause harm.

7. Engaging in Violent Conduct that Intentionally or Recklessly Causes Physical Injury or Substantial Property Damage

Violent conduct would include rioting or engaging in fighting or other tumultuous or threatening behavior in the school. Behavior of this nature would be considered reckless if it is likely to cause physical injury or substantial property damage even though the student may not specifically intend to cause physical injury or substantial property damage.

8. Sexual Assault on Another Person

Sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person or any sexual act committed without consent. Refer to Connecticut state statute sec. 53a-70, 53a-71, 52a-72a, and 53a-73a. **See Student/Staff Sexual Harassment Policy**

9. Hazing

Hazing is defined as any form or type of physical, verbal and/or emotional mistreatment, abuse and/or harassment of a student in connection with a student's participation in or membership on an interscholastic athletic team or in any school-sponsored activities and/or forcing, coercing or intimidating any student to participate in any illegal or inappropriate activities in connection with the student's participation or membership in the foregoing. Hazing is prohibited whether it occurs during, prior to or after the season or school day. **See Hazing Policy**

10. Possession of any Controlled Substance With or Without the Intent to Sell

Any unauthorized possession of a controlled substance, illegal drug or alcohol is covered under this infraction. Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, possession alone is a Type III offense and may be subject to expulsion.

11. Possessing any Firearm, Knife, Explosive or Other Dangerous Object

Any weapon or dangerous instrument found in a student's possession or brought onto the school's premises, on school buses, at any school-sponsored activity, on or off school premises, will result in an automatic ten (10) day suspension and mandatory referral for expulsion.

PENALTIES FOR TYPE III DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES

In all Type III offenses the principal will convene a meeting with the SRBI team to assess the student's developmental age and determine appropriate consequences. If the student is deemed not capable of understanding his/her actions and ramifications, the administration will recommend a developmentally appropriate consequence (please refer to the developmentally appropriate section Appendix D). The following are Type III consequences:

1. The student will receive ten (10) days of out- of- school suspension.
2. The principal will refer the student for expulsion.
3. A student who is in possession of a weapon is subject to mandatory referral for expulsion.

4. A student who is in possession of a controlled substance, with the intent to sell, is subject to mandatory referral for expulsion.
5. A student who makes threats/assaults on a staff member may be referred for expulsion and reassigned to a different school.

Additionally, any student in violation of a Type III offense will be:

- Referred to law enforcement officials and/or to the school security staff
- Referred to appropriate social service agency when drugs and/or alcohol are involved
- Required to repair, restore or provide restitution for any damaged or stolen property

PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSIONS

A student may be expelled only after a hearing before the Board of Education or its Hearing Officer. The Superintendent or his/her designee must concur in any referral for expulsion. A student may be excluded from school pending the hearing provided the procedures for a suspension have been followed. However, in accordance with Connecticut Statutes, such a suspension may last no more than ten (10) school days.

The Student Code of Conduct establishes that the Board of Education or its Hearing Officer will conduct an expulsion hearing within ten (10) days after receiving the referral for expulsion. If this schedule is followed, there should rarely be a case where a student who has been suspended pending an expulsion hearing may return to the school before the expulsion hearing is held.

DRUG OFFENSES AND WEAPONS

Pursuant to Connecticut Statute, a student who is in possession of a firearm on school grounds or who uses a dangerous or deadly weapon in the commission of a crime, or offer for sale or distribution, illegal drugs on or off school grounds, shall be excluded for one calendar year. The Board of Education or Hearing Officer may modify the length of the expulsion on a case by case basis.

Firearms include any weapon or part of a weapon that may be capable of expelling a projectile by explosive action including guns, pistols, facsimile weapons, BB guns and any destructive device including explosive or incendiary devices, bombs, grenades, rockets or fireworks. Deadly and dangerous weapons include any device capable of causing death or serious bodily injury and not approved for school use including knives, stun guns, box cutters and martial arts weapons.

APPENDIX A – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

For the purpose of understanding and implementing the policy and administrative regulations on drugs and alcohol, the following terms are defined:

1. **Administrator or Designee:** an employee of the Board of Education holding an intermediate administrator's certificate. **Designee:** Any employee of the Board of Education acting in place of an administrator.
2. **Alcohol:** any intoxicating liquid (also see definition of drugs).
3. **CIAC:** The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference
4. **Confidentiality:** school administrators, teachers and support staff who hear confidential communications may or may not disclose them in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 10-154a. However, if in the course of such confidential student communications, physical evidence is obtained, such evidence must be turned over to a school administrator who shall turn the evidence over to the police within three (3) days. The name of the student turning over such evidence shall not be disclosed in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 10-154a (b), (c), as amended.
5. **Confiscation:** when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a student is in possession of drugs, there is an obligation on the part of school personnel to search for and seize such drugs. Such search and seizure may involve school lockers, cars on school property, clothing, purses, book bags, books and other personal property. Reasonable efforts will be made to secure the student's voluntary agreement to the search and to have the student present at the time of the search. All confiscated drugs will be turned over to the police as soon as possible, certainly within three (3) days in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 10-154 (c).
6. **Dangerous Instrument:** any instrument, article or substance, which under the circumstances is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury and includes a "vehicle" as that term is defined in this section.
7. **Deadly Weapon:** any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon or brass knuckles.
8. **Distribution:** to give possession of a drug to another person whether or not for compensation.
9. **Drugs:** any alcoholic beverage, controlled substance, illegal substance or prescribed medication for which the student does not have a prescription from a licensed physician or dentist.

- 10. Drug Paraphernalia:** any object or device used, intended for use or designed for use in ingesting, inhaling, injecting or otherwise introducing controlled substances into the human body, (e.g. razor blades, bong, pipes, roach clips, tobacco rolling papers) or any object or container used, intended for use or designed for use in storing, concealing or distributing controlled substances.
- 11. Expulsion:** exclusion from school attendance and privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days.
- 12. Emergency Suspension:** exclusion from school attendance and privileges for as long as the emergency exists, but no more than three (3) consecutive school days. An emergency shall mean a situation where the continued presence of the student in school poses a danger to persons/property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing cannot be effectively held prior to excluding the student from school.
- 13. Firearm:** any weapon that will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer or any destructive device, including any explosive, incendiary, poisonous gas device, including a bomb, a grenade, a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter (1/4) ounce, a mine or similar device or any weapon that will or may be converted to more than a half inch (1/2") in diameter.
- 14. Hearing (Administrative):** a meeting with a school administrator where charges are made and an opportunity for explanation provided.
- 15. Hearing before the Board of Education:** such a hearing is usually for consideration of a recommendation for expulsion of a student (see Connecticut General Statutes § 10-233d).
- 16. In-School Program:** any special program, as may be established by the school, to provide counseling and opportunities for restorative justice to students who are found to be in violation of this and other school policies.
- 17. In-School Suspension:** procedure in which the assigned student spends the full day in a restricted area away from the rest of the students. During this experience, students will be properly supervised and supplied with work assignments. Please refer to Public Act 10-111 and General Statute Section 1-233C
- 18. Law Enforcement Authorities:** any legally constituted local, state or federal agency authorized to enforce the law of the community, state or federal government.
- 19. Martial Arts Weapon:** a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or Chinese star.
- 20. Out-of-School Suspension:** exclusion from school attendance and privileges for a definite period not to exceed ten (10) consecutive school days. Each day of

suspension shall be considered a full day of excused absence. Please refer to Guidelines for In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions:
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/pressroom/In_School_Suspension_Guidance.pdf

21. **Possession:** any possession which is unlawful under Connecticut State Law, (e.g. holding or having on one's person or belongings the like or any drug or alcoholic beverage, which includes one's automobile, locker, backpack, carry case).
22. **Principal:** administrator responsible for the students, building and/or activity.
23. **Punitive Action:** a punishment by school authorities in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 10-233 and published school regulations approved by the Board of Education.
24. **Social Service Agencies:** town, state or private social or psychological providers that provide counseling assistance to individuals with concerns related to alcohol or drugs.
25. **Scientific Research-Based Intervention Team (SRBI) Team:** a team consisting of the principal and/or the assistant principal, a guidance counselor and other staff as required, for example: a psychologist. The SRBI Team or designated representatives from the team will meet with a student returning to school from either a disciplinary suspension or other program. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the returning student with a support network for his/her return to the school environment.
26. **Use:** to ingest, inject or otherwise cause a drug to reach the bloodstream or digestive tract.
27. **Zero Tolerance:** policy of punishing any disciplinary infraction of a rule within the scope of developmental age appropriateness and due consideration of pertinent mitigating circumstances.

APPENDIX B – DEVELOPMENTALLY AGE APPROPRIATE CONDUCT

Developmentally Age Appropriate Conduct

The Board recognizes that students of different grades and ages are at different developmental levels, thus their behavior will be different and may call for different responses. In determining the appropriate level of interventions and consequences in addition to mitigating circumstances, school officials should consider the grade level and age of the student. This approach may result in a less severe intervention and consequence for a lower grade or younger student as compared to a higher grade or older student.

APPENDIX C – RESTORATIVE JUSTICE GOALS

- Promote healing for all affected parties
- Provide an opportunity for the offender to make amends
- Empower victims, community members, families and offenders by giving them a voice and a shared responsibility in finding constructive resolutions
- Address the underlying cause(s) of offensive behavior
- Build a sense of community and its capacity for resolving conflict
- Promote and share community values
- Improve school culture
- Hold offenders accountable for the harm they have caused to the school community
- Provide school communities with human resources that can assist in maintaining a positive school climate
- Determine a fair and restorative sentence or disposition
- Provide an opportunity for the victim to be directly involved in the discussion of the offense and in decisions regarding appropriate sanctions to be placed on the offender
- Increase the offender's awareness of the human impact of his or her behavior and provide an opportunity to take full responsibility for it
- Engage the collective responsibility of the offender's support system for making amends and shaping the offender's future behavior
- Allow both offender and victim to reconnect to key community support systems
- Help offenders understand the impact of their offenses on victims and communities
- Provide victims with a structured, positive outlet to share their personal experiences and to educate offenders and others about the physical, emotional and financial consequences of offenses
- Build a partnership among victim service providers and community agencies that can raise the individual and community awareness of the short and long term impacts of crime

Some examples are: community service, peer mediation, group/family counseling.

APPENDIX D- DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES AND PENALTIES CHART

Type I Behaviors	Continuum of Consequences	Range of Possible Support Interventions to be Integrated
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engaging in Pranks which do not Endanger Persons or Property 2. Throwing Food or Objects 3. Disrupting Class, including but not limited to Electronic Devices 4. Using a Cellular phone or mobile device while in School or while attending any School -Sponsored Function on or off School Property. 5. Leaving a Classroom without Permission 6. Refusing to Identify oneself to School Personnel 7. Turning off Corridor, Classroom or Stairwell Lights 8. Improper use of School Entrance and Exit Doors 9. Entering or Remaining in a Classroom, in a School Building or on the Grounds without an Authorized Purpose 10. Blocking or Interfering the Flow of Traffic in Corridors 11. Displaying Inappropriate Affection (kissing, etc.) 12. Violation of the Uniform Policy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student will be removed from class 2. Principal may warn student and send notice to parent. 3. Principal may deprive student of school privileges for a period not to exceed three (3) school days 4. Principal may refer student for appropriate counseling 5. Principal may assign student to detention. 6. For cell phone and mobile device use, the principal can confiscate and return the device at the end of the day and warn that repeated offenses will result in the device being confiscated for 1 month's time. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent Outreach 2. Classroom detention 3. Referral to school counseling staff 4. Individual/group counseling 5. Peer mediation 6. Mentoring Program 7. Conflict resolution 8. Development of individual behavior contract 9. Short-term behavioral progress reports 10. Referral to SRBI Team 11. Community service (with parental consent) 12. Referral to a Community-Based Organization (CBO) 13. Referral to PPT (Planning & Placement Team)

Type II Behaviors	Continuum of Consequences	Range of Possible Support Interventions to be Integrated
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cheating or Plagiarism 2. Fighting 3. Intentionally Defying a Valid Request of a School Staff Member 4. Intentionally Threatening Another Person with Physical Injury or Property Damage 5. Forcing other Persons to Engage in Conduct in which they have a Legal Right to Refuse to Participate 6. Directing Profane, Vulgar or Disrespectful Language at School Staff Members or other Students 7. Disrupting the Educational Process in an Area other than a Single Classroom 8. Harassing Conduct, Written or Verbal Conduct, Directed at a Person because of His/Her Sex, Race, Ethnicity or Sexual Preference 9. Stealing, Damaging or Defacing School Property or the Property of Others 10. Vandalism - By Minors Vandalism - By Adult Student 11. Violating Emergency Evacuation Regulations 12. Recklessly Driving on School Property, in Parking Lots or in Areas Directly Adjacent to the School 13. Being Found with any Type of Paraphernalia Normally Associated with the Use of Drugs, e.g. Tobacco Rolling Papers, Bongs, Clips, Pipes and Needles 14. Leaving School Building or School Grounds Without Permission 15. Engaging in Inappropriate Sexual Behavior 16. Smoking On School Grounds/School Buses 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student will be removed from class if offense took place during class time. 2. Principal will request a conference with student and parent/guardian. 3. Student will repair, restore or provide restitution for any damaged or stolen property 4. Principal may assign in-school suspension 5. Principal may deprive student of school privileges not to exceed five (5) school days 6. Principal may require student to serve detention. 7. Principal may refer to school security, community counseling, and/or law enforcement. 8. Principal may suspend the student out-of-school or in the event of repeated, aggravated or flagrant offenses, may recommend for expulsion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent Outreach 2. Classroom detention 3. Referral to school counseling staff 4. Individual/group counseling 5. Peer mediation 6. Mentoring Program 7. Conflict resolution 8. Development of individual behavior contract 9. Short-term behavioral progress reports 10. Referral to SRBI Team 11. Community service (with parental consent) 12. Referral to a Community-Based Organization (CBO) 13. Referral to appropriate substance abuse counseling services 14. Referral to PPT (Planning and Placement Team)

Type III Behaviors	Continuum of Consequences	Range of Possible Support Interventions to be Integrated
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using Threats or Force to Make other Persons Give up Money or Property They Have a Right to Possess 2. Stealing School Property or the Property of others by Using Force Against Another Person 3. Starting a Fire or Causing an Explosion with Intent to Damage School or Personal Property 4. Sounding or Reporting a False Emergency Alarm 5. Intentionally Causing Serious Injury or Physical Assault to Another Person 6. Threatening or Assaulting a Staff Member 7. Engaging in Violent Conduct that Intentionally or Recklessly Causes Physical Injury or Substantial Property Damage 8. Sexual Assault on Another Person 9. Hazing 10. Possession of Any Controlled Substance with or without the Intent to sell 11. Possessing any Firearm, Knife, Explosive, or other Dangerous Object 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student will receive 10 days of out-of-school suspension 2. Principal will refer student for expulsion. 3. Student who is possession of a weapon is subject to mandatory referral for expulsion. 4. Student who is possession of a controlled substance with the intent to sell is subject to mandatory referral for expulsion. 5. Student who makes threats/assaults on a staff member may be referred for expulsion and reassigned to a different school. 6. Student will be referred to school security and/or law enforcement. 7. Student will be referred to appropriate social service agency when drugs and/or alcohol are involved. 8. Student may be required to repair, restore, or provide restitution for damaged or stolen property. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent Outreach 2. Referral to school counseling staff 3. Individual/group counseling 4. Peer mediation 5. Mentoring Program 6. Conflict resolution 7. Development of individual behavior support plan 8. Short-term behavioral progress reports 9. Referral to SRBI Team 10. Community service (with parental consent) 11. Referral to a Community Based Organization (CBO) 12. Referral to appropriate substance abuse counseling services 13. Referral to PPT (Planning and Placement Team) 14. Referral to Law Enforcement or School Security

**APPENDIX E - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF
THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Bridgeport Public Schools
Student Agreement**

I, _____ (print student's name) have received and read the Student Code of Conduct (SCC) for the Bridgeport Public Schools. I am aware of my rights and responsibilities under the SCC. Furthermore, I understand that acts of misconduct or inappropriate student behavior will result in interventions and consequences as stated under the SCC.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Agreement

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Bridgeport Public Schools believes that you should be informed regarding our effort to create and maintain a safe and secure learning environment for all students. Please read the Student Code of Conduct (SCC) and sign the document below to acknowledge your receipt and understanding of the SCC.

I am the parent or guardian of the above named student. I have received and read the SCC. I understand that by signing this document, I agree to support and promote the goals of the SCC and make every effort to work with the school in resolving all disciplinary matters.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date