

# Belton Preparatory Academy



2024-2025

Parent / Student Handbook

## Table of Contents

### **Belton Preparatory Academy**

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### **ADMINISTRATION**

Principal

Deirdre McCullough, M.Ed.

[dmccullough@beltonprep.us](mailto:dmccullough@beltonprep.us)

### **Introduction**

This Parent/Student Handbook describes Belton Preparatory Academy’s (“BPA” or the “School”) current policies, rules, and procedures concerning matters that affect our students and their parents. Policies, rules, and procedures described in this handbook are provided for the information and guidance of students and their parents and do not constitute, nor should they be relied on, as contractual obligations of BPA to any student, parent, or other person. Further, the policies, rules, and procedures included are not all-inclusive and are not intended to address all possible applications of or exceptions to all the policies, rules, and procedures of BPA. BPA reserves the right to revise, amend, modify, or terminate its policies, rules, and procedures at any time, with or without prior notice. The policies and procedures contained herein apply to all students enrolled at BPA. Parents are encouraged to review and discuss these policies, rules, and procedures with your child(ren) and to contact your child(ren)’s teacher or the Principal with any questions you may have about the application or interpretation of any specific policies, rules, or procedures.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Belton Preparatory Academy Preparatory, as set forth in its charter, is to prepare its students to compete at the highest levels of academics, with integrity, using a proven curriculum, Core Knowledge, and through the core programmatic feature of entrepreneurship used in tandem with an organized wellness program. The School shall operate in a manner consistent with the mission statement.

## **Organizational Structure**

BPA is a public charter school organized pursuant to and operating in accordance with the South Carolina Charter Schools Act and the School's charter and charter contract approved by its sponsor, the Charter Institute at Erskine.

The School is governed by the Board of Directors (the "Board"), which generally sets policy, adopts curriculum and instructional programs, and supervises fiscal and operational matters. The Board is comprised of seven members, four of whom are elected by current employees and parents of enrolled students, and three of whom are appointed. Parents of enrolled students are eligible to participate in Board nominations and elections in accordance with the School's bylaws, charter, and applicable laws.

The Principal is generally responsible for managing the School's education program and day-to-day operations in accordance with Board policies, actions, and decisions. The Principal serves as the liaison between the Board and the School and will generally present matters that require Board action to the Board. The Board primarily interacts with the School community through discussion with and direction to the Principal.

## **Parents / Legal Guardians**

For purposes of this handbook and School rules, policies, and procedures, the term "parent" means: a biological parent; an adoptive parent; a foster parent (unless applicable law, regulations, or contractual obligations with the State or a State agency prohibit a foster parent from acting as a parent); a guardian lawfully authorized to act as the child's parent or authorized to make educational decisions for the child (but not the State if the child is a ward of the State); a person lawfully acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (e.g., stepparent, grandparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or a person who is otherwise legally responsible for the child's care and welfare; or a surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with applicable laws. If the School receives a valid court order or other valid legal documentation identifying a specific person to act as the "parent" of a child or to make educational decisions for or on behalf of the child, then such person shall be determined to be the "parent" of the child for School and education purposes.

BPA does not involve itself in child custody and other domestic matters. Unless prohibited by a court order or applicable law, each biological or adoptive parent, whether the custodial or non-custodial parent, shall have equal access and the same right to obtain information and records concerning their child[ren]'s education and to participate in their child[ren]'s school activities. It is the parents' responsibility to provide the Principal (or designee) with copies of current court orders and related legal documents concerning custody and parental rights. When a person other than a parent has been appointed legal guardian, it is the legal guardian's responsibility to provide the Principal (or designee) with copies of current court orders and related legal documents evidencing their appointment and the terms and conditions of the guardianship. BPA will follow the most current court order on file.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

BPA is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all students, parents, and other persons who participate or seek to participate in its programs and activities. BPA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, or other class, status, or characteristic protected by applicable law. BPA also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other youth groups as required by law. Individuals with questions or complaints regarding the School's nondiscrimination policies may contact the Principal, Deirdre McCullough, or the Title IX Coordinator, Patti Barrett, in person or in writing at 3201 Hwy 29 N, Belton, SC 29627, by phone at (864) 392-1173, or by email at [dmcullough@beltonprep.us](mailto:dmcullough@beltonprep.us) or [pbarrett@beltonprep.us](mailto:pbarrett@beltonprep.us). Any person who is unable to resolve a complaint arising under any applicable nondiscrimination laws may contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-1475; Telephone 1-800-877-8339; Email at [OCR.DC@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.DC@ed.gov).

### **Student Code of Conduct**

While attending school and participating in school activities and events (on or off School property), and to provide an orderly and safe educational environment, all students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that adheres to the following Code of Conduct:

1. We cheerfully and promptly obey the authority under which we are placed.
2. We can appeal respectfully and courteously. We do not argue or negotiate.
3. We love and honor one another.
4. We give encouragement to one another.
5. We do not point out shortcomings of others in order to build ourselves up.
6. We will tell the truth.
7. We do not disrespect the classroom and teacher by interrupting.
8. We do not spread rumors or gossip.
9. We will not make excuses for our wrong actions but will admit them.
10. We will avoid cliques, clubs, or games that exclude others.
11. When others are sorry, we forgive them.

12. When others are sad, we comfort them.
13. When we have work to do, we do it without complaining.
14. If we make a mess, we clean it up.
15. We treat one another with respect and patience.

BPA faculty and staff will reinforce these expectations through instruction and appropriate student discipline. Students will be held accountable for their behavior in accordance with the Code of Conduct and other student conduct policies, rules, and procedures.

### **Academics, Grading, and Reports**

Teachers are responsible for communicating grading standards and performance expectations to students and parents. School and classroom grading scales and standards will be consistent with applicable uniform grading policies developed and adopted under state laws and regulations. Teachers will communicate with parents when a student's work or progress is unsatisfactory or otherwise not meeting expectations.

#### **Grading Guidelines for Kindergarten**

The following letter grading scale is used to assess and report a kindergarten student's progress:

**E=Excellent:** Performs at a 90-100% mastery of SC State Standards.

**S=Satisfactory:** Performs at an 80-89% mastery of SC State Standards

**P=Partial:** Performs at a 70-79% mastery of SC State Standards

**N=Needs Improvement:** Limited mastery of standards; 0-69%

#### **Grading Guidelines for Grades 1-8**

Students in grades 1-8 will earn numerical grades. The following numerical grading scale and traditional letter grades are used to assess and report student progress in grades 1-8:

**A = 90%-100% and above = denotes excellent progress**

**B = 80%-89% = denotes above average progress**

**C = 70%-79% = denotes average progress**

**D = 60%-69% = denotes below average progress**

**F = Below 60% = denotes unsatisfactory progress**

In grades 1-8, a student's numerical grade is determined by the following weighting of assignment grades:

- Grades 1-5: summative (major) - 40% and formative (minor) - 60%
- Grades 6-8: summative (major) - 60% and formative (minor) - 40%
- Algebra 1: summative (major) - 60% and formative (minor)- 40%; End-of-Course Exam will count 20% of the final grade.

A student's final grade for the school year (with exception of Algebra 1) is an average of the student's Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4 grades. To receive credit for a course, a student must complete the course and instructional requirements with a numerical grade equal to 60% or above

and must also satisfy the applicable attendance policy requirements. A student who fails to meet all applicable academic and attendance requirements for a course will not receive credit for that course, which may affect promotion to the next grade level.

### Other Grading Guidelines

Related Arts are graded as Pass (P) or Fail (F) for students in grades 1-5 and on the numerical grading scale for students in grades 6-8.

PE/Health is graded on in the informal letter grading scale (E, S, P, N) for students in K-5 and on the numerical grading scale for students in grades in 6-8.

### Progress Reports and Report Cards

Students in grades K-8 will receive report cards at the end of each quarter (once every nine weeks). Mid-term progress reports are sent home halfway through each quarter for students in grades 1-8. The dates for issuing progress reports and report cards will follow the school-year calendar adopted by the Board. The School strongly encourages parents to monitor their child[ren]'s progress and grades through PowerSchool during the school year.

### Homework

Homework is work assigned by the classroom teacher that is related to the class curriculum and instruction and intended to provide additional practice and enrich the student's learning experience. Teachers will provide clear instructions and expectations for all homework assignments. Homework assignments should be expected Monday through Thursday of each week. Homework assignments and grading are subject to the classroom teacher's discretion. Questions or concerns related to homework assignments should be directed to the student's teacher. In addition to regular homework assignments, we encourage each child to read, or for parents to read to their child[ren], each weeknight.

### Make-up Work

In the case of missed assignments (e.g., classwork, homework) resulting from an absence(s), a student will have three days, including weekends, from the day the student returns to make up all missed work. In the event a student misses a test due to absence(s), the student will have three school days from the day the student returns to make up the test.

Parents should contact their child's teacher(s) for guidance regarding missed assignments, scheduling make-up tests, and for materials and information necessary for the student to complete missed assignments and tests. It is the responsibility of the students and their parents to ensure missed assignments and tests are timely completed.

The classroom teacher or the Principal, in their discretion and on a case-by-case basis, may grant exceptions and provide reasonable extensions of time for extreme illnesses or

emergencies. The School may require documentation to verify illnesses or emergencies.

### Advanced / Honors Courses

Advanced/Honors courses are available for students exhibiting superior abilities in the particular course content area. The qualifications include course grade averages of 90-100 the prior school year, MAP and SC Ready test scores in the “exceeds expectations” category or higher, or identified as Academically Gifted and Talented according to the applicable South Carolina Department of Education criteria.

### Promotion / Retention

Promotion is the goal for every student, but it is recognized that retention may allow some students the necessary additional instructional time at a grade level to be successful. The following guidelines govern promotion and retention of students:

- Promotion and retention decisions for kindergarten to first grade may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: mastery of kindergarten skills; ability to function independently; developmental and maturity level; and regular attendance.
- Promotion and retention decisions for grades one through eight may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: progress toward mastery of the applicable grade level academic standards; social, emotional, and physical maturity; assessment and testing data; regular attendance; and academic history.
- Students who fail to demonstrate reading proficiency must be retained in third grade in accordance with the Read to Succeed Act, unless a good cause exemption applies.
- Promotion and retention decisions for special education students will be guided by their IEPs and applicable special education laws and regulations.

The Principal will be responsible for promotion and retention decisions in the best academic interests of the student based on his/her professional judgment after conferring with the student’s parents, teachers, and other School staff. The Principal will notify the parents in writing of the reasons for retaining a student. If a student is retained based on the parents’ request or consent, a written statement to that effect will be signed by the parents and placed in the student’s permanent record.

If the parent disagrees with the Principal’s retention decision, the parent may appeal to the Board by submitting a written appeal to the Principal or Board Chair within fifteen days after receiving the Principal’s decision. The appeal must state the reasons the student should not be retained and include any supporting documents. The Board will consider the appeal at its next scheduled meeting. Filing an appeal does not guarantee a student or parents the right to appear before the Board. The Board, in its sole discretion, may decide the appeal with or without meeting with the student and/or parents. The Board’s decision is final.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Planned parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall. Teachers or parents may request additional parent-teacher conferences to review and discuss a student's academic performance, behavior, and/or other concerns. If parents are unable to satisfactorily resolve concerns with the student's teacher, then the parents may request a conference with the Principal. Conferences with teachers or the Principal may be requested at any time during the school year. Conferences will be scheduled before or after school hours or other times that do not disrupt or interfere with instructional time or School operations.

## **School Property**

Students are expected to treat the School building, grounds, furniture, fixtures, equipment, and other property with care and respect. Any student who intentionally or negligently defaces, vandalizes, damages, or destroys School property will be liable for the cost of repair or replacement and subject to further disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Textbooks, library books, computers, software, and other materials issued or loaned to students are School property. Each student issued or loaned School property has the responsibility to return it in the same condition as when it was issued or loaned, less normal wear and tear. All School property must be returned to the School by the end of the school year or at such earlier time as may be requested. Replacement or repair costs for unreturned, lost, or damaged School property is charged to the student using current replacement or repair costs. The year-end report card will be withheld until the School receives payment of the replacement or repair costs. Upon request from the student's parent, the Principal, in his or her discretion, may approve a payment plan for replacement or repair costs.

## **Student Attendance**

BPA believes regular attendance is essential to student success and is necessary if students are to make the desired and expected academic and social progress. Pursuant to state law, it is the obligation of every parent to ensure every child under their care and supervision, if of compulsory school age (ages 5 to 17), regularly attends school.

### **Absences & Excuses**

The school year consists of 180 school days. To receive credit, a student must attend a minimum of 170 school days. A student who accumulates more than 10 absences in a school year (whether lawful, unlawful, or a combination) is subject to failure due to absences, pending review by the Principal. Elementary school students (grades K-5) must be in attendance at least one-half of the school day to be counted present. Middle school students (grades 6-8) must attend half the block to be counted present for that block.



Any student who misses school must present a written excuse signed by the student's parent or a written medical excuse issued from a licensed medical practitioner. The written excuse must include the student's name, the date(s) and reason for the absence, the telephone number of the parent or medical practitioner, and the required signature. If a valid written excuse is not turned in within three school days after the student returns to school, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Excuses may be submitted by hand-delivery or email to the Principal (or designee) or the student's classroom teacher. If a student submits a false or forged excuse, the student will be subject to disciplinary action.

The School will consider students lawfully absent (excused) in the following circumstances:

- student's own illness and attendance in school would endanger the student's health or the health of others (verified by a medical provider's written statement);
- medical/dental appointments (verified by medical provider's written excuse);
- School-sanctioned events and activities (e.g., field trips);
- a certified court appearance or related court-ordered activity (e.g., court-ordered treatment services) (verified by a copy of the court order or similar documents);
- a death or serious illness in the student's immediate family (verified by parent's written excuse);
- a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith (verified by parent's written excuse);
- other unusual or mitigating circumstances approved at the Principal's discretion.

The School will consider students unlawfully absent (unexcused) when the student is willfully absent or is absent without the knowledge of his/her parent for any reason other than those set forth above. Suspension days will not be counted as unlawful absences.

#### Truancy / Intervention Plans

Truancy is generally defined as when a student misses too many days of school that are not approved. A student who has three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences is considered truant as defined by state laws and regulations. If a student is determined to be truant, the Principal (or designee) will make reasonable efforts (e.g., phone calls, emails, letters, home visits) to meet with the parents to identify the reasons for the student's continued absences. The School will develop a written intervention plan to address the student's continued absences in consultation with the parent and, if appropriate, representatives from social services, community mental health, and other such persons deemed appropriate in the School's discretion. The student's and/or parent's refusal to cooperate with the intervention planning or failure to comply with the plan may result in referral of the student to Family Court and the filing of a report against the parent with the Department of Social Services in accordance with applicable state laws.

#### Tardiness / Late Arrivals

It is the parent's responsibility to have students at School on time each day. Late arrivals result in interruptions to instructional time and the learning process for the tardy student and other students in the class. Students are considered tardy at 8:11 a.m., unless they

present a valid written parental or medical excuse. Students arriving after 8:10 a.m. must be accompanied by a parent to the main office to sign in and obtain a tardy slip. After a tardy slip is issued, the student shall report directly to class and present the tardy slip to the teacher. Students without a tardy slip will not be admitted late to class but will be sent to the office. Students who arrive after 8:10 a.m. and fail to check in at the main office before entering the School may be subject to disciplinary action.

If a student accumulates five tardies to school or class, the Principal (or designee) will make reasonable efforts (e.g., phone calls, emails, letters, home visits) to meet with the parents to identify and address the reasons for the student's continued tardiness. Repeated tardiness to school or to class may also result in disciplinary action.

### Hall Passes

Students who are not present in their designated classes during class time must have a hall pass. Students without a hall pass may be subject to disciplinary action.

### Attendance for e-Learning

The School is accountable for attendance on e-Learning days. In order to be counted present on an e-Learning day, a student must complete and submit their assignments for the e-Learning day within five school days from the date of returning to school. Students who do not timely submit completed e-Learning lessons will receive an unexcused absence for each e-Learning day for which assignments were not timely submitted.

### Early Dismissals

Once students arrive at school, they are not permitted to leave for any reason without prior approval from the Principal (or designee). Early dismissals must be requested by the student's parent in person or in writing on the day of dismissal. A written request must be signed by the parent and contain the student's name, the date, the reason for early dismissal, the parent's name and phone number, and the name of the adult who is picking up the student if different than the parent. Parents or other authorized adults must pick up students in the main office and sign the student out before leaving school.

## **Student Dress Code**

BPA has adopted the following dress code standards to minimize disruptions and distractions, promote the health and well-being of students, and generally promote and maintain an appropriate educational environment conducive to learning. The dress code standards and guidelines apply to all students during the school day and at all school-sponsored activities and events (unless an approved exception applies).

Each student is responsible for purchasing, maintaining, and wearing the uniform of BPA, which shall consist of the following (as applicable to boys or girls):

### Tops

- polo shirts (short or long sleeve with a collar) with BPA's logo embroidered on the chest and in solid navy, white, light gray, or Kelly green color;
- sweaters, sweatshirts, and pullovers with a crew neck or collar and in solid navy, white, light gray, or Kelly green color may be worn over a polo shirt;
- solid white blouse or BPA polo shirt should be worn under jumpers;
- shirts, though recommended to be tucked in, can be untucked as long as the shirt does not extend below the lower hip, does not have torn or tattered edges, and does not result in a disheveled appearance.
- the following examples are types of tops that are prohibited: hooded sweatshirts and pullovers ("hoodies") of any kind; t-shirts; tank tops; muscle shirts; halter tops; crop tops; backless tops; tube tops; low-cut tops; and spaghetti straps.

### Bottoms

- pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, capris, dresses, and jumpers in solid khaki or navy color;
- all bottoms must be worn at hip level and may not sag or drag the floor;
- hemlines shall be no higher than three (3) inches above the kneecap;
- the following examples are types of bottoms that are prohibited: leggings; lounge pants; yoga pants; fishnet or mesh materials; sweatpants; and pajama pants.

### Shoes / Socks

- tennis shoes, street shoes, casual boots, and sandals are permitted;
- shoes must be worn at all times;
- specific types of footwear (e.g., close-toed shoes, tennis shoes) may be required to participate in certain classes and activities for safety purposes;
- tights and socks worn with shorts, skirts, skorts, dresses, and jumpers must be in solid white, tan, gray, or navy color;
- patterned socks may only be worn with pants;
- the following examples are types of shoes that are prohibited: Crocs; bedroom shoes or slippers; hunting boots; work boots; combat boots; flip-flops; and shoes with wheels or lights.

### Physical Education (PE)

- BPA issued or approved t-shirt or gym shirt is required;
- athletic shorts or pants in solid black or navy color;
- tennis shoes are required for PE;
- girls may wear athletic leggings if the PE shirt fully covers their bottoms or if worn with shorts.

Students are expected to wear the BPA uniform at all times during the school day. Many of our parents shop for uniform sales at Walmart, Old Navy, French Toast, JC Penny, Target, and Kohls (online and in stores). The following are the only vendors with rights to BPA's logo:

- Palmetto Screen Print & Embroidery of Anderson (864) 642-4062– PE t-shirts and logo embroidery
- Three Girls Design of Honea Path (864) 369-0488 – logo embroidery

The following additional dress code standards and guidelines shall apply to all students:

- all clothing must be neat and clean without rips, tears, holes, or frayed edges;
- hair should be neat and well-groomed;
- unnatural hair colors (e.g., pink, blue, purple, orange, etc.), mohawks, shaved designs, and similar distracting hairstyles are prohibited;
- hair bows in solid navy, white, light gray, or Kelly green colors are permitted;
- abdomen, chest, shoulders, and back must be covered at all times;
- sheer, see-through, and other revealing clothing of any type is prohibited;
- undergarments shall not be worn as outerwear or otherwise exposed;
- sunglasses, hats, hoods, headbands, bandanas, headphones, earmuffs, and other types of head gear and head coverings are prohibited;
- coats, raincoats, jackets, and similar outerwear shall be removed indoors;
- except for earrings worn in the earlobes (limited to 2 sets) worn in the earlobes, visible body piercings are prohibited;
- spiked collars, wristbands, bracelets, belts, and similar accessories are prohibited;
- body art (e.g., permanent or temporary tattoos, face painting) is prohibited.
- clothing and accessories displaying illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol products, tobacco or vape products, gang symbols, or any vulgar, obscene, profane, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate language or image is prohibited;
- for safety and security purposes, all face coverings (e.g., masks, face paint, bandanas) are prohibited, and a student's face must be visible at all times on school property and at school-related activities and events for identification purposes (except for approved medical or religious face coverings that cover the mouth and nose without concealing the student's entire face or head).

The Principal, teachers, and staff shall enforce the dress code in a consistent and non-discriminatory manner. Teachers and other staff will report possible dress code violations to the Principal. The Principal, in his or her discretion and on a case-by-case basis, shall determine compliance with the dress code. The Principal, in his or her discretion and on a case-by-case basis, may grant exceptions to the dress code under special circumstances, such as, but not limited to, medical accommodations, religious accommodations, school spirit days, field days, field trips, or when other school activities or special events warrant an exception. Parents of students needing medical, religious, or other dress code accommodations should contact the Principal. The Principal's decisions shall be final.

In the event of a dress code violation, the Principal will review the violation with the student and initiate corrective action as the Principal deems appropriate under the circumstances and consistent with the student discipline policies. The Principal will notify a student's parents each time a student violates the dress code. If the student's dress constitutes a threat to health or safety or otherwise disrupts the school environment, the Principal may require the student to remain in the office until the parents are notified and deliver an appropriate change of clothing to the School. Excessive or repeated dress code violations may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension.

### **Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment**

BPA prohibits harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any student by other students, staff, or other persons. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying is defined as a gesture, electronic communication, or a physical, verbal, or written act reasonably perceived to have either of the following effects: (i) harming a student physically or emotionally, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage; or (ii) insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operations of the School. Examples include, but are not limited to, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, racial slurs or epithets, extortion of money or possessions, physical or verbal assault, hazing, stalking, and threats.

Any student, or the parents of any student, who feels the student has been subjected to harassment, intimidation, or bullying are strongly encouraged to report the allegations to a teacher, counselor, or the Principal. Any student who witnesses or has reliable information that another student has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall report it to a teacher, counselor, or the Principal. A School employee who witnesses, receives a report, or otherwise has reliable information that a student has been subject to any form of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall report the incident to the Principal.

Complaints or reports may be made orally or in writing and should include as much information as possible, such as, but not limited to, the following: names of the victim and the accused; the date, time, and location of the incident; a description of the accused's conduct; a description of any harm to the victim or the victim's property; names of potential witnesses; and any other relevant facts. Reports may be made anonymously, but disciplinary action shall not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Principal (or designee) shall promptly and thoroughly investigate complaints and reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. BPA may take disciplinary action against a student for harassment, intimidation, or bullying that occurs in a classroom, on other School premises, at a School-sponsored activity or event (on or off School property), at any other program or function where the School is responsible for the student, or off-campus when such off-campus conduct poses a threat or substantially interferes with or disrupts the orderly operations of the School (e.g., off-campus use of the internet, social media, or other web-based resources to harass, intimidate, or bully another student). Any student found to have engaged in harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be subject to

disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Additionally, conduct arising to the level of criminal conduct will be referred to appropriate law enforcement officials.

The identities of the parties and witnesses involved, the findings of the investigation, and any disciplinary actions shall be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. BPA prohibits retaliation or reprisal in any form against a student, parent, or employee who has filed a complaint or report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. BPA also prohibits any person from knowingly and intentionally making false accusations against a student or other person as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Conduct determined to be retaliation, reprisal, or false accusations shall also constitute a violation of this policy.

### **Sexual Harassment / Title IX**

It is BPA's policy to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX). BPA does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education program or activity. Except as provided in Title IX, no student shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic, extracurricular, or other education program or activity operated by BPA. BPA will not tolerate discrimination or harassment of students based on their sex by any person, including, but not limited to, other students, employees, volunteers, or visitors. Further, BPA will not tolerate retaliation against any student who has made a report, filed a complaint, or participated in any investigation concerning alleged sex-based discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. Violation of this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action.

#### **Sexual Harassment**

Prohibited sex discrimination includes sexual harassment. BPA prohibits and will not tolerate sexual harassment against its students, employees, and other persons. The School will respond to actual knowledge of sexual harassment in its education programs or activities against a person in the United States in a prompt, supportive, and fair manner that is not deliberately indifferent. Allegations of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or other inappropriate conduct that do not constitute sexual harassment as defined under Title IX, or allegations of sexual harassment that do not occur within an educational program or activity or do not occur in the United States, will be addressed through other applicable policies and administrative rules governing employee or student conduct and discipline.

#### **Title IX Coordinator**

The Title IX Coordinator coordinates the School's efforts to comply with Title IX, including assisting parties with the sexual harassment grievance process and coordinating the School's response to reports of sexual harassment. The current Title IX Coordinator is Patti Barrett, 3201 Hwy 29 N, Belton, SC 29627, (864) 392-1173, pbarrett@beltonprep.us.

### Definitions

“Actual knowledge” means notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator or any other School employee.

“Complainant” means a student or other individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. A parent may act on behalf of a complainant.

“Day” or “days” means a day on which the School is open for operations.

“Education program or activity” includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the School exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs.

“Formal complaint” means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting the School investigate the allegations. A formal complaint initiates the grievance process.

“Respondent” means a student or other individual who is reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. A parent may act on behalf of a respondent.

“Sexual harassment” means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following: (a) a School employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit or service of the School on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; (b) unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the School’s education program or activity; or (c) sexual assault [as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v)], dating violence [as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10)], domestic violence [as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8)], or stalking [as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30)]. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexual violence, and any other verbal, non-verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

### Reporting Sexual Harassment

Students, parents, and other persons may report sexual harassment in person or by mail, telephone, e-mail, using the contact information for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person’s verbal or written report. Reports may be made at any time (including during non-business hours).

Any student who believes he/she has personally experienced sexual harassment or believes he/she has witnessed or otherwise heard or learned about sexual harassment against another student, employee, or other person, should promptly notify the Title IX Coordinator or a teacher, a counselor, the Principal, or other School employee with whom

the student is comfortable notifying. The parent of a student may also report sexual harassment.

### Response to Sexual Harassment

The School will respond to actual knowledge of sexual harassment in its education programs or activities against a person in the United States in a prompt, supportive, and fair manner that is not deliberately indifferent (i.e., in a manner that is reasonable in light of the known circumstances). The School's response will treat complainants and respondents equitably by offering supportive measures to a complainant, and by following and completing a grievance process before imposing any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against a respondent.

### Supportive Measures

Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive, individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without charge to the complainant or respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to preserve or restore equal access to the School's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Examples may include, but are not limited to, the following: counseling; extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments; modifications of class schedules or locations; escort services; mutual restrictions on contact between the parties; increased monitoring or supervision; and other similar measures.

Supportive measures will be offered to every complainant upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment, and with or without the filing of a formal complaint. The Title IX Coordinator will coordinate the effective implementation of supportive measures. Upon receiving a report or formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant to:

- (a) offer and discuss reasonably available supportive measures;
- (b) inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures (with or without the filing of a formal complaint);
- (c) discuss and consider the complainant's wishes regarding supportive measures; and
- (d) explain the availability of the grievance process and the process for filing a formal complaint.

The appropriate supportive measures will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The Title IX Coordinator shall document the supportive measures offered and those provided to the complainant, or alternatively, the reasons why no supportive measures were provided (e.g., the complainant declined to receive any supportive measures). The School will maintain as



confidential any supportive measures provided to the extent maintaining confidentiality does not impair the ability to provide the supportive measures.

### Grievance Process (Formal Complaint)

The grievance process will treat complainants and respondents equitably by providing remedies to the complainant where a determination of sexual harassment has been made against the respondent and completing the grievance process before imposing any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against the respondent. In every case, it is presumed the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

#### *Formal complaint*

A formal complaint is required to initiate the grievance process to investigate and adjudicate allegations of sexual harassment against a respondent. The School will follow this grievance procedure when a complainant files a formal complaint requesting an investigation, or when the Title IX Coordinator determines an investigation is necessary.

A formal complaint must be in writing, signed by the complainant, and filed with the Title IX Coordinator. A formal complaint may be filed in person, by e-mail, or by mail using the contact information for the Title IX Coordinator. A formal complaint should include the following information, to the extent it is known: (a) complainant's name and contact information; (b) name or identity of the respondent; (c) description of the nature of the alleged conduct; and (d) date, time, and location of the alleged conduct. A formal complaint may be filed in any written form that is signed by the complainant.

The School will respect the complainant's decision as to whether or not to file a formal complaint. However, if the Title IX Coordinator determines it is clearly unreasonable for the School not to investigate the reported incident in light of the known circumstances, the Title IX coordinator may initiate the grievance process by preparing and signing a written formal complaint alleging sexual harassment against a respondent. The Title IX coordinator is not the complainant or otherwise a party (the complainant is the party).

#### *Investigators / Decision-Makers*

As soon as practicable, but not more than five days after receiving a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will designate School employees who have completed the required Title IX training to serve as the investigator and decision-maker in each case. The investigator and decision-maker cannot be the same person or the Title IX Coordinator.

#### *Written Notice / Response*

As soon as practicable but not more than five days after receiving a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will provide the following written notice to all the known parties:

- (a) notice of the grievance process (including the informal resolution process);
- (b) notice of the allegations of sexual harassment that includes sufficient details known at the time (including, but not limited to, the identities of the parties involved in the alleged incident, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident);
- (c) a statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
- (d) notice that the parties may have an advisor of their choice (who may be, but is not required to be, a licensed attorney employed at the party's own expense), present during any subsequent proceedings;
- (e) notice that the parties (and/or their advisors) may inspect and review evidence (as set forth herein);
- (f) notice of any provision of the code of conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or submitting false information during the grievance process;
- (g) the names and contact information of the investigator and decision-maker.

This notice must be delivered to the parties prior to any meeting, interview, or other investigation proceeding. The Title IX Coordinator may deliver the notice to the parties in person, by certified mail (return receipt requested), or by any other means evidencing delivery and receipt by the party. Within ten days after receipt of the notice, the respondent may submit a written response to the allegations.

#### *Burden of Proof / Evidence*

The School will apply the preponderance of the evidence standard to determine responsibility. The burden of proof and of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on the School and not on the parties.

The School will not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless the School obtains the voluntary, written consent of the party (or the party's parent if the party is under eighteen years of age).

Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent.

### *No Hearings / Advisors*

The School will not provide hearings at any stage of the grievance process.

The parties may have an advisor of their choice present during any stage of the grievance process; provided, however, students cannot serve as advisors in any case. A party's advisor may be an attorney licensed to practice in the State of South Carolina. The parties shall be responsible for all costs and expenses associated with their advisors.

All advisors must comply with the grievance rules and procedures, including, but not limited to, confidentiality requirements. Any advisor found to have violated any confidentiality requirements, or to have engaged in retaliation or other inappropriate conduct, will be prohibited from participating in any current or future grievance proceedings.

### *Timeframes / Extensions*

Any party or an investigator, decision-maker, or informal resolution facilitator, may submit a written request for an extension or temporary delay of the established deadlines to the Title IX Coordinator. The request must include the length of the requested extension or delay and the reason(s) for the request. The Title IX Coordinator has discretion to allow limited extensions or temporary delays for good cause to ensure the integrity and thoroughness of the investigation. Examples of good cause may include, but are not limited to, factors such as: unavailability of a party or witness; complexity of the alleged misconduct; complexity of the investigation; the volume of evidence or the written record; or intervening breaks in the School calendar. The Title IX Coordinator shall provide written notice to the parties that sets forth the request, whether it is granted or denied, the length of the extension or delay (if granted), and the reasons for the decision. The School will not unreasonably delay the prompt resolution of a complaint without a showing of good cause.

### *Dismissal of Complaint*

The School will investigate the allegations of a formal complaint. At any time during the grievance process, the Title IX Coordinator *must* dismiss a formal complaint with regard to the alleged conduct for purposes of sexual harassment if it is determined:

- (a) the alleged conduct would not constitute sexual harassment as defined under Title IX even if proved;
- (b) the alleged conduct did not occur in the School's education programs or activities; or
- (c) the alleged conduct did not occur against a person in the United States.

At any time during the grievance process, the Title IX Coordinator *may* dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if:

- (a) the complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations;
- (b) the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the School; or
- (c) specific circumstances prevent the School from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon the dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly and simultaneously send written notice to the parties of the dismissal and the reasons therefor. The dismissal may be appealed as provided herein.

A dismissal will not preclude the School from investigating the alleged conduct under other policies and administrative rules governing discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or other employee or student conduct and discipline as applicable under the circumstances.

### *Investigation*

After the deadline for respondent to submit a written response to the allegations, the Title IX Coordinator will provide the investigator copies of the complaint, any written response, and other documents and information related to the complaint. The investigator will promptly initiate the investigation. When investigating a complaint, the investigator will:

- (a) interview the parties and witnesses, and will gather other evidence related to the allegations of the complaint;
- (b) ensure the burden of proof and gathering of evidence rests on the School and not the parties;
- (c) provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence;
- (d) not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or gather and present relevant evidence;
- (e) refrain from requiring, allowing, relying upon, or otherwise using questions or evidence that constitute or seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege unless the person holding such privilege has voluntarily waived the privilege in writing;
- (f) provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during interviews, meetings, or other investigation proceedings, including the opportunity to be accompanied by the advisor of their choice and will not limit the choice or presence of the advisor for either party; and
- (g) provide parties and/or witness whose participation is invited or expected written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all investigative interviews, meetings, or other proceedings with sufficient time for the party or witness to prepare to attend and participate.

Upon completing the investigation, but before completing the investigative report, the investigator will provide all parties up to ten days to review and submit a written response

to any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint, including evidence the School does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility, and inculpatory and exculpatory evidence, whether obtained from a party or other source. The investigator will consider the parties' responses (if any) prior to completing the investigative report. Within ten days after the response deadline, the investigator will complete a final investigation report that summarizes the relevant evidence, including, but not limited to, relevant: dates; allegations; witness statements and other evidence; policies, procedures, and similar authorities; and findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations.

The investigator will provide the final investigation report and evidence to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will simultaneously send a copy of the final investigation report to each party and the party's advisor (if any), and will send copies of the investigation report, complaint, any written response, and evidence gathered during the investigation to the designated decision-maker.

#### *Determination of responsibility*

The decision-maker is responsible for weighing the relevant evidence and making a determination regarding responsibility. Before making a determination, the decision-maker shall afford the parties up to ten days to review the investigation report and to submit written, relevant questions the party wants asked of any other party or witness. The decision-maker will review the questions and submit relevant questions to the responding party or witness and will determine a reasonably prompt timeframe for the responding party or witness to submit written responses based on the nature and number of the questions submitted for response. The decision-maker will compile and provide the parties with copies of the written answers to all the relevant questions, and if appropriate, will allow reasonable time for limited, relevant follow-up questions from each party. The decision-maker will provide a written explanation of any decision to exclude a question.

The decision-maker will apply the preponderance of the evidence standard to make a determination regarding responsibility, and will issue a written determination that will include the following:

- (a) identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- (b) a description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including notifications to the parties, interviews and other methods used to gather other evidence;
- (c) findings of fact supporting the determination;
- (d) conclusions regarding the application of the School's applicable code of conduct to the facts; and
- (e) a statement of, and rational for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination of responsibility, whether any disciplinary sanctions will be imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the Schools education program or activity will be provided to the complainant.

The decision-maker will provide the final written determination to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will send the final written determination to the parties simultaneously, along with information about the procedures and permissible grounds for appeal. If no appeal is timely filed, the written determination of responsibility becomes final as of the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely. If a timely appeal is filed, the determination of responsibility becomes final on the date the Title IX Coordinator provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal.

### *Appeals*

A party may file a written appeal with the Title IX coordinator within five days after receipt of the decision maker's final written determination or receipt of a written notice of dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein. The appeal must include a written statement of the grounds for appeal. A party may only appeal on the following grounds:

- (a) a procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the grievance;
- (b) an erroneous exclusion of questions or evidence based on relevance or other grounds that could affect the outcome of the grievance;
- (c) new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the complaint was dismissed or the final determination regarding responsibility was made that could affect the outcome of the grievance; or
- (d) the Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker had a conflict of interest that affected the outcome of the grievance.

The Principal (or designee) shall serve as the decision-maker on the appeal (provided the decision-maker on the appeal shall not be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator, the investigator, or the initial decision-maker).

As soon as practicable but not more than five days after receiving the appeal, the Title IX Coordinator will simultaneously send the parties written notice of the appeal, including the grounds for appeal, appeal procedures, and name and contact information of the decision-maker on appeal. Within ten days after receipt of the appeal notice, the appealing party may submit a written statement in support of the appeal. Within ten days after receipt of the appealing party's written statement (or the deadline to submit a written statement), the responding party may submit a written response to the appeal.

The Title IX Coordinator will compile and send the appeal documents, formal complaint, any written response to the complaint, investigation report, written determination, and any other relevant materials to the Principal (or designee). Within ten days after receipt, the Principal (or designee) will review the record and issue a written appeal determination to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will simultaneously send the appeal determination to the parties with notice that the appeal determination constitutes the final decision in the grievance process.

## Remedies

If a respondent is found to be responsible for sexual harassment, the School will implement remedies for the complainant. Remedies will be designed to restore or preserve the complainant's equal access to the School's education program or activity. Remedies may include, but are not limited to, the same individualized services described as supportive measures; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive in nature and need not avoid burdening the respondent. Disciplinary or punitive remedies may not be implemented against a respondent until after the written determination becomes final. Students found to be responsible for sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, consistent with student conduct and discipline policies.

## Informal Resolution

After a formal complaint has been filed, and any time prior to issuance of the final written determination of responsibility, the School may facilitate an informal resolution process that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication of the formal complaint. The informal resolution process seeks to facilitate the resolution of a formal complaint by providing the parties an opportunity to voluntarily resolve the formal complaint allegations.

The Title IX Coordinator will evaluate the case to determine if it may be appropriate for informal resolution. Any party may submit a written request for informal resolution to the Title IX Coordinator. Informal resolution is generally available when the Title IX Coordinator, based on review of the complaint and available evidence, believes the allegations are appropriate for informal resolution, and all parties voluntarily agree to participate; provided, however, informal resolution is not available and will not be offered in any cases involving allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

When the Title IX Coordinator believes the formal complaint is appropriate for informal resolution, he/she will contact the parties to offer the informal resolution option, and will provide the parties with written notice that includes the following information and terms:

- (a) allegations of the formal complaint (if not previously provided);
- (b) name and contact information of the facilitator;
- (c) the facilitator is a neutral whose function is to assist the parties in resolving the allegations, and will not function as an advisor or advocate for any party;
- (d) only the parties and their advisors may participate;
- (e) all parties voluntarily consent to participate;
- (f) all parties agree to participate in good faith and to work constructively toward a mutually acceptable resolution;
- (g) the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint will be suspended pending completion of the informal resolution process;
- (h) at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process;

- (i) all communications and information a party shares with the facilitator will be confidential and will not be disclosed to the investigator or decision-maker;
- (j) upon any resolution, the facilitator will prepare, and the parties will sign, an agreement specifying the allegations resolved and the agreed actions, which will preclude resuming the grievance process as to the resolved allegations;
- (k) if informal resolution is not successful as to any or all allegations, the School will resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint.

If all parties agree to participate in the informal resolution process, each party must provide written consent by signing the notice. Upon receipt of the signed agreement from all the parties, the Title IX Coordinator will initiate the informal resolution process.

The Title IX Coordinator will serve as the informal resolution facilitator and will determine the appropriate format and procedures on a case-by-case basis. At any time during the informal resolution process, the facilitator may declare an impasse as to all or any of the allegations, upon which the School will resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint allegations that have not been successfully resolved by agreement.

All parties must mutually agree in writing to any informal resolution. The agreement will be binding on the parties and will be implemented by the Title IX Coordinator.

#### Emergency Removal / Administrative Leave

Based on a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, and with or without a grievance process pending, the School may remove any respondent (include a student) from its education program or activity on an emergency basis after the Title IX Coordinator:

- (a) undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis;
- (b) determines an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student, employee, or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal; and
- (c) provides the respondent with written notice of the decision, and an opportunity to challenge the decision promptly following the removal.

Based on a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, the School may place an employee respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance process.

#### Conflicts of Interest

The Title IX Coordinator, investigators, decision-makers, and informal resolution facilitators must not have a conflict of interest or a bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent in a particular case. The Title IX Coordinator will consider potential conflicts of interest or bias when designating an investigator, decision-maker, or informal resolution facilitator. A party may notify the Title



IX Coordinator in writing if he/she believes an investigator, decision-maker, or informal resolution facilitator has a conflict of interest or bias in a particular case.

If the Title IX Coordinator is found to have a conflict of interest or bias, the Principal shall designate another School employee who has completed the required Title IX training to perform the responsibilities of the Title IX Coordinator in that case. If the investigator, decision-maker, or informal resolution facilitator is found to have a conflict of interest or bias, the Title IX Coordinator shall designate another School employee who has completed the required Title IX training to perform the responsibilities of that individual in that case.

### Confidentiality

The School will make reasonable efforts to safeguard an individual's privacy and protect from disclosure the identity of individuals who make a report or file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, complainants, respondents, and witnesses, except as necessary to carry out its obligations under Title IX, the grievance process, or as may be required by law. Information related to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment may be shared with School employees who "need to know" in order assist in the assessment, investigation, and resolution of the report or complaint. The privacy of student education records will be protected in accordance with School policy, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and other applicable privacy laws. Employee records will be protected in accordance with School policy and applicable privacy laws. The disclosure of confidential information by any student or employee may result in disciplinary action.

### Retaliation / False Reports

The School prohibits retaliation against any student, employee, or other person who has made a report, filed a complaint, or participated in any investigation or other grievance proceeding concerning alleged sexual harassment. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, threats, coercion, reprisal, or harassment. Any parent or other person may make a verbal or written report of retaliation in person or by mail, telephone, or e-mail using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator. Students may report retaliation to the Title IX Coordinator or a teacher, counselor, school administrator, or other School employee with whom the student is comfortable notifying.

Students found to have engaged in retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, consistent with applicable student conduct and discipline policies.

Any student who makes a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment that are later found to have been intentionally false or made maliciously without regard for truth will be subject to discipline. This provision does not apply to reports or formal complaints made in good faith, even if the allegations are not substantiated by subsequent investigation. A determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

## **Student Grievances**

BPA encourages and provides for the orderly and equitable resolution of grievances regarding decisions or actions by School personnel affecting or concerning a student's education, concerning the treatment of students, or concerning conditions in the School.

"Grievance" generally means a concern or complaint that a student has been unfairly treated or adversely affected by specific decisions or actions of a teacher, administrator, or other School personnel. "Grievance" does not include concerns or complaints regarding the following: (i) student discipline decisions and actions, which are addressed pursuant to the student conduct code and student discipline policies and procedures; (ii) sexual harassment, which is addressed pursuant to the sexual harassment (Title IX) policies and procedures; (iii) special education decisions or actions, which are addressed pursuant to due process and complaint procedures under the IDEA, Section 504, and other applicable special education laws and regulations; (iv) decisions concerning teacher or staff employment, qualifications, or contracts, which are reserved solely to the discretion of the administration and the Board; or (v) matters in which the Board does not have the power or authority to act.

Failure to comply with timelines or to attend a scheduled meeting at any stage shall result in dismissal of the grievance. Timelines shall not be extended except upon written request and a showing of good cause made to the Principal (Stage 2) or the Board Chair (Stage 3) before the applicable time period has expired. A grievance may be withdrawn or resolved by agreement at any time, which shall constitute a final resolution.

When a student files a grievance, the Principal will notify the student's parents and discuss the grievance with the student's parents. A student may be represented and accompanied by a parent at any stage of the grievance process. A grievance cannot be filed in a representative capacity except by a parent on behalf of his or her student. A student, at his or own sole expense, may be represented by legal counsel at Stage 3. The School will not provide or pay any costs or fees for legal counsel for any student or parents.

The School will maintain the confidentiality of the grievance, any investigation, and identities of persons involved to the extent permitted by law and to the extent possible consistent with its responsibility to investigate and take appropriate action to resolve the grievance.

BPA prohibits retaliation or reprisal against any student, parent, or other person for making a complaint or participating in the grievance process. BPA further prohibits use of the grievance process to pursue clearly frivolous or trivial matters or to make deliberately false, abusive, or malicious claims. Any student who retaliates or seeks reprisal against another person, or who misuses the grievance process, will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Stage 1 – Direct Resolution**

Students and parents shall first meet with the teacher, administrator, or other school employee responsible for the decision or action at issue and engage in good faith efforts to resolve the grievance at the lowest possible administrative level. At this initial stage, notice of the grievance may be given verbally or in writing.

### Stage 2 – Referral to Principal

If the grievance is not resolved at Stage 1, the student or parent may present the grievance in writing to the Principal. If the grievance involves a decision or action of the Principal, the student or parent shall still submit the grievance to the Principal in order to permit the Principal the opportunity to respond and attempt to resolve the grievance.

The written grievance must be delivered to the Principal within five school days after the meeting in Stage 1 and must include the following information: the name and grade level of the student affected; if filed on behalf of a student, the parent's name and contact information; the name of the teacher or other staff member responsible for the decision or action at issue; a concise statement of the facts, including the date and explanation of the decision or action at issue; each policy, rule, and law at issue; the relief requested; any supporting documentation; and whether a meeting with the Principal is requested.

The Principal may conduct such investigation as he or she deems necessary and appropriate under the circumstances before rendering a decision. If a meeting is requested, the Principal will notify the student and/or parent in writing of the time, place, and date of the meeting. The Principal will issue a written decision and the reasons for the decision within ten school days after receipt of a timely written grievance, or, if a meeting is requested, within ten school days after the conclusion of the meeting. If the Principal fails to issue a written decision within the prescribed time, it shall be deemed a denial of the grievance.

### Stage 3 – Appeal to Board

The Principal's decision shall be final unless the student or parent timely delivers to the Principal or Board Chair a written appeal to the Board within five school days after receipt of the Principal's written decision or, if a written decision was not issued, within five school days after the date by which the Principal was required to have issued a written decision. The written appeal must include a concise statement of the issues presented to the Board on appeal and a statement of the student's or parent's position as to each issue. The Board will only consider issues that are timely and properly presented in the written appeal. Any issues that were not presented at Stage 1 or Stage 2 will not be considered.

The Board will consider the appeal at its next scheduled meeting. Filing an appeal does not guarantee students or parents the right to appear before the Board. The Board, in its sole discretion, may decide the appeal with or without meeting with the student and parents.

If the Board decides to meet with the student and/or parents, the Board Chair will send written notice of the date, time, and location of the meeting. Any meetings will be informal and non-adversarial and will be held in executive session to the extent consistent with the meeting provisions of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. The parties will be allowed an opportunity to state their respective positions and arguments concerning the issues or questions presented for appeal. The Board may question the parties.

The Board shall act on the appeal in open session and issue a written decision within ten school days after taking action on the appeal. All decisions of the Board are final.

### **Cell Phones / Personal Electronic Devices**

In order to foster a positive learning experience free from electronic distractions and to provide an educational environment that enhances student focus and engagement, BPA prohibits the use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices during the school day.

“Personal electronic device” or “device” means any device that is not authorized for school or classroom use by a student that can be utilized for communication and/or to access the internet, wi-fi, cellular telephone signals, or to capture images or video. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, smart phones, smart watches, tablets, and gaming devices.

“Device accessories” means any wired or wireless accessory or wearable technology that connects to a personal electronic device and any other accessory commonly used in conjunction with a personal electronic device. This includes, but is not limited to, AirPods, earbuds, headphones, speakers, chargers, batteries, and power banks.

During the school day, students are prohibited from accessing, wearing, or using their personal electronic devices and device accessories, unless authorized for classroom use. Students may store their devices and device accessories in their lockers, desks, backpacks, or as otherwise directed by the Principal, provided their devices and device accessories are turned completely off (devices may not be stored or used in vibrate or silent mode). The School will not be liable for loss, theft, or destruction of a student’s personal electronic devices or device accessories brought onto School property or in a student’s possession while attending or participating in School activities and events (on or off School property).

If explicitly required by a student’s IHP, IEP, or 504 Plan, the student will be allowed to access his/her personal electronic device and device accessories for medically or educationally necessary purposes in accordance with the IHP, IEP, or 504 Plan.

If a student violates these rules, and if such violation causes distractions or disruptions, the teacher or Principal (or designee) may confiscate the student’s device and/or accessories for the remainder of the class or the school day. Violations of this policy may also result in disciplinary action in accordance with applicable student discipline policies.

### **Special Education / Child Find**

BPA, in conjunction with its sponsor, the Charter Institute at Erskine (CIE), ensures that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is made available to all students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state special education laws and regulations. Eligible students under the IDEA will receive special education and related services tailored to the student to make progress in school.

Upon request, BPA, in conjunction with CIE, will evaluate a student for eligibility for special education and related services. A request for evaluation is known as a referral. When the School receives a referral, an Evaluation Planning team is appointed to determine if the child has a disability, and if the child needs special education and related services.

Parents and School employees who reasonably believe a student has a disability may refer the child, including a homeless child, for evaluation. Referrals must be in writing and must include the reason why the person believes the child is a child with a disability. A referral may be submitted in writing to the Special Education Coordinator by hand-delivery at or by mail addressed to 3201 Hwy 29, Belton, SC 29627, or by email at [REDACTED].

If a student is identified as having a disability and needing special education and related services, then an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed by an IEP team. The IEP team may include, but is not limited to, general educators, special educators, a school psychologist, a school administrator, and the student's parent. The IEP team will determine appropriate placement, accommodations, supplementary aids, interventions, supports, and/or services available and appropriate for the student. Parents should provide the School copies of any relevant medical records and previous IEPs pertaining to their child.

### **Section 504 Accommodations**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities. Students eligible under Section 504 are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) with the provision of accommodations and related services designed to provide disabled students with equal access to educational services, programs, and activities offered to nondisabled students. Section 504 requires identification, evaluation, and provision of appropriate accommodations and procedural safeguards.

A student is eligible for a 504 Accommodation Plan if the student has a physical or mental condition that substantially limits the ability to perform one or more major life activities, such as, but not limited to, learning, reading, writing, hearing, seeing, speaking, concentrating, thinking, walking, or the operation of major body functions (e.g., functions of immune, endocrine, digestive, or respiratory systems). Students may be eligible under Section 504 even though they do not need special education services under the IDEA.

Parents or School employees can request a Section 504 evaluation if they suspect a student has a disability. Referrals must be in writing and must include the reason why the person believes the student is a child with a disability. An evaluation request may be submitted in

writing to the Special Education Coordinator by hand-delivery at or by mail addressed to 3201 Hwy 29, Belton, SC 29627, or by email at [REDACTED]. The School must have the parent's written consent before conducting the initial evaluation. If the request is denied, the School will provide the parents with written notice of their procedural safeguard rights.

Evaluation and disability determinations are made by the Section 504 team. If a student is determined to be eligible under Section 504, the Section 504 team will develop a 504 Plan that will include appropriate accommodations, interventions, and/or related services designed to provide the student with an equal opportunity to access and participate in programs and activities offered to grade-appropriate nondisabled peers. The Section 504 team may include, but is not limited to, general educators, a school psychologist, a school administrator, a school nurse, and the student's parents. Once eligible, the Section 504 team will reevaluate the student and the 504 Plan on a periodic basis.

### **School Communications**

BPA strives to maintain open and effective communications between students, parents, teachers, and staff. This requires persistent effort by all parties, combined with mutual trust and respect. BPA expects students, parents, teachers, and staff to treat one another with mutual kindness and respect at all times and in all communications (oral and written). BPA reserves the right to dismiss any student, parent, or other person from School property, events, or activities for being rude or disrespectful to our teachers and staff or for otherwise interfering with or disrupting the educational environment or School operations.

BPA will keep parents informed through multiple communications methods, including, but not limited to, the following: emails; the School's website and social media pages; PowerSchool Parent Portal; monthly Board meetings; newsletters; and parent conferences. Email is the recommended mode of communication between parents and School staff. Teachers and staff will provide parents with their BPA email address for communications concerning their students and School matters. All emails will be sent to the parent's email address provided to the School at registration. In the event of an emergency, the School will call the parent's phone number on file. It is therefore important for parents to promptly notify the School of any changes in their email, phone number, or other contact information.

Teachers will also send written communications and information home in students' folders. This may include, but is not limited to, newsletters, permission slips, conference information, report cards, class schedules, class syllabi, special event fliers, and homework and other class assignments. Parents should check their child's folder daily and review all student work and School information sent home with their child. Questions and concerns about classroom matters (e.g., homework, grades, discipline) should be directed to the student's classroom teacher(s). Questions and concerns about non-classroom matters, (e.g., curriculum content, School policy or philosophy) should be directed to the Principal (or designee).

### **Deliveries/ Celebrations/ Special Activities**

Deliveries to students, particularly during instructional time, disrupt the school day. Students may not receive commercial deliveries such as, but not limited to, food, flowers, balloons, and other such items at the School. BPA will not accept commercial deliveries for students and will not be responsible for any loss, theft, or damage to any such items delivered to the School for students. Parents needing to deliver school-related items (e.g., change of clothes, books, homework, lunch, medication) to their child during the school day must deliver such items to the main office for their child to pick up during class breaks, lunch, recess, or other appropriate non-disruptive times during the school day.

Classroom celebrations, parties, or special activities must be arranged with the teacher and approved by the Principal in advance. Celebrations, parties, and special activities (i) must be scheduled at times that minimize disruption to instructional time; (ii) must not disrupt the School's learning and work environment; (iii) must be age and grade appropriate; and (iv) must allow for all students to participate. All foods and beverages must be store bought, must have the nutrition/ingredients label clearly visible, must be unopened and in the original packaging, and must comply with all School and/or classroom-specific restrictions and protocols for managing food allergies and student-specific dietary restrictions. Parents will drop items off at the front office or arrange to deliver items to the classroom teacher before or after school hours. For the safety of our students, parents and other visitors will not be allowed to attend classroom celebrations, parties, or special activities.

### **School Safety Plans and Drills**

For the safety of students and staff, safety drills are conducted throughout the school year. BPA will collaborate with local law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency management agencies to develop and implement plans and conduct drills for evacuating or locking down facilities in emergency situations. In accordance with state law, the School will conduct at least two fire drills, two active shooter/intruder drills, and two severe weather/earthquake drills each school year, with at least one of each drill conducted each semester. During drills and actual emergencies, students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner and follow the directions of their teachers, the Principal, and other School staff. Students who fail to follow directions, cause disruptions, or otherwise interfere with safety drills or emergency responses will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Student Drop-off and Pick-up**

BPA's goal is to provide a safe, efficient system of dropping off and picking up your children. Parents should be alert, be patient, be respectful, and refrain from using cell phones or engaging in other distracting activities during drop-off and pick-up to ensure the safety of all students, faculty, and staff. Parents must only use designated areas for drop-off and pick-up, remain in their cars at all times, keep all car doors closed until in the drop-off / pick-up zone and at a complete stop, and follow any directions given by School staff. If your child needs your assistance getting into or out of the car, please park in a designated

parking space and walk your child to the building. No parking is permitted, and cars may not be left unattended for any reason, in the car line or in any drop-off or pick-up zones.

#### Drop-Off:

Student drop-off begins at 7:30 a.m. at the front of the School. School staff will be present to direct traffic flow and assist students by opening car doors and with gathering their belongings. Students should exit on the school-side of the vehicle. Morning drop-off ends and building doors shall close at 8:10 a.m. After drop-off ends, parents must escort their child[ren] to the main office and follow late-arrival sign in procedures.

#### Pick-Up:

Students will be dismissed for pick-up at the front of the School. Staggered student dismissal and pick-up times are scheduled by grade-level as follows:

- 2:05 p.m. for 5K-2<sup>nd</sup> grades;
- 2:35 p.m. for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades; and
- 2:55 p.m. for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades.

Younger students with older siblings will be allowed to remain with teachers or staff until their older siblings are dismissed for pick-up.

BPA will provide parents with a family placard to place on the dashboard of their vehicle. Each vehicle must display the placard at all times until their student has entered their car. If the person picking up the student does not have a placard, he/she will be directed to park and report to the main office for approval to pick up the student(s) upon proof of identification. For your child's safety, adults without car placards will be required to show satisfactory identification before the School will release your child into their custody. Additional placards are available for purchase in the front office.

Teachers and staff will be present to direct traffic flow and assist students by escorting students to their car, opening car doors, assisting them with their belongings, and placing them in the car on the passenger side. Parents are asked to please move car seats and other obstructions to the driver's side or other areas of the vehicle.

#### Late Pick-Up

Please make every effort to pick-up your child, or have your child picked-up, on time. School staff will not leave students unsupervised while waiting to be picked up from school or after school activities. The School will contact parents of students who are not picked up within twenty minutes after the appropriate pick-up time. If a parent cannot be reached, BPA will attempt to contact the student's authorized emergency contacts on record to pick-up the student. Habitual tardiness to pick-up students will require a parent meeting with the Principal (or designee) where further action will be determined.



## **Student Custody / Dismissal**

In order to ensure student safety, the School will only release or dismiss students into the custody of a parent, legal guardian, or other adult specifically authorized by the parent in writing. At the time of registration or any time during the school year, a parent may submit in writing the names and contact information of other adults authorized to pick up a student from school. Copies of any court orders, divorce decrees, and other documents which restrict a parent's or other person's custody, ability to seek the release or dismissal of, or other access to the child at school must be submitted to the Principal (or designee).

Before being allowed custody of or other access to a student, the person must report to the main office, show a valid picture identification (e.g., valid driver's license), and must be authorized in writing by the parent to pick up or remove the student from School. If the person does not provide valid identification or is not properly authorized, the person will be denied entrance to the School and access to the student unless and until the School is able to contact the student's parent to verify the person's identity and authorization to pick up or remove the student. If the person objects, the Principal, and if necessary, the SRO will be contacted to handle the situation. No student will be released into the custody of any individual who is not the custodial parent of the student unless the School has written authorization from the parent and the individual presents valid identification.

## **Technology**

BPA provides a variety of technology resources for students to promote learning and expand educational resources. "Technology resources" include, but are not limited to, the following: computers; tablets; networks, routers, servers, and internet systems; printers; email accounts and systems; electronic storage devices; video and camera systems; software; and any other information technology and electronic devices owned, leased, used, or otherwise controlled by the School regardless of the location of the system, device, or user. These policies and rules also apply to the use of any privately owned computers, phones, or other devices used to access the School's technology resources.

### **Acceptable Use**

The School's technology resources shall only be accessed and used for School educational and business purposes, shall conform to School technology and security standards, and shall be used in compliance with all School policies and applicable laws. Prohibited uses of technology resources include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Accessing, creating, posting, downloading, uploading, sending, receiving, or otherwise transmitting unlawful, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, defamatory,

obscene, pornographic, or otherwise inappropriate content.

- Creating, posting, uploading, or otherwise transmitting false, defamatory, or fraudulent information about the School, students, employees, or other persons.
- Any use that interferes with the education or work performance of any other person.
- Downloading, playing, streaming, or viewing non-educational games, videos, movies, music, applications, or programs.
- Downloading, posting, reproducing, or distributing protected content or material in violation of copyright, trade secret, patent, trademark, or other intellectual property laws (including software or programs to which BPA does not have a license).
- Accessing, copying, or distributing any confidential information concerning the School, students, parents, employees, or any other person without authorization.
- Any use for personal, commercial, or political purposes.
- Hacking, spamming, phishing, or maliciously creating, installing, uploading, or distributing viruses, trojans, spyware, malware, or other damaging programs.
- Circumventing or disabling, or attempting to circumvent or disable, any user login or authentication systems, firewalls, or other content controls or security systems installed on any BPA technology resources.
- Sharing passwords with others, allowing others to use technology resources issued to the student, or assisting unauthorized users to access technology resources.
- Accessing, copying, or modifying School, student, or employee files.
- Accessing or using any technology resources for any illegal purpose.

Students are also expected to follow the same rules, guidelines, and policies that apply to other daily school activities as well as the law in the use of technology resources. Any student who violates the acceptable use standards or any other student conduct rules, guidelines, or policies applicable to the use of technology resources will lose their technology use privileges and may be subject to additional disciplinary action. Additionally, any illegal access or use will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

### Internet Access

BPA offers students the privilege of internet access for educational purposes only. By providing internet access, BPA intends to promote educational enhancement and support by allowing access to educational resources unavailable through traditional means. All internet use must be in support of education and consistent with School policies, rules, and guidelines. The internet system has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. BPA reserves the right to restrict access to and use of its internet systems.

To protect students, BPA will use software and other technology protection measures to monitor, block, or filter content that is pornographic, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate for minors. Teachers and staff will also instruct students as to the safe and appropriate use of the internet. However, because internet access provides connections to other systems and users all over the world, neither the School nor its employees can completely control the content that students might be able to access through their use of the internet. Therefore, the safe and appropriate use of the internet as an educational tool also requires

students to at all times adhere to the acceptable use guidelines and student conduct rules and policies.

### School-Issued Computers and Devices

School-issued computers and devices shall only be used for educational purposes and in accordance with all acceptable use, privacy/monitoring, and security guidelines, as well as all student conduct rules, guidelines, and policies. Students are responsible for charging their computers and devices each day, bringing them to School each day, and safely and securely storing them while on and off School property. Students are prohibited from placing stickers, paints, or other markings on School computers and devices.

Students are required to maintain School-issued computers and devices in the same condition as when issued, less normal wear and tear. Any malfunctions, damage, loss, theft, or security issues occurring during the School day should be immediately reported to a teacher or the Principal (or designee). Any malfunctions, damage, loss, theft, or security issues occurring off-campus outside of the School day should be reported to a teacher or the Principal (or designee) within twenty-four hours of the occurrence. Students are responsible for the cost to repair any malfunction or damage caused by the student and for the cost to replace any computer or device that is damaged beyond repair, lost, or stolen. A student who incurs unauthorized or excessive costs in using any technology resource will be responsible for paying or reimbursing the School for all such costs.

### Privacy / Monitoring

School technology resources and any files, data, or content sent, received, created, or stored using School technology resources are property of BPA and are subject to review and monitoring. Students using School technology resources shall have no expectation of privacy in such use. BPA reserves the right to monitor student access and use of any technology resources, including, but not limited to, internet activity, emails, and all stored data. By accessing or using the School's technology resources, students are deemed to have voluntarily consented to monitoring at any time without prior notice. Any student possessing a School computer or other technology device or resource may be required to produce the device for inspection at any time without prior notice. Students should always be mindful that their electronic communications, internet search history, stored data, and other information relating to their access or use of School technology resources may be subject to disclosure to School officials for disciplinary purposes, to law enforcement or other government officials as part of an investigation, in response to court orders or subpoenas, in response to public records requests, or as otherwise required by law.

### Security

The School expects all students to use technology resources in a safe and secure manner. The access and use of all School technology resources shall comply with the security

protocols and standards established by the School, including, but not necessarily limited to, the following requirements:

- Computers and other devices shall only be used by the student to which the device is issued. Usernames and passwords for devices and accounts shall not be shared with or disclosed to other persons (except School officials as needed for access).
- Hardware, software, applications (“apps”), and other programs must be approved and installed by or in consultation with the School’s information technology staff.
- Users shall not attempt to uninstall, disable, or circumvent any monitors, filters, firewalls, or other security programs or software.

Students must promptly report the loss, theft, misuse, or security breach of any technology resources to their teacher or the Principal. Any student who knowingly or intentionally causes, aids, or permits a security breach of any technology resources will lose their technology use privileges and will be subject to additional disciplinary action. Additionally, any illegal activity will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

### Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) may be used for educational purposes and to assist in learning, but it may not be used as a substitute for the learning and creative process. Teachers may allow students to use AI tools to generate ideas or help them understand concepts, but the work students create and submit must be their own. If students use AI, they are still responsible for the content of their work, and they should cite it as a source just as they would any other information source. Submitting AI created or generated output as the student’s own work is considered plagiarism and cheating in violation of School policies.

### **Inclement Weather / School Closing**

The Principal is authorized to delay opening, dismiss early, or close the School in the event of inclement weather, power outages, or other conditions or emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students or employees or otherwise make the operation of the School unreasonably difficult or dangerous. Information about delays, early dismissals, and closings will be communicated to families as soon as possible using various methods such as, but not limited to, local media outlets (e.g., television, radio), social media (e.g., BPA’s Facebook page, ClassDojo), and mass alerts via phone call, text message, and/or email. To prevent confusion and disruptions, parents are asked not to call the School or its employees.

### **Student Records and Information**

BPA will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws governing the confidentiality and privacy of student education records and personally identifiable information.

Education records include all materials directly related to a student that the School maintains. Records and notes maintained in the sole possession of a teacher, administrator, or other School employee, for his/her own personal use, and which are not accessible or revealed to others, are not education records of the student. Security videos are not education records unless made a part of the student's education record for disciplinary purposes or other official School purposes directly related to the student. Whether a security video constitutes an education record will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

A student's health-related records (including immunization records) and other records maintained by the School Nurse are education records subject FERPA. Additionally, records maintained for special education students, including records of services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), are education records subject to FERPA. Special education records will be maintained in accordance with the privacy, confidentiality, and access provisions of FERPA, the IDEA, and other applicable federal and state laws.

Personally identifiable information (PII) includes, but is not limited to: (i) a student's name; (ii) the names of the student's parents and other family members; (iii) the address of the student or the student's family; (iv) social security numbers; (v) student identification number; (vi) dates of birth; and (v) other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty.

The School shall give full rights under the FERPA and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations to each parent, unless the School has been provided with applicable law, a valid court order, or other legally binding documentation relating to such matters as divorce, separation, or custody that limits or revokes these parental rights.

### Requests for Inspection

Except as limited under FERPA, parents generally have the right to inspect and review their student's education records maintained by the School upon written request to the Principal (or designee). The request must include a description of the records requested for inspection and review. Parents may only inspect and review records pertaining to their child[ren] and may not inspect and review records pertaining to other students. Parents have the right to give written authorization for their representative (e.g., their attorney) to inspect and review the education records of their child[ren].

The Principal (or designee) will set a time and place for the inspection of the records within a reasonable period of time, but not more than forty-five days, after the written request was received. The Principal (or designee) shall respond to a parent's reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of records. If the request is in relation to a pending hearing or proceeding involving the student, the School will endeavor to honor the request prior to the hearing or proceeding, provided the request includes notice of the pending

hearing or proceeding and is received sufficiently in advance to allow the School reasonable time to locate, compile, and produce the records prior to the hearing or proceeding.

Original student records must be inspected and reviewed on School property and will not be released to the parent, student, or other person. If circumstances effectively prevent the parent from exercising the right to inspect and review the student's education records at the designated place and time, the School will provide copies of the requested records or make other arrangements for the parent to inspect and review the requested records. The School may charge a fee for copies of records made for the parent.

#### Requests to Amend

If a parent believes the student's education records contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights, the parent may request the School amend the records by submitting a written request to the Principal (or designee) that identifies the records, describes the requested amendments, and clearly states the reasons for the requested amendments. The Principal (or designee) shall decide whether to amend the records as requested and notify the parent of the decision within fifteen days after receiving the request. If the Principal (or designee) denies the request to amend the record, the School will inform the parent in writing of the decision and of the right to request a hearing to challenge the content of the student's education records on the grounds the information contained in the education records is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights.

Upon receipt of a hearing request, the Principal (or designee) will notify the parent in writing of the date, time, location, and procedures reasonably in advance of the hearing. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the requirements set forth under FERPA.

If, as a result of the hearing, it is determined the contested information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, the School will inform the parent of the amendment in writing and will amend the records accordingly. If, as a result of the hearing, it is determined the contested information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, the School shall inform the parent of the right to place in the student's education record a statement commenting upon the contested information in the record and/or setting forth any reasons for disagreeing with the decision. Any such statement will remain with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained, and it will be disclosed whenever the portion of the record to which the statement relates is disclosed.

These amendment procedures are intended to correct facts that are inaccurately recorded in the student's education records. They may not be used to challenge or appeal an individual's opinion or decisions about grades, academic assessments, placement, discipline, or other substantive decisions made by the School about the student, or to challenge information contained in records provided to the School by other persons or entities.

### Disclosure of Records

BPA will not disclose or release a student's education records or PII to any person or agency without the prior written consent of a parent, except in those circumstances in which such consent is not required under FERPA or other applicable law. The written request or consent must specify the records to be disclosed, state the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the party or parties to whom the disclosure may be made. The School will require a separate written consent for each act of disclosure or release of information. Blanket authorization for disclosures or releases of information is not permissible.

However, the School may disclose student education records or PII without prior written consent if the disclosure meets one or more of the exceptions under FERPA. These exceptions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- disclosure to other School officials the School has determined to have legitimate educational interests, including, but not limited to, teachers, administrators, school nurse, support staff, and Board members;
- disclosure to officials of another school or school system where the student seeks or intends to transfer or enroll, or where the student is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer;
- disclosure to organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of the School to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests, to administer student aid programs, or to improve instruction;
- disclosure to accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions;
- disclosure is to comply with judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- disclosure is in connection with a health or safety emergency and the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals;
- disclosure of information the School has designated as directory information;
- disclosure is to the parent of a student who is not an eligible student or to the student;
- as otherwise provided by FERPA and/or other applicable federal or state laws.

The School will use reasonable methods to identify and authenticate the identity of parents, students, school officials, and other parties to whom education records or PII is provided prior to disclosure. The School will inform the party to whom the records or PII are disclosed that such disclosure is subject to the condition that the party will not disclose the records or information to any other party without prior written consent of the parent; provided, however, such condition will not apply to disclosures of records or information made to a parent or student, that only contain directory information, or that are made to comply with a court order or lawfully issued subpoena.

### Directory Information

The School may disclose a student's directory information without prior consent. "Directory information" means information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

The School has designated the following categories of student information as directory information: student's name; current grade level; participation in School sports and other activities; photographs, videos, and other digital or electronic images of the student participating in school or extracurricular activities and events; academic, athletic, and other curricular or extracurricular recognitions, degrees, awards, honors, and achievements received; and graduation or expected graduation dates. Directory information shall not include a student's social security number or student identification number.

The primary use of directory information is to include information from a student's education records in certain School publications, such as, but not limited to, its website, yearbooks, awards programs, honor roll and other recognition lists, school newspapers and newsletters, approved press releases, and similar publications. Directory information will only be disclosed at the discretion of School officials to organizations, clubs, athletic teams, media, and other parties to promote student achievement, for participation in school sponsored activities and events, and for other legitimate educational and school purposes. The School will not release directory information for commercial or solicitation uses.

A parent has the right to annually opt out and refuse to permit the disclosure of any or all of the designated categories of directory information by notifying the Principal in writing.

### FERPA Enforcement

Parents have the right to file written complaints concerning alleged FERPA violations with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.

### Field Trips

BPA supports learning experiences through field trips that are educational or involve interscholastic or extracurricular activities. The Principal may approve field trips lasting one day or less. All out-of-state, overnight, and water-related (e.g., involving swimming, boating, or other activities in or around water) field trips must be approved by the Board.

Each student must provide a signed parental permission form to attend the field trip. Students may be asked to pay all or part of the costs to attend a field trip; provided, however, students will not be denied a field trip experience due solely to inability to pay the costs. The Principal or sponsoring teacher may approve other payment arrangements upon a satisfactory showing that the student is unable to pay the costs.

Participation in field trips is voluntary and is not subject to extra credit for participating or loss of credit for not participating. Students must be in good standing academically and



behaviorally to participate in field trips. Students will not be allowed to participate if they are suspended or expelled at the time of the field trip. Students may also be denied the opportunity to participate if at the time of the field trip they: have accumulated five or more Level I discipline offenses, three or more Level II discipline offenses, or one or more Level III discipline offenses during the school year; do not have passing grades in all core subjects; have accumulated excessive absences; are otherwise deemed ineligible by the sponsoring teacher or the Principal. The Principal's decision about a student's eligibility to participate in a field shall be final. The School will ensure appropriate educational activities and supervision are provided for students who do not participate in a field trip for any reason.

Students are expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct during field trips. The School uniform dress code must be worn on field trips unless notified otherwise. Students must ride School transportation to and from the field trip if transportation is provided.

Parents of students participating in a field trip are encouraged to serve as chaperones. The School will inform chaperones of their responsibilities before each field trip. All chaperones are subject to a background check prior to participating in a field trip and are subject to all School policies and rules applicable to volunteers. Siblings and other family members will not be allowed to attend field trips with chaperones and students. Chaperones may be required to pay any fees or costs associated with their participation.

### **Firearms / Weapons**

BPA prohibits employees, students, parents, visitors, and other persons from carrying or possessing weapons of any kind on any property owned, leased, operated, or controlled by the School and at any School activities or events (on or off School property). "Weapon" means any device or object that may be used to inflict bodily injury or death, including, but not limited to, the following: guns and firearms (or any similar device that propels a projectile); knives; swords; razors; box cutters; metal knuckles; slingshots; blackjacks; tasers; stun guns; explosive devices; and incendiary devices. Replicas of weapons (e.g., toy replicas, pellet guns, Airsoft guns) also constitute weapons under this policy. A student or parent who witnesses, receives a report, or otherwise learns that any person possesses a weapon must immediately notify a teacher, the Principal, the SRO, or other available staff member.

Any person who violates this policy will be reported to law enforcement. A student who violates this policy will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. In accordance with state law, the Board must expel for no less than one year any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to the School, any School activity or event (on or off School property), or any other setting under the jurisdiction of the School or the Board.

## **Homeless Student Assistance**

BPA will seek to provide academic stability for students and families experiencing homelessness. In accordance with federal and state law, BPA will ensure homeless students are provided with equal access to its educational programs and services comparable to those provided to other students in the School and are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. As appropriate, the School will ensure homeless students have access to academic and extracurricular activities for which they are eligible.

A homeless student is defined as an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes the following:

- student who is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- student who is living in a motel, hotel, trailer park or camping ground due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- student who is living in emergency or transitional shelter;
- student who is abandoned in a hospital;
- student who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation;
- student who is living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting;
- migratory student who qualifies as homeless because the student is living in circumstances described above.

BPA will immediately enroll the student even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. BPA will contact the school last attended to obtain relevant academic and other records. If needed, the School will assist the parent and the student in obtaining necessary immunizations or immunization records. BPA will maintain all student records ordinarily maintained by the School and make the records available to the parent, student, and a new school or district when that student enters a new school or district and will treat information about a homeless student's living situation as a student education record, in accordance with and subject to the protections of FERPA.

Parents and students experiencing homelessness, economic hardship, or otherwise believe they are eligible for services are encouraged to contact the Principal (or designee).

## **Student Health**

BPA recognizes that good physical health goes hand in hand with good academic performance. Health problems may prevent a child from achieving his/her fullest potential. It is important that parents inform the School about any illness or health condition their child has that may require medical support during the school day. BPA employs a School

Nurse to support student health and help promote a healthy and safe school environment in partnership with students, families, School staff, and healthcare providers.

#### Emergency Contacts

If the School determines a student must be sent home for health reasons, or in the event of an emergency, the School will first contact the student's parents. If a parent cannot be reached, then the School will attempt to contact the other emergency contacts on record for the student. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure they have provided the School with current and accurate emergency contact information for their child.

#### Illnesses / Contagious Conditions

If a student is ill, he/she should not attend school. If a student becomes sick at school, the School Nurse will evaluate the student. The School Nurse will contact the parents to pick-up their child for the student's own well-being and the health and safety of other students and staff when the student has vomiting, diarrhea, fever, rash, persistent cough, sore throat, or any other symptom or condition the School Nurse believes might be contagious or might require further evaluation by a physician. Students may not return to school until they have been symptom free for at least twenty-four hours without the use of medication.

#### Health Emergencies

If a student has a serious illness or health emergency that the School Nurse, the Principal, or other employee believes requires immediate medical attention that cannot be provided at the School, the School will notify the student's parents and, in its discretion under the circumstances, may call 911 for emergency medical services. In such event, neither BPA nor its employees shall be liable for any costs associated with emergency medical services.

#### Communicable / Infectious Diseases

Communicable or infectious diseases may pose a threat to the health and safety of students and staff. Parents of students diagnosed with a communicable or infectious disease (including blood-borne diseases) should notify the School so that other students and staff who might have been exposed to the disease can be notified. In order to protect the School community, and in accordance with applicable state law, students will be excluded from attendance if they have one or more conditions identified on the official list of conditions requiring exclusion from schools from the SC DHEC. The exclusion list includes specific conditions for duration of school exclusion and criteria for return to school. Decisions regarding the attendance of students with communicable or infectious diseases will be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the student's parents and physicians.

#### Head Lice / Nits

If a teacher or other employee suspects a student has head lice or nits, the student will be sent to the School Nurse for screening. The School Nurse will examine the student and, if

lice or nits are discovered, the School will contact the parents to pick up their child. The School Nurse will inform the parents of recommendations for treatment procedures. The student will not be allowed to return to school until the following conditions are met: (i) show evidence of treatment (as determined by the School); and (ii) pass a physical screening by the School Nurse that shows the absence of lice and nits. All students in a classroom may be screened if determined to be necessary by the School Nurse or Principal.

### Student Medications

Whenever possible, parents should administer medications to students at home. BPA will only administer medications with a parent's written permission. Medication permission forms are only valid for the duration of the health care practitioner's written order and only for the current school year. Parents are responsible for informing the School of any changes in their student's medication and providing updated or renewed written permissions as needed. BPA will not administer expired medications and will not give the first dose of any medication that the student has never received before. Unused medications that are not picked up by a parent by the last day of school will be destroyed.

Prescription medications will be administered by the School Nurse or other employee designated by the Principal only if a licensed healthcare practitioner's signed written order and written permission signed by the parent are submitted to the Principal or School Nurse. Prescription medications will only be administered in accordance with the healthcare practitioner's order. A parent must deliver prescription medications to the Principal or School Nurse in the original container with the original pharmacy label that includes the medicine name, student's name, dosage instructions, and a current date.

Non-prescription medications will be administered by the School Nurse or other employee designated by the Principal only if written permission signed by the parent is submitted to the Principal or School Nurse. Non-prescription medications will be administered in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended dosage and directions unless the School receives a licensed healthcare practitioner's signed written order and a parent's written permission approving a different dose and/or directions. A parent must deliver non-prescription medications to the Principal or School Nurse in the original packaging with the manufacturer's recommended dosage and directions and a current date.

Student medications shall be kept in a secure area. Students are prohibited from possessing medications (except as may be allowed and as provided by a proper IHP or applicable law) and from sharing medications with other students. Violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion.

BPA reserves the right to refuse requests to administer medication that it believes to be inconsistent with applicable professional standards, inconsistent with a healthcare practitioner's orders, inconsistent with a manufacturer's directions, or otherwise potentially harmful, dangerous, or unsafe to the student or others. In such event, the

Principal, School Nurse, and parents will discuss alternatives for meeting the student's health needs.

### Individual Health Care Plan (IHP)

The School will develop an IHP for students with documented special healthcare needs with an IHP for the health monitoring and care of the student during the school day and at school activities and events. The School Nurse will develop and coordinate the IHP with input from and approval of the student's health care provider, the parents, the student (if appropriate), and any other School staff members as needed. In accordance with the IHP, the student may be authorized to self-monitor and self-administer medication as prescribed by the student's health care provider and based on appropriate written authorization from the student's parents, unless there is evidence that unsupervised self-monitoring or self-medication would seriously jeopardize the safety of the student or others.

The parent must sign a statement agreeing that the School will not incur any liability as a result of any injury arising from the student's self-monitoring or self-administering medications and agreeing to indemnify and hold harmless the School and its employees against any claims arising out of the student's self-monitoring or self-administering of medications. The School may revoke a student's permission to self-monitor or self-administer medications if the student is found to be endangering himself/herself or others through the misuse of self-monitoring devices or medications.

### Immunizations

Pursuant to state law, to be admitted to or retained in school, the student must provide a valid SC Certificate of Immunization at the time of registration. Students may be exempt from the immunization requirements as follows:

- a medical exemption may be granted if a licensed physician determines, for medical reasons, that a required vaccine is not advisable for the child and completes and signs the SC Certificate of Immunization containing the medical exemption;
- a religious exemption may be granted to a student whose parent signs the appropriate section of the SC Certificate of Religious Exemption stating that one or more immunizations conflicts with their religious beliefs;
- a special exemption may be issued by the School to transfer students while awaiting arrival of medical records from their former area of residence or to students who have been unable to secure immunizations or documentation of immunizations already received; provided, however, a special exemption can only be issued one time, is valid for only thirty days, and upon expiration the student must present a valid SC Certificate of Immunization or valid medical or religious exemption.

Immunization records must be provided or updated each school year. Students that do not meet immunization requirements will not be allowed to attend BPA. BPA shall retain copies of each student's immunization records in accordance with state law requirements. In the event of a disease outbreak, students with exemptions may be excluded from school to the extent allowed by law if they are not vaccinated against the disease.

### Allergies / "Nut Conscious" School

Parents should notify their child's teachers and the School Nurse of known allergies. In all classrooms and lunch areas, food and beverage sharing is prohibited due to concerns about allergies and other health-related restrictions to some students' diets.

For students with known severe or life-threatening allergies, the School Nurse will develop and coordinate an IHP and allergy action plan as needed with input from and approval of the student's health care provider, the parents, the student (if appropriate), and any other School staff members as needed. If a student's health care provider has provided an individual emergency plan for the student, a copy should be provided to the School Nurse. Parents should provide the School with epinephrine injectors, inhalers, and similar allergy medications for their child as prescribed by their healthcare providers and in accordance with the School's student prescription medication policies and procedures.

BPA is a "nut conscious" school. Parents should notify their child's teachers and the School Nurse of nut allergies. Parents will be notified if their child is in a class with a student or staff who has a known nut allergy. Classrooms with students or staff with known nut allergies will be nut-free, meaning nuts and products containing nuts will not be allowed in the classroom. Parents with students in the classroom will be asked not to send nuts or foods that contain nuts with their students for lunch, snacks, or classroom parties, celebrations, or other activities. For classes without nut allergies, food containing nuts will be allowed.

### Lunch / Nutrition

Students bring their own lunches to school. Parents should pack healthy lunches in unbreakable or disposable containers with disposable utensils and napkins. Lunches will not be microwaved or refrigerated, so parents should plan and pack lunches accordingly. BPA recommends that students drink low fat or nonfat milk, water, and 100% juice with no added sweeteners for lunch. Due to concerns about illness, individual dietary restrictions, and food allergies, students are prohibited from sharing food or drink items with others.

If a student forgets his/her lunch, the parent may deliver the lunch to the front office. To keep disruptions at a minimum, and to maintain the security of the school, parents are not allowed to enter the classrooms or lunch area to deliver lunches to students.

Outside or commercial food and beverage deliveries to students are prohibited. School staff will not accept food and beverage deliveries for students, and food delivery drivers and

employees will not be allowed in the School to deliver food to students. The School will not be responsible for payment or refunds for any costs incurred for food deliveries.

Students are encouraged to bring an unbreakable water bottle that can be refilled during designated times during the day. Parents should label the water bottle with the child's name.

### **Searches of Persons and Effects**

Any student, parent, or other person entering School premises is deemed to have consented to a reasonable search of his/her person and effects. Reasonable searches of individuals may be conducted by designated School personnel on School grounds or at School-sponsored activities and events in accordance with applicable School policies and laws.

In order to maintain a safe School environment conducive to education and to protect the safety and welfare of students and staff, the Principal or other designated School administrator may conduct reasonable searches of students and their personal property when there is reasonable suspicion the student has violated or is violating the law or School rules, and there is a reasonable belief that a search may turn up contraband or evidence of such violation. This includes reasonable searches of a student's person and personal belongings, such as, but not limited to, backpacks, purses, wallets, bags, satchels, shoes, coats and other outerwear, and cell phones and other electronic devices. School lockers, desks, storage spaces, computers, email accounts, and other such items or equipment provided by the School to students are School property and may be searched at any time.

School officials are prohibited from conducting a strip search. Searches will be conducted or authorized by the Principal, will be conducted in the presence of at least one other adult witness, will take into consideration the age and sex of the student and the nature of the circumstances giving rise to the search, and will be conducted as discreetly as possible to avoid unnecessary embarrassment to the student. Searches of a student shall be performed by a School official who is the same sex as the student. School officials may, in their discretion, consult with the School's SRO with regards to searches and seizures.

The Principal, teachers, and other designated School officials may also interview and reasonably question students about any matter pertaining to the operation of the School and/or enforcement of its rules. Any student who knowingly answers falsely or evasively or otherwise refuses to answer appropriate questions may be subject to discipline.

If a search or interview uncovers contraband or evidence of a violation of law or School rules, the School will take appropriate disciplinary action. Any contraband or evidence of a violation of law or School rules may be seized and retained by the School or turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency. In cases involving injury or serious threat of injury to the person or to another person, or to the property of another person or the

School, or involving a possible crime or other violation of law, the School will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency. The School will cooperate with law enforcement investigations.

### **Tobacco Free School**

It is BPA's policy that the school environment shall be tobacco, smoke, and vape free. Students, parents, and other persons are prohibited at all times from using and/or possessing any type of tobacco and alternative nicotine products and paraphernalia while in or on any School property or attending any School-sponsored activity or event (on or off School premises). This includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco (e.g., chewing tobacco, dip, snuff), electronic smoking devices or products (e.g., e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes), vape devices or products (e.g., vape pens, vape liquids or e-liquids, vape cartridges), and any other products derived from tobacco or containing tobacco or nicotine. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Parents and other persons violating this policy may be required to leave School property, activities, or events, and may be referred to law enforcement in accordance with state law.

### **Drug and Alcohol Free School**

It is BPA's policy that the school environment shall be free from the influence of drugs and alcohol. Students, parents, and others are prohibited at all times from possessing, using, selling, acquiring, dispensing, distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance while on any School property or attending any School-sponsored activity or event (on or off School premises). Students are further prohibited from aiding, abetting, or concealing the possession, consumption, acquisition, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance by any other student.

Students experiencing issues with alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from a teacher, guidance counselor, or the Principal without fear of disciplinary or legal action. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action and may be referred to law enforcement. Parents and other persons believed to be in violation of this policy will be referred to law enforcement.

### **School Volunteers**

BPA welcomes and encourages parents to serve as volunteers in our school. "Volunteers" are persons who provide services in the School or at School events or activities without compensation or benefits of any kind. Volunteers assist under the supervision and direction of teachers and other designated School employees in various capacities, such as, but not limited to, School committees, guest lecturer, chaperone, assisting in classrooms (non-teaching duties); and assisting with other School activities and events.

Volunteers must be approved in advance by the Principal (or designee). Serving as a volunteer is conditional upon a satisfactory screening and background check to assure



student and staff safety as much as reasonably possible. The School will take reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of the volunteer's personal information.

Approved volunteers must enter through the main office, present a valid picture identification (e.g., valid driver's license), follow the established sign-in/sign-out procedures, and receive a visitor's badge before entering other areas of the building or grounds. A visitor's badge must be visibly worn at all times. Volunteers must comply with School rules and policies, shall not have unsupervised contact with students, and shall not have access to confidential student, employee, or other School records. Volunteers are expected to maintain the confidentiality of any information they might obtain about any student, employee, or School operations in accordance with School policies.

The Principal, supervising teacher, or other designee will inform volunteers of their duties, expectations, and applicable operations of the School. Volunteers shall not be responsible for educational instruction or discipline of students; provided, however, volunteers should report any inappropriate student behavior they observe to the Principal, supervising teacher, or other staff member to be addressed in accordance with School policies.

Volunteers are responsible for becoming familiar with and following School rules and policies. Volunteers who violate School rules and policies will have their volunteer privileges revoked, will be required to leave the School premises or the School-sponsored activity or event (on or off School property), and, in the School's discretion, may be banned from future volunteer opportunities. Volunteers who are believed to have engaged in criminal conduct will be referred to the SRO or the appropriate law enforcement agency.

### **School Visitors**

BPA encourages parents to visit the School and attend School-sponsored activities and events. To protect the safety of students and staff, BPA requires all visitors to enter through the main office, present a valid picture identification (e.g., valid driver's license), follow the established sign-in/sign-out procedures, and receive a visitor's badge before accessing other areas of the building or grounds. All visitors are required to visibly wear their badge. Any person who is not displaying a visitor's badge will be stopped and, if unable to produce a valid badge, will be reported to the Principal or SRO for trespassing.

At the Principal's discretion, parents and other visitors invited to attend School programs and events open to the entire School or the general public may be allowed to enter without signing in at the main office and displaying a visitor's pass. Such programs and events may include school plays and programs, Board meetings, and other large-crowd events.

All visitors are expected to adhere to School rules and policies and refrain from conduct that disrupts or interferes with the educational environment or School operations. Visitors engaging in disruptive or inappropriate conduct will be required to leave the premises, may be reported to law enforcement, and may be banned from future visits. School staff may

accompany visitors as deemed appropriate by the Principal (or designee). All visitors are subject to reasonable searches of their person and property to the extent allowed by law.

### **Student Conduct and Discipline**

The Student Code of Conduct and student discipline rules and procedures are intended to encourage positive social behaviors and maintain a safe and orderly School environment for all students and staff. BPA expects students to be familiar with and conduct themselves in accordance with the Code of Conduct and other School policies and rules. The Code of Conduct, as well as other School conduct policies and rules, and the discipline procedure for violations, apply to all students and will be enforced at all times when students are on School property and during School-sponsored activities and events (on and off School property).

Students will be held accountable for their conduct, and violations of the Code of Conduct and other School policies and rules will result in appropriate disciplinary action. It is BPA's philosophy to handle student discipline matters at the lowest supervisory level possible.

Teachers have the authority to make and enforce appropriate rules for classroom management. For minor classroom infractions or disruptions, teachers may use classroom interventions to address the student's conduct, such as, but not limited to, a class behavior system, verbal warnings, changing seat locations, and conferencing with parents. When minor classroom infractions or disruptions continue, or for significant infractions of School rules, teachers will refer the student to the Principal (or designee) to address the conduct. The Principal (or designee) will have authority and discretion to tailor disciplinary consequences to the facts and circumstances of each particular case. The School will maintain a record of disciplinary actions as part of the student's education record and will advise parents of student misconduct and disciplinary actions.

BPA has adopted a matrix of conduct violations defined as Level I, II, or III offenses as guidance. The matrix includes common student conduct violations with a range of possible consequences, which only serve as guidelines. The levels of offenses are based on degrees of seriousness of student misconduct. As the levels of offenses increase in seriousness, the severity of the possible disciplinary consequences increases. The Principal (or designee) has discretion to determine the appropriate disciplinary action based on the facts and circumstances of each particular case, such as, but not limited to, the nature and severity of the conduct, the degree of harm, continuing patterns of conduct, and the student's age and developmental level. When considering disciplinary actions, the Principal (or designee) will seek to balance the severity of the conduct and the resulting discipline.

The following codes apply to the matrix:

- VR - Verbal Reprimand
- PC - Parent Contact or Parent Conference
- D - Detention (lunch, recess, break)

- OSS - Out-of-School Detention
- RE – Recommendation for Expulsion

### Level I Offenses

Student Code of Conduct Matrix				
Level I: Behavioral Misconduct - Behavioral misconduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which tend to impede orderly classroom procedures or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school, or the frequency or seriousness of which interrupt the classroom or school. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to student conduct during school-sponsored activities.				
Code	Offenses	1st Consequence	2nd Consequence	3rd Consequence
	<b>Cell phones, smart watches, or electronic devices:</b> Unauthorized possession, use, or display of an electronic communication device inconsistent with school policy	VR, PC	PC, D, Confiscate device. Parent may retrieve at the end of the school day	PC, OSS (1-5+ days) Confiscate device. Parent may retrieve at the end of school day.
	<b>Cheating/Plagiarism</b> - Take work, student may receive no credit or half credit for the assignment, quiz, test, project, or exam at the discretion of the teacher or Principal (or designee)	VR, PC and/or D	PC, D/ OSS (1 day)	PC + OSS (2-3 days)
	<b>Dishonesty</b> - intentionally giving false information, written or verbal, to a school employee	VR, PC and/or D	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC + OSS (2-3 days)
	<b>Abusive language between or among students</b> - This may include, but is not limited to, profanity, teasing, name-calling, gossiping, spreading or starting rumors, and purposely embarrassing or humiliating another student	VR, PC, D, and/or	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC + OSS (2-3 days)

	<b>Insubordination:</b> refusal or failure to comply with a direction or an order from a school employee (to include substitutes, volunteer aids, chaperones).	VR, PC, D/OSS (1 day)	(1 PC, D/OSS (1-3 days)	PC + OSS (3 days)
	<b>Forgery:</b> The making of false or misleading written communication to a school staff member with either the intent to deceive the staff member or under circumstances which would be reasonably calculated to deceive the staff member.	VR, PC, D/OSS (1 day)	(1 PC, D/OSS (1-2 days)	PC + OSS (3 days)
	<b>Cutting class</b> - A class cut occurs when a student is absent from class/activity for more than 5 minutes without permission from the teacher or authorization from administration to do so.	VR, PC, D	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC + OSS (1-3 days)
	<b>Truancy</b> – student has accumulated 3 consecutive unlawful absences or a total of 5 unlawful absences.	Follow SC state truancy guidelines		
	<b>Dress Code</b> - student is not in compliance with dress code	Dress Code		
	<b>Inappropriate Behavior:</b> hit/kick/push/bite/pinch/pulling hair/horseplay/running from school personnel	VR, PC and D/ OSS (1 day)	PC, D/OSS Parent Pick-up (1-2 days)	PC + OSS Parent Pick-up (3 days)
	<b>Unprepared for Class/Failure to Complete Assignments or Carry out Direction</b>	VR, D, PC	PC +D/OSS (1-2 days)	D, PC, OSS (2-3 days)
	<b>Disrespect or rude behavior toward adults:</b> Conduct or behavior that lacks regard, civility, politeness, and/or courteous consideration which goes beyond the bounds of acceptable student behavior.	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC, OSS (1-2 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Food/Drink in unauthorized area</b>	VR, D	D, PC	D, PC, and/or OSS (1day)

	<b>Profane, obscene, or abusive language/materials:</b> The use of either oral, written or bodily language (including designations or abbreviations that connote offensive meaning), electronic messages, computers, gestures, objects, or pictures which are disrespectful or socially unacceptable, and which tend to disrupt the school environment, a school function, or an extracurricular activity.	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC + OSS (2-3 days)	PC+OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Disrupting Class:</b> Any minor acts of misconduct which interferes with the orderly operation of the classroom including but not limited to excessive or disruptive talking, throwing objects, verbal exchanges, arguing, passing notes, etc.	VR, PC, D	PC, D/OSS, Parent Pick-up (1-3 days)	PC+OSS Parent Pick-up (3-5 days)
	<b>Leaving class without permission</b>	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC, OSS (1-2 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Out of Area</b> - undesignated area without permission	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC, OSS (1-2 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Computer Violation</b> - Breaking Technology Agreement & Classroom rules	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC, OSS (1-2 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Gang Signs</b>	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC, OSS (1-2 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Gambling</b> - participation in games of chance for money and/or other things of value	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC, OSS (1-2 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)

Level II Offenses

**Student Code of Conduct Matrix**

**Level II: Disruptive Conduct - Disruptive conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by the student(s) which are directed against persons or property, and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of oneself or others in the school. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both disciplinary actions and referral to law enforcement. Behavioral misconduct (Level I) may be reclassified as disruptive conduct (Level II) if it occurs three or more times. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to the student conduct during other school-sponsored activities.**

Code	Offenses	1st Consequence	2nd Consequence	3rd Consequence
	<b>Threatening students:</b> written/verbal/electronic or assault to others.	OSS (1-3 days)	OSS (1-5 days)	OSS + RE (5-10 days)
	<b>Threatening adults:</b> written verbal assault to school personnel, substitutes, volunteer aids, or visitors	OSS (1-5 days)	OSS (5-10 days)	RE
	<b>Repeated Insubordination/Open Defiance:</b> Either verbal or non-verbal refusal to comply with school rules or directions from school personnel, substitutes, volunteer aids	PC, D/OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (1-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Severe Disrespect -</b> Directing obscene, profane, offensive, or abusive language to school employee: Any behavior offensive to common propriety or decency directed to a school employee including, but not limited to, any verbal, written, electronic, or physical conduct such as threats, bullying, slurs, innuendos, or harassment, which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment	PC, OSS (1-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, RE
	<b>Fighting -</b> physical contact between two or more students which is harmful or disruptive. Self-defense is described as an action taken to block an attack by another person or to shield oneself from being hit by another person. Retaliating by hitting a person back is not self-defense and will be considered as fighting.	PC, D/OSS (1-5 day)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, OSS (5+ days)
	<b>Provoke/Attempt to cause fight:</b> Any action, comment, or written message intended to cause others to fight or which might reasonably be expected to result in a fight	PC, D/OSS (1-5 day)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, OSS (5+ days)

	<b>Sexual Harassment -</b> (Verbal/written/physical) using sexual comments and suggestive physical contact to torment another person.	PC, OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, OSS (5+ days)
	<b>Lewd, indecent, or offensive behavior:</b> Any behavior offensive to common propriety or decency, including, but not limited to offensive touching, indecent exposure, possession, distribution, or display of obscene or "hate" material, possession/display of electronic images or text, or similar behavior	PC, OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, 5+ days/RE
	<b>Inappropriate use of technology - major</b> (e.g., bullying, harassing, or intimidating other students or district employees, plagiarizing copyrighted materials, and accessing inappropriate websites)	PC, D/OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (1-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Unauthorized video or sound recording:</b> Recording anything on the school campus, at a school event or field trip without the consent of administration or supervising teacher/coach	PC, OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, OSS (5+ days)
	<b>Inciting, leading, or participating in any act which substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of school or a school function.</b> This may also include any false accusations made by a student that jeopardizes the professional reputation, employment, or professional certification of a school employee.	PC, OSS (1-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC,RE
	<b>Bullying -</b> Systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or that it unreasonably interferes with the individual's school performance or participation. Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, acts of violence, bullying, cyberbullying, or threat of violence, or harassment based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or other distinguishing characteristics of a student that is directed at one or more students; substantially interferes with the educational opportunities or educational programs of the	PC, OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, 5+ days/RE

	targeted student(s); or adversely affects the ability of a student(s) to participate in or benefit from the schools' educational programs or activities by placing that student(s) in reasonable fear of emotional or physical harm, or because the conduct as perceived by the student(s) is severe and pervasive.			
	<b>Stealing:</b> Taking the property of another person or school without permission	PC, D/OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Vandalism (minor)</b> - the willful or malicious destruction, damage, or defacement of school property or the property of others including the acts of defacing with graffiti, keying, or scratching a car, or trashing a room resulting in damages.	PC, D/OSS + restitution (1 day)	PC, OSS + restitution (1-5 days)	PC, OSS + restitution (3-5 days)
	<b>Trespassing</b> - Unauthorized entry into school property, a school function, or extracurricular/co-curricular activity and/or remaining after the administrator or designee has directed such person to leave that location	PC, D/OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-4 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Leaving School w/o Permission:</b> Leaving school grounds or the site of any school activity without permission	PC, D/OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-4 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Simple Battery</b> - Any pushing or striking of another student against the will of the other student	PC, OSS (1-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, RE
	<b>Public Display of Affection (PDA):</b> Kissing, "dirty dancing," sitting on laps, prolonged hugging, close contact, or any suggestive contact that is in poor taste and shows disrespect for others as interpreted by school personnel. Parents are contacted at each step.	PC, D/OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-4 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Smoking:</b> use of tobacco/nicotine products such as electronic cigarettes/vapes on the school premises and/or school related events	PC, D/OSS (1 day)	PC, OSS (2-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)
	<b>Possession of Contraband</b>	PC, OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, 5+ days/RE



	<b>Alcohol;</b> Possession of/or use of Alcohol	PC, OSS (1-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC,RE
	<b>Medications:</b> unauthorized possession of prescription or over-the-counter medications	PC, OSS (1-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC,RE
	<b>Fireworks:</b> Possession of/use of fireworks	PC, OSS (1-5 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC,RE
	<b>False 911 Call/ False Fire Alarm</b> - Making a false call to 911 services from school or personal phone; the willful and/or malicious activation of a fire alarm system or the willful and/or malicious reporting of a false fire	PC, OSS (1-3 days)	PC, OSS (3-5 days)	PC, 5+ days/RE

### Level III Offenses

**Level III: Criminal Conduct - Criminal conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which result in violence to oneself or another's person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of oneself or others in the school. When school officials have a reasonable belief that students have engaged in such activities, then these activities usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of the School Resource Officer or other law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the school board. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to student conduct during other school-sponsored activities.**

**Assault and/or Battery:** an intentional, unlawful act to do violence to another person that poses a serious threat of injury or results in physical harm

**RE**

**Arson** - The willful and/or malicious burning of, or attempt to, burn, or destroy school property, contents (in or on the property), or personal property of others.

**RE**

**Bomb Threat:** Threat of the use of a destructive device (bomb, grenade, pipe bomb, or similar device)

**RE**

**Possession, use, or transfer of weapons** - any weapon, firearm, knife, gun BB gun, pellet gun, mace, box cutters, instrument or article that might be injurious to a person or property

**RE**

**Sexual Offenses -**

**RE**

<b>Breaking and Entering</b> - The unlawful and willful entry or attempted forcible entry of any school property, or the personal property of students and/or school personnel	<b>RE</b>
<b>Illegal use of technology</b> (e.g., communicating a threat of a destructive device, weapon, or event with the intent of intimidating, threatening, or interfering with school activities and maliciously transmitting sexual images of minors and the like.)	<b>RE</b>
<b>Extortion/Coercion/Blackmail</b> - obtaining money or other things of value from an unwilling person, or forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force	<b>RE</b>
<b>Use of /Possession/Possession with intent to distribute/Selling illegal drugs prescription drugs, or alcoholic beverage, including paraphernalia/ facsimile (materials passed as illegal drugs) and CBD oils and materials ;</b>	<b>RE</b>
<b>Theft or the possession or sale of stolen property</b> – including stolen School property or personal property of another student or staff member	<b>RE</b>

The School may suspend or expel a student for the commission of any crime, gross immorality, gross misbehavior, persistent disobedience, violation of written rules or regulations established by the School or the State Board of Education, or when the student's presence is detrimental to the best interest of the School. A student who is expelled (or has been recommended for expulsion) or suspended from School is excluded and prohibited from entering School property (except for prearranged conferences with the Principal) and from attending any School activities or events (on or off School property).

#### Suspensions from School

The Principal is authorized to suspend a student from the School for a period of time not to exceed ten school days for any one offense or thirty days in any one school year; provided, however, a student may not be suspended during the last ten days of a school year if the suspension will make the student ineligible to receive credit for the school year without the approval of the Board unless the student's presence constitutes an actual threat to the School or a hearing is granted within twenty-four hours of the suspension.

Prior to suspension, the Principal will meet with the student to explain the alleged conduct violation and allow the student an opportunity to respond with his/her explanation of the facts. If the Principal determines suspension is appropriate, the Principal shall inform the student of the decision and notify the parents of the suspension in writing, giving the reason for the suspension, the dates of suspension, and setting a time and place when the

Principal shall be available for a conference with the parents. The parent conference shall be held as soon as possible, but not later than three days from the date of the suspension.

After the conference, the student may appeal the suspension to the Board. To appeal, the student or parent must submit a written appeal to the Principal and/or the Board Chair within three days after the conclusion of the conference with the Principal, which must include a concise statement of the grounds for the appeal, copies of any relevant documents the parents wish the Board to consider, and any specific relief requested. The Principal will provide the Board with copies of any relevant documents maintained by the School.

The Board will only consider issues that are timely and properly presented in the written appeal. The Board will consider the appeal at its next scheduled meeting. Filing an appeal does not guarantee a student or parents the right to appear before the Board. The Board, in its sole discretion, may decide the appeal with or without meeting with the student and parents. Any meetings will be informal and non-adversarial and will be held in executive session to the extent consistent with the meeting provisions of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. The Board shall act on the appeal in open session and will endeavor to issue a written decision within five school days after taking such action. If the appeal is denied, the student will complete any time remaining on the suspension before returning to school. If the appeal is granted, the student will be immediately reinstated to school, and the suspension will be removed from the student's permanent records. The Board's written decision will be included in the student's discipline records. The Board's decision is final.

#### Expulsions from School

If the Principal determines expulsion is appropriate, he/she will make a recommendation for expulsion to the Board. The student will be suspended from School and all School activities and events (on and off School property) during the expulsion procedures.

Upon recommending expulsion, the Principal shall notify the student's parents in writing of the following: (i) the reasons for the expulsion recommendation; (ii) the date, time, and location of an expulsion hearing before the Board; (iii) the right to have legal counsel present at the hearing; (iv) the right to question all witnesses; (v) contact information for a legal aid service provider which may determine eligibility for free legal representation; and (vi) the right to access the investigative file in its entirety, to include all documents and videos, at least three days prior to the hearing (with appropriate exemptions and redactions as required the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable laws). The Board hearing shall be scheduled as soon as practical, but not more than fifteen days after the written notification to the student's parents.

The hearing shall be held in executive session to protect student privacy and confidentiality. The Board Chair shall preside over the hearing. The hearing shall be informal. Formal court rules of procedure and evidence will not apply. The Board Chair will rule on all procedural and evidentiary issues and may make reasonable modifications to the hearing procedures to serve the just and efficient completion of the hearing. Each party may present testimony and other relevant evidence and will be allowed an opportunity to cross-examine witnesses

and review the other evidence submitted. Board members may also question the parties and witnesses. The Board shall render its decision within ten days after the conclusion of the hearing. The action of the Board may be appealed to the proper court.

#### Restraint / Seclusion / Corporate Punishment

The use of physical restraint, seclusion (isolation), corporal punishment, or physical force as a disciplinary measure or punishment is prohibited. Such measures should only be used by School staff as may be reasonable and necessary when circumstances constitute a safety emergency in which a student poses a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to self and/or others. The SRO and other law enforcement officials may respond to such situations according to the protocols established by their law enforcement agency.

#### Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are not exempt from student conduct rules and school disciplinary processes. Students with disabilities will be disciplined in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, their implementing regulations, and state law and regulations, as applicable.

### **2024-2025 Parent / Student Handbook Acknowledgement**

The parent and student have received electronic access to or a hard copy\*\* of the 2024-2025 Parent/Student Handbook. The parent has reviewed and discussed the handbook with the student, including the student conduct rules and expectations. The parent and student understand and agree to abide by the policies, rules, procedures, and expectations of BPA, including student conduct rules and expectations. The parent and

student understand that the student's failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or other consequences.

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Parent Name (Print)

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Parent Signature

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Date

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Student Name (Print)

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Grade

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Student Signature

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Date

\*\*Hard copies of the 2024 - 2025 BPA Parent/Student Handbook are available upon request.