

# PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Berkshire Country Day School

2018–2019

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August, 2018

Dear BCD Parents:

This **Handbook** will be a useful guide to the policies, procedures and activities of Berkshire Country Day School. Many of your questions have been anticipated and are discussed in some detail within this book. Please read the material carefully and do not hesitate to call us if you have any questions.

The PS-9 school years are full of excitement, challenge, and exploration. This is a time when children undergo tremendous mental, physical, and social growth. Our goal at BCD is to meet the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of our students. We want to challenge them to develop their talents and abilities and to learn to be responsible, kind, and understanding. We want to provide a learning environment that offers active participation and the opportunity to be successful in a range of experiences.

Cooperation between home and school is essential to help us achieve our goals and so we ask you to visit school, to take part in parent/teacher meetings, and to volunteer your time in some aspect of our enterprise. Meaningful exchanges of information and a visible demonstration of your commitment to and trust in our school play a crucial role in the development of a positive bond between your child and BCD. We consider the family-school interaction to be the most significant factor in children's success at school.

It is our hope that this **Handbook** will be helpful to you and that it will promote positive communication and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Segar Ed.D.  
Interim Head of School

# ABOUT BERKSHIRE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

## **Mission Statement**

*Berkshire Country Day School exists to inspire the individual promise of every student so that each may become an exemplary citizen of the world.*

## **The School's Philosophy**

Berkshire Country Day School's intentional approach of inquiry, discovery, and discussion blends proven methods with emerging best practices to draw fully on the experiences and contributions of our entire school community. Our comprehensive curriculum, which includes project-based and experiential learning, leverages the talents of our exemplary educators and the natural resources of our extraordinary campus to inspire independence, academic excellence, and mutual respect. (Revised by the Faculty – May 2016)

## **The School's Values**

Our values guide us to engage members of the school community in the shared responsibility of fostering students' growth and supporting their individual talents and passions.

**Originality** We provide learning activities that inspire creativity and thoughtful reflection in an environment where each student is nurtured, celebrated, and encouraged to take risks.

**Quality** We promote academic excellence and scholarship so that each student can flourish and succeed through a vigorous curriculum and an extensive offering of arts and athletics.

**Respect** We empower acts of inclusion and acceptance with due regard for the feelings, wishes, rights, and traditions of others.

**Sustainability** We educate our community about the impact of our actions and behaviors on the environment and instill practices that protect its long-term viability.

**Community** We establish trust, cooperation, and accountability within an atmosphere of belonging where we all invest in the success and well-being of each other.

**Wellness** We ensure the physical, social, and emotional health of each community member.

**Citizenship** We guide all members of our diverse school community to become ethical, engaged, and informed global citizens.

## **The School's Vision**

Distinct in program, adventurous in spirit, engaged in a changing world

*Approved by the Board of Trustees, 2009*

## **Accreditation Statement**

Berkshire Country Day is accredited by NEASC (the New England Association of Schools and Colleges), a non-governmental, nationally recognized organization whose affiliated institutions include independent schools and colleges throughout New England.

Accreditation of an institution by NEASC indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer group review process. An accredited school is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation. Accreditation by NEASC is not partial; it applies to the institution as a whole. As such, it is not a guarantee of the quality of every course or program offered, or the competence of individual graduates. Rather, it provides reasonable assurance about the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the institution.

Inquiries regarding the status of an institution's accreditation should be directed to the administrative staff of the school. Individuals may also contact: **New England Association of Schools and Colleges, 209 Burlington Road, Bedford, MA 01730, (781) 271-0022**

## **School Memberships**

Berkshire Country Day is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (*NEASC*), the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (*CASE*), the Educational Records Bureau (*ERB*), and the School and Student Service (*SSS*) for Financial Aid. BCD's campus is located in the Berkshire Hills Regional School District, from which the school receives state approval.

## **ORGANIZATION & STRUCTURE OF BCD**

### **Board of Trustees**

The general responsibility and authority for the operation and conduct of the School rests with the Board of Trustees. The Board deals primarily with policy and financial matters. It appoints the Head of School and delegates to him or her the authority to deal with all operational matters concerning admission, curriculum, faculty, students, and administration.

The guidelines for the responsibility of the Governing Board follow those described in *A Handbook for the Independent School Trustee* published by the National Association of Independent Schools.

The Board meets seven times during the year (Sept, Nov., Dec., Feb., Apr., May, and June). Standing committees of the Board meet as needed to conduct the business of the School.

All members of the Board serve on committees. Persons who are not members of the Board may volunteer or be asked to serve on one of the following standing committees: Advancement and Marketing; Buildings and Grounds; Committee on Trustees and Governance; Executive; and Finance.

Each year, the Committee on Trustees proposes new Board members. The Board elects nominees. Each elected member serves a three-year term and is eligible for renewal. The faculty also elects two voting representatives to the Board.

The Board of Trustees shall consist of at least 14 members but no more than 27. The Board also includes the Head of School, Alumni/ae, and two faculty trustees who are voting members of the Board. Members of the Administration attend meetings.

### **The Parents' Association**

All parents and guardians of BCD children automatically belong to the Parents' Association. Active participation on the Association's committees and their projects gives parents opportunities to become better acquainted with one another and with the life of the school. The hope and expectation is that each parent will volunteer to work on a minimum of two school functions. Volunteer activities contribute

substantially to the well-being and overall healthy environment at BCD. Over the years, the School has been fortunate in having all parents give willingly of their time and talent to enrich BCD.

### **Parents' Association Statement**

The Parents' Association:

- Is an important arm of the School and is comprised of current parents and the Head of School;
- Exists to build community among BCD's students, parents, and faculty, as well as with the larger community;
- Promotes and organizes volunteer services at BCD in order to increase parent involvement and volunteerism as much as possible. In this way many special events—unique to the school and special to all who attend—are made possible.
- Hopes, through its efforts, to further the School's support of academic achievement, the well-rounded development of each student, and to encourage responsive and responsible citizenship.

The Parents' Association is organized by a Steering Committee whose members are selected each year by the membership. The Steering Committee encourages interested parents to attend the Association's monthly meetings (date, time, and location is announced in advance in the calendar). It also encourages parents to communicate with the members by calling or emailing individual Steering Committee members, whose contact information can be found in the School directory.

The Parents' Association facilitates the process of choosing Class Parents. The role of the Class Parent is to help teachers keep in touch with parents of the class about nonacademic, class affairs. Individual parents are encouraged to volunteer to be Class Parents in the spring of each year for the following year. Class Parents contact other parents to assist with trips, class parties, and other projects that the class might undertake. Class Parents may also host outside class get-togethers during the year.

### **Head of School**

The Board of Trustees hires the Head of School and evaluates his performance annually. The Head of School's responsibilities include:

- Reporting to the Board with respect to all significant matters concerning the school;
- Leading the school's planning team;
- Hiring and evaluating all school administrators, faculty, and staff;
- Developing and overseeing the educational and extracurricular programs of the school;
- Having responsibility for all disciplinary matters, including dismissal of a student;
- Acting as spokesperson for the school;
- Supervising the general maintenance of the physical plant;
- Serving as an *ex officio* member of the Board of Trustees.

While families are asked to first contact the appropriate teacher, and then next the Associate Head of School, the Head of School is available to meet with any parent to discuss school-related issues or concerns about a child. To make an appointment with the Head of School, please call the Main Office at 413-637-0755.

The Head of School hires the Associate Head of School to oversee the different divisions: Preschool (Beginner Threes and Pre-K); Lower School (Kindergarten through grade 3); Middle School (grades 4-6); and Upper School (grades 7-9). The Associate Head is responsible for leading the divisions' faculty in its program planning; evaluating the divisions' faculty; and supporting and overseeing academic and co-curricular programs among other responsibilities.

## **Admission**

Berkshire Country Day is a coeducational day school which does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color and national or ethnic origin in any of its policies or operations, and admits qualified students to all the rights, privileges, responsibilities, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School.

BCD Admission depends upon its students, parents, and alumni/ae as the primary referrals for prospective families who are interested in enrolling their student(s) at BCD.

The admission process is based on a rolling admission cycle. The Admission application requirements are as follows: 1) parent tour of school and meeting with Admission Officer, 2) student and parent application completed, 3) transcripts, 4) evaluations, 5) class visit during the school year, 6) student interview with Admission Officer and Associate Head of School, and 7) assessment for grades 1-9.

Applications for siblings of current BCD students, faculty and staff children, and children of alumni/ae receive priority consideration by the Admission Committee.

The Director of Admission oversees all aspects of admission operations. An Admission Committee, comprised of academic administrators, reads the files of all applicants to determine who is a qualified applicant for BCD.

During the school year, the BCD Admission Office hosts Admission Open Houses, represents BCD at local fairs, holds receptions in parent homes, as well as hosts other events to invite prospective families to learn more about BCD.

The Admission & Marketing Committee of the Board of Trustees oversees the operation of the Admission Office.

**Financial Aid:** The School believes that the cost of a BCD education should not prevent qualified children from attending who would benefit from what the School offers. Financial aid funds are allocated on the basis of need and are granted at all grade levels beginning with Kindergarten. Candidates' families wishing to apply should ask the Admission Office for a *School and Student Service for Financial Aid* form. FEBRUARY 15th is the deadline for submitting the completed form — with the indicated fee — to SSS by NAIS — this information must be entered on-line. Also by February 15th, the Director of Admission must receive copies of the SSS form and of all current W-2 forms. Finally, the Director on or before April 1st, must receive a copy of the family's 1040 Form, together with all accompanying schedules. Each year, families currently receiving financial aid must reapply if they wish to be considered.

Financial aid funds are limited; therefore, priority is given each year to current students receiving aid (from Grade 9 down to Kindergarten), and then to other current students applying for assistance for the first time. Once these needs have been met, funds will be made available to new students, again giving priority to students in the Grade 9 level down to Kindergarten.

## **Business Office**

The Business Office oversees all matters relating to the financial affairs of the School. Another major function of the Business Office is the administration of the financial operations including issuance and collection of contracts and all fees.

**Tuition:** The payment of tuition is outlined for the next school year in each child's contract for enrollment in the School. The Board of Trustees establishes new tuition rates each February. Each child's signed contract is returned to the Business Office accompanied by a deposit, which is followed in turn by two additional tuition payments — on or before July 1st and January 1st.

**Payment of Fees:** Prompt payment of all fees is important to the School and will be greatly appreciated. A LATE FEE OF 1.5% PER MONTH IS ASSESSED ON THE OUTSTANDING BALANCE OF ACCOUNTS NOT PAID BY THE DUE DATE. As a reminder, all parents receive a statement *prior to the date the*

*payment is due.* Please notify the Business Office if this bill should be sent anywhere other than to the parents at the home address of the student.

All parents are urged to help the school by keeping their accounts paid on a current basis; repeated billing and checking with parents who are late places an expensive and unnecessary burden on the School. Parents who face unusual circumstances affecting their ability to meet obligations should call the Business Manager to discuss possible arrangements. Contracts for reenrollment of students with delinquent accounts are withheld until the account is paid in full. According to Board policy, students whose tuition bills are not paid in full by the end of spring vacation will not be allowed to attend classes until the tuition is paid in full or a payment schedule agreed upon. They also will forfeit their space in the following year's class. In addition, students will not be allowed to travel on field trips if the cost of the trip is not paid in full before the departure date.

At year-end, reports and comments are withheld until all parent obligations are met and financial accounts paid in full.

BCD must contract for faculty, staff and services, and incur expenses for a full academic year. Therefore, except under Tuition Refund Coverage, BCD's tuition contract obligates you to the full tuition fee except as canceled or forgiven as follows:

If a student is withdrawn on or before the following dates, the tuition obligation is modified accordingly:

**June 30 10%/August 31 33%/September 30 67%/Thereafter 100%**

Withdrawal of a student must be submitted in writing to the Business Office.

The Tuition Deposit, which accompanies the enrollment contract, is non-refundable under any circumstances.

The first tuition billing for the academic year is mailed in June. Transportation charges are billed in two parts; the first in the fall, the second in early winter. The tuition balance (less deposit) is billed in December.

Bills for students accepted after June 1st are included with the acceptance letter; these are payable within ten days.

Miscellaneous charges, such as for the Extended Day Program, field trips, bus passes, books, etc., are billed periodically.

All bills are due and payable as stated on the bill.

**Security Enrollment Deposit:** When a new student is accepted at BCD, parents pay the Security Enrollment Deposit (SED) in order to hold a place for him or her in the appropriate grade. The school retains the SED for as long as the student remains at BCD and will refund it upon written request made within one year of the student's graduation or withdrawal if all bills have been paid.

**Facilities Fee:** When a new family is accepted at BCD as part of the SED and tuition payment, a \$1,000 fee is collected. This facilities fee is a one-time fee per family and is tax-deductible. Proceeds will be deposited into the BCD Plant Reserve Fund to be used for ongoing maintenance and repairs to BCD's physical plant and facilities.

**Enrollment Contract:** This simply confirms the parents' agreement to meet their financial obligations to BCD on a timely basis. Parents of entering students receive the contract with their Letter of Acceptance.

**Reenrollment:** Families receive Enrollment Contracts and related materials in mid-January. The reenrollment period ends February 15th, which is the deadline for returning the Tuition Deposit and Contract. Receipt of the Contract and the Tuition Deposit insures a child's place in the appropriate grade, assuming that academic and financial requirement for the current year has been met. The Tuition Deposit



is deducted from the tuition balance due in January of the following year. Enrollment contracts cannot be issued, nor class spaces held, for students whose families' accounts are in arrears. After March 15th, the Director of Admission may fill any such openings by accepting new applicants.

**Monthly Payment Plan:** BCD contracts with Tuition Management Services (TMS) to assist those families who prefer to pay tuition monthly (usually over ten months, from May through February). Information about the plan is mailed with reenrollment information and also may be obtained from the Admission Office. Should a family's TMS account be delinquent at the time of reenrollment, the contract(s) will be held until the account is cleared.

**Tuition Refund Plan:** In accordance with Board policy, tuition is refunded when:

1. *Extended Medical Absence:* If a child has an extended illness, the parents' account may be credited with the equivalent of one day of tuition for each day absent after the first thirty consecutive school days. (Parents should contact the Business Office to request this credit.)
2. *Withdrawal:* If a student is withdrawn from BCD because a parent's employer transfers him or her out of the area and the entire family must move (50 miles beyond their current residence), exclusive of the Tuition Deposit, any unused prepaid tuition is credited to the parents' account and any unpaid tuition forgiven. Withdrawal of a student must be submitted in writing to the Business Office. A relocation letter from an employer is required.

This policy does not cover, among other things: **a)** withdrawal of students whose parents unilaterally choose to move from the area except in extreme and unusual circumstances and at the discretion of the school; **b)** all non-medical absences even though authorized; **c)** expulsions or suspensions for disciplinary reasons; or **d)** absence due to the denial by the school of a student's attendance or participation due to indebtedness or failure to provide required medical information.

**Distribution and Billing of Books:** Paperbacks, workbooks, and certain hard covers used in the Lower, Middle and Upper Schools and required for coursework are distributed to the students. The school retains some hardcover texts; these are loaned to students and parents are charged a usage fee (approximately 25% of the book value). Textbook loaners are issued by the teachers at the start of the school year, and they must be returned at the end of the year in good condition. Students will be charged the full price for books that are lost, damaged, or destroyed.

## **Counseling**

BCD's counseling program provides a confidential and thoughtful support system for students, parents, faculty and staff, as well as advice to faculty regarding students. The School draws upon the resources of a trained psychologist who is available to give advice and short-term counseling to both students and families. The psychologist deals with matters ranging from day-to-day problems to more serious concerns related to school and/or home. Parents are encouraged to avail themselves of this service as the need arises. Please call the Main Office to set up a meeting or to arrange a conversation with the school psychologist.

## **Development**

The Development Office is responsible for coordinating all fundraising for the School and for Alumni Relations. In conjunction with parent and other constituent groups, the School engages in fundraising activities authorized by the Board to help meet its operating and capital needs. These fundraising efforts are designed to maintain tuition at reasonable levels, promote faculty development, support the School's endowment and/or meet other priorities as the Board may determine, such as tuition assistance. Development programs shall strive to provide a proper balance between school needs, volunteer initiative, and donor participation.

The Annual Fund is initiated in the fall, and every family is asked to participate in this important campaign. Tuition does not cover the full cost of each child's BCD education, and gifts to the Annual Fund help to close the tuition gap. In addition to the Annual Fund drive, the Development Office coordinates several other fundraising events throughout the year to raise money for the School's financial aid fund the Annual Fund. Any capital campaign fundraising is also coordinated through the Development Office.

The Development Office maintains contact with BCD's growing alumni/ae and "past parent" body through its annual magazine, *BCD Today*, a Facebook page, and ongoing class reunions. It also coordinates BCD's annual Grandparents' / Grand Friends' Day and Thanksgiving Soup.

The Development and Communications Offices may from time-to-time use the names and/or photographs of BCD students to promote the School in press releases, such as the honor roll or sports awards, on its web site, (student names will not be associated with photographs on the school's web site), or in its advertising and marketing materials. It may also, from time to time, solicit testimonials from parents to be used in the School's marketing communications initiatives.

### **Main Office**

The School's Main Office is located on the second floor of Albright Hall. This office provides all necessary support for the effective administration of the school. Among office staff responsibilities is the distribution of messages for students. Except in extreme emergencies, the staff cannot promise to deliver messages to students received after 1:30 p.m., when teachers may not be available to check their voice mail.

### **Maintenance**

BCD's Maintenance Department is responsible for the care and upkeep of the buildings and grounds. Parent requests for assistance — such as a Parents' Association activity — must be submitted to the Maintenance Supervisor in writing at least two weeks in advance of the event. The Maintenance mailbox is located in the mailroom of Albright Hall or through email to [dlee@berkshirecountryday.org](mailto:dlee@berkshirecountryday.org).

### **School Nurse**

The School Nurse serves the BCD community in a variety of ways. In addition to providing the student body with daily medical and health support, the consultant is available to advise families on health-related issues. The Nurse oversees the health curriculum that begins in Preschool and continues through ninth grade. The nurse also issues the appropriate forms to all families each year and ensures that all required health forms are on file and that each student is in compliance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The School Nurse (or designated staff member) dispenses any medications a student may require (and for whom a release is on file) during school hours (see Health and Safety section). If you have any questions for the school nurse, please call the school's Main Office or email [edaigneault@berkshirecountryday.org](mailto:edaigneault@berkshirecountryday.org).

### **The Division Structure**

BCD is divided into four divisions: Preschool (2, 3 and 4-year olds), Lower School (Kindergarten – Grade 3), Middle School (grades 4-6), and the Upper School (grades 7-9). Often, Preschool/ Lower School Divisions and Middle/ Upper School Divisions may be combined for assemblies, meetings, etc.

Please consult your Divisional Supplement for specific information about each division.

Questions or concerns that are academic in nature should be directed to the Associate Head of School. Concerns that are social in nature should first be directed to the student's homeroom or class teacher and/or the student's advisor.

# IMPORTANT SCHOOL-WIDE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Absences

**Absence Due to Illness:** If a student is ill, this is considered an excused absence. The School requests that the parent or guardian send a note/email to the homeroom teacher explaining the absence when the child returns to school after being absent or calls the School by 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence to report an illness.

**Excused Absence Other Than Illness:** BCD discourages student absences from scheduled class days. The School has scheduled generous vacation periods staggered throughout the academic calendar. BCD, in its calendar, also allows for religious celebrations. Because of this, the School asks for parent cooperation in keeping their child's vacation within the dates prescribed. Whenever a student misses classes, the classroom routine is affected and an additional burden for make-up work is unfairly placed on the student and the teacher.

The School recognizes that there are instances during the school year that may require a student's absence other than illness. These EXCUSED absences include family or personal milestones (i.e. sibling's graduation or marriage), religious holidays, visiting schools, medical appointments, and an unusual educational experience. Any plans for such an excused absence must be made in advance and in writing and given to the Head of School. This timely advance notice will allow the student and teachers to discuss work that will be missed. Each student is responsible for all work assigned during the absence. Teachers will do their best to provide assignments in advance of an absence, yet students and families must respect the fact that this may not be possible due to the nature of the class or teaching method of the instructor.

BCD urges parents to schedule medical appointments for times before or after school or during school holidays, yet recognizes that this will be impossible at times.

A student remains responsible for all work assigned during his/her absence from a class. Refer to Division Supplements for specific information regarding missed work.

**Extended Absences:** If a child has 20 or more absences during a school year, his/her ability to be promoted to the next grade at the end of the year is subject to review by the Administration and the final determination is up to the Head of School.

## Animals on Campus

Realizing that members of the BCD community have severe allergies to pets and/or are fearful of dogs, and due to insurance company restrictions because of liability, **BCD prohibits dogs and other pets and animals on campus at all times.**

## Behavioral Expectations

BCD students are expected to be respectful members of the community, and we set high standards of behavioral expectations for our students. Grades 4-9 Middle and Upper School students and their parents are asked to read together both this section of the handbook as well as the CODE OF CONDUCT in the MS/US Addendum. These spell out clearly BCD's behavioral expectations, the **Code of Conduct**, major code of conduct offenses, and the manner in which BCD may address inappropriate conduct.

Middle and Upper School students and their parents must sign an acknowledgment form stating that they have read and understand the policies outlined in the handbook and processes for addressing any and all infractions.

**Code of Conduct:** BCD strives to create an environment in which students can grow academically, physically, socially, and spiritually. The manner in which students choose to conduct themselves affects them directly and affects those around them and the entire school community. To make sure that BCD provides a safe haven for each and every student, a Code of Conduct exists to articulate clearly the school's expectations regarding the behavior of each student. Students are expected to follow and support the school rules. They should be polite, kind, considerate, and supportive of others in the school community, and they must respect the school's property and the property of others. Children are expected to treat each other with

respect. In keeping with BCD's school philosophy, bullying, teasing, unnecessary exclusion, and other acts of unkindness are not tolerated. The School emphasizes the importance of students taking responsibility for themselves and their actions. The School expects all students to conduct themselves in a manner harmonious with this goal.

BCD is a Drug Free Zone. It is illegal for students, parents, faculty, or staff to be in possession of, to distribute, or to use any illegal drugs or substances on the BCD campus or at BCD-related events/trips. Use, possession, or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, or any other illegal substance on campus or during any school-related activity by a student. It is important to also note that alcohol will not be served to or purchased by parents or their friends or school employees at any school-sponsored and/or school activity-related event (off or on campus) in which students are in attendance. Examples of such events include, but are not limited to, field trips, class trips, athletic events, ski trips, cast parties, theater banquets, dinners, and dances.

BCD will not tolerate bullying or hazing. Bullying is any act, often repeated, that causes intentional physical or emotional harm to another person. Bullying can also include cyber bullying. This includes sending mean or inappropriate texts, e-mails or instant messages, posting nasty pictures or messages on social networking sites, or E-mailing or posting messages of retaliation. Hazing refers to any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person (MA Anti-Hazing Law, see Chapter 269, Section 17 in this Handbook).

All BCD students sign a Technology Acceptable Use Policy (which includes a section on cyber bullying) in their computer classes and are expected to follow these guidelines during any communication with or regarding the BCD community. Acts of bullying, especially if repeated, will be reported to and investigated by the Associate Head of School and handled as a Major Code of Conduct offense. In such cases, it will be paramount for the administration and the student's teachers and advisor to restore a sense of safety for the victim.

#### **Major Code of Conduct Offenses:**

The following is a list of some, but not all, of the types of inappropriate conduct that, when they involve BCD students, happen on the BCD campus, or happen at BCD-related events/trips, shall be considered major Code of Conduct offenses that may result in immediate probation, suspension, or expulsion, without warning or notice:

- Conduct which is illegal or reflects negatively on the school.
- Interference with the rights of others, including but not limited to physical, sexual, and verbal abuse, bullying, teasing, exclusion, lying, cheating, and stealing.
- Conduct that subverts the order and discipline of the school and compromises the integrity of others.
- Damage or abuse to any school property or personal property of others.
- Possession, use, distribution, or sale of drugs listed in the current Federal Controlled Substances Act or otherwise considered illegal.
- Possession, use, distribution, or sale of alcohol, any tobacco substance, or inhalants.
- Possession, use, distribution, or sale of firearms, explosive materials, fireworks, knives, or matches.
- Repeated use of obscene, profane, threatening, or intimidating written or verbal language.
- Repeated disruptive or uncooperative behavior.
- Violation of the school-wide Acceptable Computer Use Policy.
- Repeated situations involving academic dishonesty.

***Please refer to Divisional Supplements for the Code of Conduct and for Procedures and Responses to Code of Conduct offenses.***

**Parent Expectations:** Parents are expected to support School policies and procedures and to treat all school personnel in a respectful and courteous way. A family failing to adhere to these basic principles may be asked to leave BCD.

## Communications

Communications at BCD include many types of media, from the note pinned to your child's jacket to Morning Chats with the Heads, an informative phone call from the teacher or administrator, a teacher blog, and the school's website.

The school's website is where parents, students, and faculty can access calendar information, news, classroom highlights, and photos. It is constantly being populated with information. It offers regular up-to-date information on calendar changes, events, etc.

**We ask that ALL parents bookmark the school's website, create an icon for their desktop, and/ or check the home page regularly to access calendar information and news around school of interest.** As a parent, you can also take advantage of RSS (really simple syndication) and subscribe to those blogs that pertain specifically to your child, such as your child's classroom teachers to receive homework updates and information on what is happening in the classroom. When an update is made to a blog you've subscribed to, you're notified through your RSS reader (usually your email program), and will receive ONLY the updates that pertain to you or your child. Students can also access the web site, where they can get homework assignments, participate in online class discussions, and find useful links posted by their teachers.

While the web site has information that is designed for parents to keep them abreast of what is happening at the school and in their child's classroom, it also contains general information about the School for Admission and Development prospects.

Once a year, Berkshire Country Day School publishes **BCD Today**, an alumni magazine, and an Annual Report of Giving, which publicly acknowledges the many contributions BCD parents and its extended family make to the school.

**Cancellation of School:** If school is canceled early in the morning for any reason, or if there is a delayed opening, parents will be notified by phone call and email through our School Messenger Alert System. We also suggest that you go to the home page of the school's web page or call the Main Office. The closing or delayed opening will also be announced on the following radio stations and television stations:

In Massachusetts: Television: Channel 22; Radio: WBEC, WBRK, WUPE, WSBS (FM 105.05, AM 1420, 101 FM, 96 FM, 110 AM, 860 AM)

In New York State: Television: Channel 6, 10 and 13; Radio: 590 AM; 810 AM; 87.7 FM; 99.5 FM; 104.9 FM; 107.7 FM; 1230 AM

If there is an unforeseen emergency necessitating the cancellation or early closing of school or the relocation of students due to a campus emergency, the School Messenger System will attempt to notify you using all available phone numbers (home and cell) and email addresses on file.

Regarding **snow days**: five snow days are built into BCD's calendar. In the event that the School needs to cancel more than five times in a given school year, the School will consider if extra days missed will be made up. The School reserves the right not to make up the missed day(s) by extending the school year due to end-of-year calendar constraints.

**Community Directory:** BCD publishes a Directory of family and faculty phone numbers, email addresses, and mailing and home address information to make it easy for community members to reach one another for school business. The Directory is published and sent home at the beginning of the school year and hard copies are available in the Front Office. ***This Directory is for the use of our families only and must not be given to any outside organization or institution, or used to communicate with the BCD community about anything not related to school matters and events.***

The Main Office should be kept informed of any change of address, telephone number, email address, or marital status affecting a Parent/Student listing. In this way we will keep the Parent List current and also notify parents, faculty, and staff of changes through updated Directories periodically sent home.

**Communications Solicitation Policy:** Berkshire Country Day School does not post or communicate information about the products, services, events, and businesses of current and past parents, faculty, or outside businesses, organizations, and companies to any of its constituents. Further, all community members are prohibited from using and sharing BCD's Parent Directory and internal email distribution lists with any outside business or organization for any solicitation. We make space available in the Main Office to display information about community events and activities for children. To request that information be displayed, please contact Melissa Kruse, in the Main Office.

**Communicating with Faculty:** BCD prides itself on being a close-knit school that maintains open and comfortable communication between the School and each student's family. We encourage families to communicate openly and frequently with teachers in a respectful, courteous manner. In the extreme case that a parent is disrespectful to a faculty member or advisor, the Head of School may require the parent talk only with the administration of the school. Teachers and advisors are not expected to defend fellow colleagues, themselves, or their curricula with angry, argumentative, or challenging parents. Outlined here is the BCD procedure for communicating with faculty:

Parents may call during the school day to inform the School of any important concerns about their children. To discuss a student's performance, problems and/or progress, please telephone the Main Office at (413) 637-0755 to request a call from a teacher. Usually a teacher can schedule a phone call with you during the school day and quickly clear up any questions before they become problems. A conference, however, is better for longer discussions. When circumstances are unusual enough to warrant a call to a faculty member at home rather than at school, parents will find faculty numbers listed in the Communications Directory. Please be considerate of a faculty member's family demands and privacy.

*Under no circumstances should a parent call the home of a teacher after 8:30 p.m.*

**Communicating with the School:** Family/school trust and mutually understood expectations are best maintained through an effective system of communication. The School welcomes comments and encourages parents to seek answers to their questions. Every question or concern should first be directed to the child's homeroom teacher (for Preschool and Lower School divisions) or teacher or advisor (in Middle, or Upper School divisions), then to the Associate Head of School, and finally to the Head of School. Any matter not related to classroom performance should be referred first to the Associate Head of School and then the Head of School if a resolution has not been reached. BCD works hard with families to work through and resolve any concerns as is best for the welfare and success of the child.

**Delivering Messages to Students:** Except in an emergency, it is impossible to deliver messages to faculty or to students directly. If called in before 1:30 p.m., messages for students will be relayed to them through teacher's voice mail before the end of the school day.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences:** See Division Supplements for specific information.

**Conferences and Reports:** The formal Parent-Teacher conferences listed above are held because they are personal, individualized, and productive. Any time a parent has a concern that needs to be addressed, additional conferences can be arranged. Parents should feel free to make an appointment with a teacher, student's advisor, Associate Head of School, or the Head of School. Keep in mind that your first communication should usually be with the subject teacher or advisor at the Middle School and Upper School divisions.

Interim reports as discussed in individual division handbooks (either phone or written comments) are prepared midway through a term to let parents know if a child's effort or achievement has slipped. At the end of each term, grades and/or written reports on all students' progress are sent home.

## **Computer Policy**

Students at Berkshire Country Day School use technology in their classes as one of many learning tools. The School has taken measures to prevent such access to inappropriate information through the use of a firewall.

However, BCD cannot control all information available on the Internet. The School shall not be held liable for inappropriate access or exposure to inappropriate materials resulting from student Internet use. The School trusts its students to know what is appropriate and inappropriate, however, to clarify; the School feels that any non-educational use is clearly inappropriate. The following guidelines are intended to help students use technology appropriately. Failure to adhere to the acceptable use policy will result in disciplinary action and/or the loss of technology use privileges. Depending on the infraction, disciplinary responses may include a written notification, and in egregious cases, including the violation of major school rules, dismissal from school as well as possible legal referral.

**User Agreement:** The use of school technology resources must be in support of education, research, and the educational goals and objectives of Berkshire Country Day School. Students are personally responsible for this provision at all times when using technology on school premises. The use of the school network or technology resources must comply with rules appropriate to that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States statute is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. While some students may use their personal e-mail to communicate with peers and teachers, computers used on school property, e-mail addresses, and/or web pages may not be used for commercial, non-profit, political, personal, or religious purposes, or any other non-educational use. If you have any questions about these rules call the Technology Office or the Associate Head of School to clarify specifics. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the School's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The student (or any guest on campus) is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the School's computer resources. The students are advised never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

**21st Century Learning:** As we strive to meet the needs of students in the 21st century, new tools, innovative ways of connecting and learning continue to be developed. BCD seeks to incorporate the use of various technologies and Web 2.0 tools in the curriculum where appropriate, as a compliment to or by means of integration with core subject classes. Students throughout the school may use various technological and may also utilize online tools (i.e. websites, apps, blogs, webquests, podcasts, etc.) both to collaborate with others and/ or to showcase their work. At times, students will be communicating with other classes, teachers, mentors and experts throughout the world. In all cases, student safety and privacy is a vital concern.

## **The Rules**

**Student Guidelines:** These are guidelines to follow to prevent the loss of network privileges at school. All student devices must be registered with the Technology Office in order to be used on the campus network. Forms are available in the Technology Office or in homerooms. Students are not allowed in the computer labs or other classrooms with Internet access without a teacher present.

- Do not use the printers without permission.
- Students are not allowed to stream music and/or videos to their computers or personal devices.
- Food and drink are not allowed in the computer labs.
- Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work.
- Do not damage the computer or the network in any way.
- Do not install any software, shareware, or freeware.
- Do not violate copyright laws.

Please be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources is a violation of school rules, and may be in violation of local, state, and federal laws, and that you can be prosecuted for violating these laws.

**Privacy:** Network storage areas may be treated like school cubbies. Network administrators may review communications to maintain system integrity and to insure that students are using the system responsibly. Students should not attempt to access information stored by others.

**Downloads:** Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks.

**Inappropriate materials or language:** Profane, abusive or impolite language should not be used to communicate nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. A good rule to follow is never view, send, or access materials which you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Should students encounter such material by accident, they should report it their teacher immediately.

Please see Division Supplements for additional policies regarding electronic devices (e.g. cell phone, iPods, hand-held gaming devices, etc.)

## **Dress Code**

Because our environment is rural and our weather is ever-changing, dress at BCD is reasonably casual. Students are asked to dress in a neat, clean, and appropriate (for school and the season) manner. A student's dress should not distract other students nor impede the learning process. Common sense dictates our Dress Code.

See the specific requirements for Dress Codes required for each division in the relevant Handbook Supplements.

## **Health & Safety**

**Philosophy:** BCD believes that people must have optimal physical and mental health in order to learn, to grow, and to develop to their full potential. The effectiveness of BCD as an educational institution depends, in part, on the health of its individuals (including staff, students, and their families). To that end, BCD has a comprehensive Emergency Procedures Plan which addresses how the School is prepared to respond to a variety of situations that our school community may face, including fire and lockdown procedures. The plan is reviewed by the staff each year and a series of drills will be completed during the year. In the event of a real emergency, the School would communicate to the parent community as soon as possible.

BCD also believes that it is necessary to promote and support healthy attitudes and behaviors. It is also important to discourage and, to the best of the school's ability, prevent behaviors that have a detrimental effect on health and development.

Please note that for students with medical complications or students diagnosed with life-threatening health issues may be required to have a parent accompany him/her on day and/or overnight field trips. School administrators, along with the school nurse, will evaluate individual student needs, based on diagnoses, the student's independent maintenance (self-care), travel distance, and emergency needs.

The School believes that it is important to:

- Work in a partnership in which staff, students, and their family members share in promoting and maintaining good health;
- Establish a climate of trust and honesty where wellness is a priority;
- Nurture positive self-regard;
- Offer educational programs to all segments of the community that enhance the awareness of health issues and provide the information and skills necessary to make sound decisions;
- Develop and follow policies that reflect the school's philosophy regarding health issues; and
- Create evaluation strategies that will ensure the effectiveness and relevance of both programs and policies.

BCD acknowledges that staff members, students, and their families may at times have health-related problems. The School will strive to provide support and access to appropriate resources in order to assist its members at these times.



BCD respects the need for confidentiality and will not violate that trust unless an individual's actions or psychological/emotional state are deemed injurious to himself/herself or to others.

**Communicable Diseases:** The School will follow standard procedures in its attempts to identify the occurrence of communicable disease, to protect at-risk students and employees, and to carry out appropriate notification of public health officials and agencies.

Parents are requested to notify the School Nurse if their child contracts a doctor-diagnosed incidence of communicable disease so that the school may alert other parents as deemed appropriate and, in specific situations, report the incidence of the disease to the State Department of Health, as required by law.

Massachusetts's law has specific confidentiality laws regarding diseases such as HIV and AIDS. Only persons with written permission from the student's parents/guardians shall have access to HIV test results. Any school personnel with knowledge of a student's HIV status must keep that information confidential.

**Required Health Forms:**

<p><b>BCD <u>MUST</u> HAVE THE REQUIRED HEALTH FORMS AND STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET IN ORDER FOR YOUR STUDENT TO <u>ATTEND</u> BCD:</b></p>
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**Physical Examinations:** All new students must have full physical examinations. They receive the Private Physician's Examination Form with their acceptance letters. All returning students who are entering Grades 4 and 8 must have follow-up examinations. All other returning students must have a Physician's Physical Activity Release Form so that they may take part in any physical activity that is part of the BCD program. Returning students receive the appropriate follow-up or physical activity release forms in the re-enrollment packet. The forms are available on the BCD website.

**Physical Activity Release:** Prior to the opening of school in September, the Main Office must have on file for every child either a physical examination or a physical activity release form signed by the child's physician indicating that the child is able to take part in all facets of BCD's physical education and sports programs, as well as everyday rough and tumble playground activities. The appropriate forms are part of enrollment and are sent with the re-enrollment contract for returning students and are included in acceptance letters for entering students. These forms are to be submitted to the Health Office by August 15th. Children for whom no statements are on file will not be allowed to begin the school year until Physical Activity Release forms are complete.

**Immunizations:** The School Immunization Law of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires that each child be successfully immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, poliomyelitis, rubella, varicella and Hepatitis B. All Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children must also have had at least one Lead Test. State requirements are defined by grade and/or age of student. Notification of immunization requirements is sent with re-enrollment or acceptance packets. Questions regarding requirements should be addressed to the School Health Consultant.

To comply with these requirements, BCD must have on file a physician's certificate of immunization or disease. This certificate, the only acceptable evidence of immunization, must be submitted together with the SED (Security Enrollment Deposit) as a condition of the child's enrollment in the school. Until the certificate is received, no place can be held at BCD for the child. It must contain the dates and types of immunization against, or occurrence of, the specific disease. Failure to supply the required information can result in a child's exclusion from school.

**Exemptions:** A physician's certificate is the only acceptable evidence for exempting a child from immunization for reasons of health. State law requires that this certificate be submitted at the beginning of each school year. To obtain a religious exemption parents should send a signed and dated statement that immunization conflicts with their sincere religious beliefs.

**Distribution of Prescribed Medicine:** When it is necessary for a child to take medications during school hours, parents should:

1. For medication administered daily during school hours obtain a "Permission for the Administration of Medication" form from the School Nurse to be completed by the child's physician. Give the prescribed medicine, together with the completed form, to the School Nurse so that it can be safely stored. Please ask your pharmacist for a second container for school doses.
2. No "over-the-counter" medication will be administered without permission from a parent or physician. Obtain "Non-Prescription Medication Permission" form from the School Nurse to be completed by parent or physician and kept on file for the occasional use as needed. This is optional.
3. In cases where prescription medication is to be administered over a short period of time (such as antibiotics), parents should coordinate procedures with the School Nurse. Please ask your pharmacist for a second container for school doses. A prescription label serves as authorization from the physician to administer during school hours.
4. School personnel will not administer the first dose of any medication nor will they administer any other medication without written authorization from both a physician and the parent.
5. Medications are typically administered at lunch times between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
6. Under no circumstances should a student have any medication in his or her possession unless written permission from a physician is on file for a student to carry asthma inhalers and epi-pens for field trips and sports events.

**Medical Insurance:** Parents must be responsible for carrying medical insurance covering students; BCD does not carry this kind of insurance.

**Miscellaneous Medical Information** may be found on a child's *Student Information Sheet*.

**Early Dismissal:** In the interest of the safety of our students and in order to maintain control and be accountable for their whereabouts while in our care, BCD asks:

- No matter what the reason, a student leaving the campus at any time other than a regular dismissal time may not "wait at the wall." Instead he/she is required to go to the Main Office and wait for the parent/guardian's arrival.
- Any student who is to be dismissed early is required to give a note from a parent or guardian (indicating reason for and time of departure) to a homeroom teacher to be included on the morning's attendance sheet. Just prior to pick-up time, the student must report to the Main Office and wait for the parent/guardian's arrival.
- A student who does not feel well must report to or be brought to the Health Office for evaluation. If the School Nurse determines that the student should go home, the parents will be called and the student will be dismissed as explained above. The daily attendance record will show that the student left school early because he/she was ill.
- While the requirement that parents come to the Main Office to get their children may be somewhat inconvenient, it is an important part of our efforts to keep all BCD students safe and free from harm.

**Illness and Accidents at School:** Every effort is made to maintain a healthy and safe school environment. The School asks parents to keep home any child who, because of illness, cannot participate comfortably in classroom or school activities or who may present a health risk to other children. In addition, the child will be excluded for any contagious conditions according to the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association. As a general rule, children well enough to come to school **are considered well enough to participate fully in all activities**. If a child arrives at school ill, or becomes ill during the school day, he or she is sent to the School Nurse who will care for the child and notify the parents to pick the child up.

Accidents during the school day are treated with simple first aid procedures when appropriate. In cases of severe injury or illness, 911 will be called immediately and the parents notified. Staff at BCD will not be permitted to transport any child for medical care. All decisions about emergency treatment of the child will be left up to the 911-response team and the emergency room physician.

**Illness at Home:** Any child who appears ill or who is running a temperature above 100.5 degrees F should be kept at home. Children with vomiting and/or diarrhea must stay home and be symptom free for 24 hours.

If the child seems to have a communicable disease, please notify the School Nurse. It is critical for BCD to protect the health of students and teachers who are **not** ill.

Children who come to school exhibiting signs of illness will be asked to return home. While the School appreciates the problem a child's illness poses to families where both parents work, having a sick child attend school is unfair to the BCD community. Parents should also remember that children must be kept home after illness until they are well enough to take part in all activities and to be outdoors in any season. All children go out for recess every day, and no child is allowed to remain indoors unsupervised.

***Pediculosis Policy (Head Lice):*** In the case of head lice, a child may be sent home early for treatment depending on the extent of the infestation. Children in Preschool and Kindergarten must to be nit free to attend school. If a child is found to have head lice at home, parents should contact the school nurse and the child may only return to school after effectively being treated and then checked and approved by the school nurse. Children with head lice should be checked daily for 14 days after an outbreak and then weekly for 8 weeks following treatment.

**Tick Policy:** Our students participate in a number of outdoor activities on and off the BCD campus, including on the BCD playground, on the athletic fields and during BCD-sponsored outdoor experiences. Due to the rural, country setting of our campus, there is a risk of deer ticks and tick-borne diseases on our campus and during other outdoor activities in which our BCD students participate. Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tick-borne disease in Massachusetts. Deer ticks, which are very small, carry the bacteria that cause Lyme disease. Deer ticks go through three life stages as they develop: larva, nymph, and adult. Nymphs and adults can transmit Lyme disease, while larvae cannot. Nymphs are approximately the size of a poppy seed, and adults are about the size of a sesame seed. Ticks usually live in brushy or wooded areas such as those found near our BCD campus. They can be active at any time of the year when the temperature is above freezing. Usually, a tick must be attached to someone for at least 24 hours to be likely to transmit Lyme disease. Not all ticks carry the bacteria that cause Lyme disease. Early Lyme disease has symptoms that usually occur between 3 and 30 days after a tick bite. A person infected with Lyme disease may get an expanding rash that looks like a bull's eye, but this is not always the case. They may also experience flu-like symptoms such as fever, fatigue or aching muscles. Lyme disease can be treated effectively with antibiotics. Please contact your child's doctor if your child is experiencing any of the symptoms listed above, especially if associated with recent tick exposure. It is important to start treatment early. Other tick borne diseases may have similar or different symptoms and need to be treated promptly.

At BCD we strive to maintain a safe and healthy environment for your children, but we cannot control whether your child comes in contact with deer ticks. Therefore, we recommend that you visually check your child for deer ticks after they spend time outdoors at school. It is also helpful to have your children dress in a way to avoid ticks by wearing long-sleeved light colored shirts and long pants tucked into socks and a hat. This helps keep ticks away from skin and makes them easier to see.

While we will not visually inspect your child for ticks, if we happen to see a tick embedded on a student we will call the parent, remove the tick if needed (with written permission), and document the incident.

Parents also may consider using EPA registered insect repellents to prevent tick bites. Consumer reports rates repellents based on tested effectiveness <http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/insect-repellent/buying-guide.htm>.

Parents who are concerned about exposures to chemicals should use the lowest concentration of DEET (not above 15% on children) that provides protection for the length of time they will be exposed to ticks or use bug repellents of their choice. Another option for tick protection during peak tick months in fall and spring is the use of permethrin treated clothing. The concentration of permethrin used to treat clothing (good for 70 washings!) is low enough to be found safe for use with children by the EPA. <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/repellent-treated-clothing>.

Permethrin treated clothing can be purchased online or clothing can be sent to Insect Shield for treatment. [http://www.tickencounter.org/prevention/insect\\_shield\\_your\\_own\\_clothes](http://www.tickencounter.org/prevention/insect_shield_your_own_clothes).

The single most important thing that can be done to prevent Lyme disease (and other diseases spread by ticks) is for parents to check their child's body for ticks every day after coming in from brushy or wooded areas. Ticks most often attach in the armpits, hairline, groin, legs, thighs, or in and behind the ears. Ticks are small, but they can be seen and felt on the skin. Ticks should be removed as soon as possible using a pair of fine point tweezers, grabbing the tick as close to the skin as possible, and pulling straight out with

firm and steady pressure. Alcohol, petroleum jelly, or a hot match should never be used to remove a tick. Our goal is to help our students stay healthy and still enjoy their time outdoors.

For more information:

Additional tick control resources can be found in the tick section of the health care policy notebook posted in the parent information area and on these sites:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health <http://www.mass.gov/dph/tick>

Tick Encounter <http://www.tickencounter.org/>

**Severe Food Allergy Policy:** BCD maintains the right to impose an "allergy-free" environment to safeguard the health of its student(s). In such cases, the School will send home a note to all families in that classroom explaining the modifications and accommodations that will need to be made to support the student.

It is the expectation of all BCD parents, teachers, and students to respect the guidelines set for each individual student. When sending in food to school that will be shared with the class, please consult with the homeroom teacher to ensure a safe and accommodating environment for every student in that class.

**Suspicion of Child Abuse or Neglect:** BCD believes in and supports the rights of all children to live and grow in a nurturing environment. Toward this end, the School follows policies and procedures to aid in the protection of BCD students from child abuse or neglect. The School defines abuse or neglects as any threat to a child's health or safety by physical, mental or emotional injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, deprivation of essential needs, or lack of protection from any of the above. The School's policy requires all employees to comply with state mandates and laws regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect to the local agencies.

Sexual relationships or activities between any member of the faculty or staff and any students are improper and prohibited. Such relationships or activities may also constitute a crime of child abuse or maltreatment under state law.

Any student who feels threatened should report this in confidence to his or her parent, homeroom teacher, advisor, Associate Head of School, and/or Head of School.

**Safe Environment for Children:** Berkshire Country Day School strives to keep its students safe. The fundamental message includes:

*Physical Contact:*

- Your body belongs to you.
- You have a right to say who touches you and how.
- If someone touches you in a way you don't like, in a way that makes you feel funny or uncomfortable inside, or in a way that you think is wrong, or your parents would think is wrong, it's okay to say "no."
- If the person doesn't stop say, "I'm going to tell," and then tell, no matter what.
- If you're asked to keep a secret, say, "No, I'm going to tell."
- If you have a problem, keep talking about it until someone helps you.

*Bullying:*

Bullying is a form of harassment. Bullying has these common features:

- It is deliberate, hurtful behavior;
- It is often repeated over a period of time;
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves;
- The person who bullies has, and exercises, power inappropriately over the victim.

Bullying can be physical (hitting, kicking, taking belongings), verbal (name-calling, insulting, racist, or homophobic remarks) or indirect/emotional (spreading nasty stories, excluding from groups).

The whole School community must work together to eliminate bullying and to establish a safe emotional and physical environment. Bullying is unacceptable behavior and is treated as a major disciplinary offense.

No one deserves to be bullied and Berkshire Country Day School strives to incorporate the acceptance of others in its program. Please see Division Supplements for individual division responses to incidents of bullying.

### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

Berkshire Country Day School is committed to providing its students with a safe learning environment that is free from all forms of harassment, including bullying. The School will not tolerate any form of bullying that occurs on School grounds or in connection with any School activity or that otherwise interferes with the educational experience of any student at the School. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our School community. We will provide annual training for all employees on this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. We will provide information to all students and parents about the Plan at least annually.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. We will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. We afford all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

We will respond promptly and effectively to any report of bullying or retaliation against any person who has any information about bullying or participated in an investigation of bullying. We will promptly investigate the report. If we find that bullying or retaliation has occurred, we will promptly take action to end that behavior and restore a sense of safety for those who were the target of it. We will impose disciplinary sanctions in appropriate cases, up to and including dismissal from the School or termination from employment. We will report to local law enforcement incidents of bullying that may constitute a violation of criminal law.

### **What Constitutes Bullying**

Massachusetts has adopted a law relative to bullying in schools, which broadly defines bullying as “the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school’s staff (including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to any extracurricular activity or paraprofessional) of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim/targeted student, that:

- (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim/targeted student or damage to the victim’s/targeted student’s property;
- (ii) places the victim/targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or damage to his/her property;
- (iii) creates a hostile environment [defined below] at school for the victim/targeted student;
- (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim/targeted student at school; or
- (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.”

The law defines a “hostile environment” as “a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student’s education.”

Bullying includes “cyber-bullying,” which Massachusetts law defines as “bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication ... including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.”

Cyber-bullying also includes “(i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (iii) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.”

Cyber-bullying also includes “the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.”

### **Definitions and School Policy**

It is important to bear in mind that stricter standards of behavior may apply under the School’s policies in order to prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct before a student has been subject to bullying as it is defined under the law. For example, although the Plan defines bullying as “repeated use” of certain expressions, acts, and/or gestures, the School reserves the right to impose disciplinary measures or other corrective action in a case of a single expression, act or gesture, as well as in a case of inappropriate conduct that may not rise to the level of the legal definition of bullying. This may occur if the School determines that the behavior is of sufficient severity to warrant disciplinary measures or other remedial action, or if the repetition of an expression, act, or gesture might result in bullying as defined under the Massachusetts anti-bullying law.

### **Prohibition Against Bullying**

The School prohibits bullying:

- on School grounds, which means any building or property that the School owns or uses for educational, athletic, or other purposes;
- on any property immediately adjacent to School grounds;
- at or in connection with any School-sponsored or School-related activity, function or program, whether or not the activity occurs on School grounds;
- on any vehicle or other form of transportation owned or used by the School; or
- through the use of any technology or any electronic device owned, leased or used by the School.

The School also prohibits bullying that does not meet any of the above criteria, but that nonetheless:

- creates a hostile environment at school for the victim/alleged target;
- infringes on the rights of the victim/alleged target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the School.

### **Prohibition Against Retaliation**

The School also prohibits retaliation against any person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. “Retaliation” means any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against any such person.

### **Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation**

*Students:* Any student who feels that he or she or any other student has been the subject of bullying or retaliation should promptly report the matter to the Head of School, the Associate Head of School, the School’s counselor or any other staff member or teacher with whom they would feel more comfortable making the report. Student reports of bullying may be made anonymously, although the School is prohibited from taking any disciplinary action against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

*Parents/Guardians:* Any parent or guardian who feels that any student has been the subject of bullying or retaliation should promptly report the matter to the Head of School or the Associate Head of School. Such reports of bullying may be made anonymously, although the School is prohibited from taking any disciplinary action against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any parent or guardian who wishes to file a claim/concern or seek assistance outside of the School may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pga>, emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu), or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the Superintendent’s office. If a parent or guardian knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, the School may terminate the enrollment of any child(ren) of that parent or guardian.

*Teachers and Staff:* All administrators, teachers, and staff – every person who is employed by the School in any capacity – *must* immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation that the person has witnessed, or otherwise become aware of, to the Head of School. If the Head of School is unavailable, reports should be given directly to the Associate Head of School. An employee who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation or who fails to immediately report an instance of bullying or retaliation of which they are aware shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

If a teacher or staff member witnesses an act of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation in progress, the teacher or staff member is expected to take reasonable steps to stop the act by communicating directly with the person where behavior is considered unacceptable, offensive, or inappropriate.

### **Anonymous Reporting**

Employees may not make reports under this policy anonymously. The School urges students and their parents and guardians not to make reports anonymously. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously. While the School cannot promise strict confidentiality, because information must be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation, the School releases information concerning complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation only as needed to address concerns.

### **Responding to Reports of Bullying or Retaliation**

Upon receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School, or the Head of School's designee, will promptly conduct an investigation. The nature and extent of the investigation will depend on the circumstances.

If the Head of School or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred after completion of the investigation, the Head or designee will take the following actions:

- Notify the parents or guardians of the alleged victim/target and, to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of any action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. The Head of School or designee shall also inform the parents or guardians of the alleged victim/target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.
- Notify the parents or guardians of the alleged perpetrator.
- Assess the alleged victim's/target's need for protection and take appropriate steps as necessary to restore a sense of safety for the victim/target.

The following is an outline of the procedure that is pursued once a complaint has been brought forward:

An impartial investigation of the complaint is conducted by the Head of School or designee. That investigation may include (but will not necessarily be limited to) interviews with the person who made the complaint, with the student who was the target of the alleged bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, with the person or persons against whom the complaint was made, and with any students, employees, or other persons who witnessed or who may otherwise have relevant information about the alleged incident.

Depending on the circumstances, the Head of School or designee conducting the investigation also may choose to consult with other teachers and/or the School Counselor.

### **Resolution, Notification, and Follow-Up**

Following interviews and any other investigation undertaken, as the School deems appropriate, the Head of School or designee will determine whether and to what extent the allegation of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been substantiated. If it is determined that the policy set forth in this Plan has been violated, the Head of School or designee will determine what disciplinary action and/or other remedial action is appropriate and how it will be implemented. When necessary, the following steps may be taken

- In consultation with the school counselor, refer perpetrators, victims/targets, and family members of such students for counseling or other services as appropriate.

- Take appropriate disciplinary action, which may include any form of discipline that the School imposes for other violations of its rules and policies, up to and including dismissal. In accordance with Massachusetts law, any disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior, and no disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- Notify local law enforcement if the Head of School or designee reasonably believes that criminal charges may be pursued against a perpetrator. Depending on the nature of the conduct, bullying may involve, for example, the crimes of stalking; making threats; harassment; or making harassing, annoying or molesting electronic communications. In addition, retaliation or threats of retaliation may involve, for example, the crime of witness intimidation.
- Notify the appropriate administrator of another school if an incident of bullying or retaliation involves a student from that school.

For all reports of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School or designee will keep a file of the report, the investigation, and any steps taken in response to a finding of bullying or retaliation.

### **Notification and Training**

The School will provide written notice of the relevant student-related sections of this Plan to students and parents/guardians at least annually. The notification to students will be in age-appropriate terms. Relevant portions of the Plan will be included in the Parent/Student Handbook.

The School will provide training on this Plan for all employees at least annually. The training at a minimum will include a review of the reporting obligations for all employees and the processes that the School will follow in response to a report of bullying or retaliation. The Plan, or relevant portions thereof, will be included in employee handbooks.

### **Reviewing and Updating This Plan**

The Plan will be updated at least once every two years. In connection with that update, the Head of School, or the Head of School's designee, will be responsible for reviewing the Plan, reviewing the file of reported incidents of bullying or retaliation in at least the preceding two years, and undertaking such other steps as may be appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of this plan and the School's compliance with the Plan and any laws or regulations relating thereto.

At least once every four years, the School will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in the School. Additionally, the School will annually report bullying incident data to the Department as may be required by law.

Harassment: Berkshire Country Day School is committed to providing a community environment free from all forms of discrimination. Conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive to another person's life will not be tolerated. This includes sexual harassment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Physical or mental abuse
- Racial or ethnic insults
- Derogatory ethnic or sexual jokes
- Religious slurs
- Taunting (teasing)
- Unwelcome sexual comments or advances
- Requests for sexual favors
- Sexual graffiti
- Sexual insults

Harassment is considered a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from school.



## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT POLICY**

### **A. Position Statement**

Berkshire Country Day School (“BCD”) is committed to ensuring equal access to its programs and activities for qualified individuals, including individuals with disabilities. Therefore, BCD supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, and the Massachusetts General Laws (hereinafter “applicable law” or “law[s]”), which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Disabilities may include physical or mental impairments which substantially limit one or more of a person’s major life activities, and which necessitate modifications to BCD’s facilities, programs, or services. BCD is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying applicants/students with disabilities as required by applicable laws. BCD is committed to making the campus and its facilities accessible as required by applicable laws. BCD cannot make accommodations that are unreasonable, unduly burdensome or that fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services.

### **B. Nature and Scope of Policy**

This policy is intended to be co-extensive with the requirements of applicable laws; nothing in this policy is intended to provide less substantive benefits or procedural protections than are required by these laws. Likewise, nothing in this policy is intended to provide greater substantive benefits or procedural protections than are required by these laws. Therefore, the specific language of such laws and controlling interpretations thereof are incorporated by reference herein, and in the event of any apparent discrepancy between the language of this policy and such legal authority, BCD’s obligations will be determined exclusively by the latter.

### **C. Admission for Applicants/Students with Disabilities**

BCD is committed to providing equal access to qualified applicants/students with disabilities and welcomes applications from students with disabilities. An applicant’s self-identification of disabilities is at the option of the applicant and is not required. A disabled applicant is qualified for admission to BCD if the applicant can meet admissions requirements with reasonable accommodation. BCD shall not lower or substantially modify its admissions standards to accommodate a disabled applicant, but it also shall not use admissions criteria that screen out or tend to screen out individuals with disabilities except with respect to criteria that are necessary to meet BCD’s educational mission and objectives. BCD shall not accept an applicant who requires accommodations that fundamentally alter BCD’s programs or cause an undue burden on BCD such that the accommodations are not reasonable. BCD also shall deny admission to an applicant if the applicant’s disability poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the applicant or others and the threat cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices or procedures or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services.

### **D. ADA Coordinator**

BCD facilitates the reasonable accommodation of applicants/students with disabilities. BCD shall designate an ADA Coordinator who, in consultation with outside professionals, shall certify eligibility for accommodation under the ADA for applicants/students presenting documented evidence of qualifying disabilities (including qualifying physical disabilities, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, psychological disabilities, medical disabilities, and covered students in drug or alcohol recovery). The ADA Coordinator shall review and act upon all requests for reasonable accommodations based on an individualized assessment of each request. The ADA Coordinator reserves the right to recommend and approve accommodations that differ from the specific approaches suggested by those making the request, or by individuals documenting the applicant/student’s disability, so long as the accommodations achieve the objective of program accessibility as required by law.

The ADA Coordinator, in consultation with appropriate BCD personnel and/or professional advisors, coordinates and facilitates the implementation of accommodations that have been deemed reasonable and appropriate in light of the nature of the disability and in consideration of the individual’s academic

requirements. Examples include the coordination and administration of ADA-related note-taking, reader, scribe, and interpreter services and ADA equipment services. The ADA Coordinator also serves as a liaison between parents, students, faculty, staff, admissions and BCD administration. The ADA Coordinator is the primary intake person and decision-maker for ADA-related issues and may also be able to provide information on ADA-related issues to members of the BCD community.

E. Accessibility of Campus Events and Programs

BCD will make its campus programs and events reasonably accessible to individuals with disabilities. Any individual, including visitors to campus, who requires an accommodation should contact BCD at least ten days in advance of the event. BCD cannot ensure reasonable accommodations on less than 10 days' notice.

**II. ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURES**

A. Certification and Accommodation

BCD has adopted a two-stage process for making reasonable accommodations to promote the accessibility of its courses, programs, goods, services, facilities, privileges, and advantages for applicants/students with qualifying disabilities. BCD shall not provide accommodations that fundamentally alter BCD's programs or cause an undue burden on BCD such that the accommodations are not reasonable. BCD also shall not permit a student to continue at BCD if the disability poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the student or others and the threat cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices or procedures or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. The following is the two-stage process:

**1. Certification**

- a. Parents seeking reasonable accommodation(s) for disabled individuals must submit the following information to BCD, in writing.
  - (i) The name of the individual;
  - (ii) A description of the disability, including the manner in which the disability limits major life activities relevant to the individual's participation in BCD's programs; and
  - (iii) A description of the specific accommodations requested.
- b. The form must be accompanied by documentation from an objective professional qualified to diagnose the individual's disability. Documentation should confirm the diagnosis and verify the manner in which the disability limits major life activities relevant to an individual's participation in BCD's programs.
- c. The written request and required documentation should be submitted to BCD immediately in order to facilitate the completion of the accommodation review process in as timely a manner.
- d. The ADA Coordinator reviews the request for accommodation, and the accompanying documentation and will make one of the following determinations:
  - (i) Certifies the student as a person with a disability under the ADA; or
  - (ii) Finds that there is insufficient evidence to certify the student's eligibility, and
    - (a) Denies the request for certification; or

(b) Requests additional information.

## **2. Accommodation**

Once an individual has been certified as a person with a disability, the ADA Coordinator:

- a. Reviews the individual's request for accommodation(s);
- b. Engages in the interactive process with the family of the individual for whom the accommodation(s) request has been made and other appropriate members of the BCD community as applicable; and
- c. Approves, denies or offers an alternative accommodation.

### **B. Role of those Requesting Accommodation(s)**

Those requesting the accommodation(s) are expected to identify the need for accommodation(s) and suggest possible accommodations to meet the needs. It is the family's responsibility to initiate the certification process described above by submitting the Accommodation Request Form and all required documentation in a timely manner. The family must work cooperatively with designated staff and faculty to determine and sustain reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations. Once a written accommodation letter has been issued, the family is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that the approved plan is meeting the needs. Families are therefore responsible for: (1) communicating their approved accommodations with faculty; (2) keeping appointments with faculty and designated staff to avoid delays in implementation; and (3) conferring with faculty regularly regarding the effectiveness of accommodations. If an individual perceives a need for additional accommodations or for the modification of existing accommodations, a request must be made, in writing, seeking a revision of the accommodation letter. Such requests should be addressed to an ADA Coordinator. Providing proper accommodations requires timely family input. Immediate accommodations may be impossible to facilitate.

### **C. Role of the Faculty**

The ADA requires that:

- All otherwise qualified individuals are provided with equal access to BCD's courses, programs, goods, services, facilities, privileges and advantages and;
- The impact of the disability on the individual's learning and/or academic performance is mitigated without fundamentally altering the nature of the courses, programs, goods, services, facilities, privileges, and advantages.

Accommodations may involve modifications of the ways in which material is presented or learning is evaluated. However, accommodations which fundamentally alter the nature of the courses, programs, goods, services, facilities, privileges, and advantages shall not be required of BCD faculty.

Faculty are encouraged to communicate with the ADA Coordinator regarding any concerns they may have about an accommodation. The ADA Coordinator shall communicate with faculty within the limitations of privacy laws. The fact, nature, and/or extent of a disability which has been certified by BCD is not subject to challenge by faculty, nor may faculty review the underlying documentation of a disability without written consent of the individual's family. The ADA Coordinator may provide faculty with information about the impact of the disability where necessary to implement the accommodations.

Faculty also have the right to receive a status report of a student's accommodation request and clarification of the accommodations approved by BCD. Also, they may suggest alternative accommodations they think more appropriate in light of the nature of the course or program. Alternative accommodations must be as appropriate and as effective in mitigating the effects of a disability as those initially approved by BCD. Any alternative accommodations must be approved by BCD before

implemented. Faculty are, in turn, encouraged in appropriate situations to share with BCD information about the course and/or program, so that BCD is better able to consider appropriate accommodations. A cooperative effort should meet the needs of the student to the extent appropriate without fundamentally altering the nature of the academic course and/or program to maintain compliance with applicable law.

Accommodations should be implemented as soon as reasonably possible after the faculty member has received the letter of accommodation in writing. If no further consultation occurs between a faculty member and BCD, it is presumed that the accommodations will be provided as delineated in the letter of accommodation. Undue delays in the implementation of accommodations should be avoided, as they may undermine a student's ability to fairly access the content of courses, programs, goods, services, facilities, privileges, and advantages.

If a student approaches a faculty member directly to request an accommodation related to a physical or mental impairment, the faculty member is expected to direct the student to the ADA Coordinator. A faculty member is not individually authorized to agree to provide a student with a requested accommodation.

#### D. Documentation

BCD requires appropriately current documentation of any or all disabilities for which accommodation is requested, provided at the expense of the family requesting accommodation, prior to determining what services and accommodations may be undertaken for those with qualifying disabilities. Documentation of disability will be kept confidential. Since insufficient information may jeopardize the accommodations process, BCD reserves the right to request additional documentation considered necessary to make a determination of reasonable and appropriate accommodations. The cost of obtaining any such additional documentation shall be the family's responsibility. BCD also reserves the right to request an independent evaluation by a professional of its choosing. The cost of obtaining any such independent evaluation shall be BCD's responsibility. Documentation supplied as part of the process of applying to BCD is not part of the student's permanent educational record.

Generally, documentation verifying the disability must:

- Be prepared by an objective professional qualified in the diagnoses of such conditions;
- Include information regarding the testing procedures followed, the instruments used to assess the disability, the test results and a written interpretation of these results as they pertain to an educational environment and/or participation in the BCD's programs;
- Reflect the individual's present level of functioning in the areas related to the particular accommodations being sought; and
- Be appropriately recent.

The ADA Coordinator determines whether the documentation submitted is adequate to certify the individual as a person with a disability under the ADA, supports the requested accommodation, and whether the person preparing the documentation is qualified to make the diagnosis at issue. Where the requested accommodation is for a learning disability, the family must provide professional testing and evaluation results that reflect the student's present level of processing information and present achievement level, based on comparison to the general public.

The four criteria necessary to establish a student's eligibility for learning disability adjustments or accommodations are: (1) average or above average intelligence as measured by a standardized intelligence test which includes assessment of verbal and nonverbal abilities; (2) the presence of cognitive-achievement discrepancy or an inter-cognitive discrepancy indicated by a score on a standardized test of achievement which is 1.5 standard deviations or more below the level corresponding to a student's sub-scale or full-scale IQ; (3) the presence of disorders in cognitive or sensory processing such as those related to memory, language or attention; and (4) an absence of other primary factors leading to achievement below expectations such as visual or auditory disabilities, emotional or behavior disorders, a lack of

opportunity to learn due to cultural or socio-economic circumstances, or deficiencies in intellectual ability.

Documentation verifying the learning disability must:

- Be prepared by an objective professional qualified to diagnose a learning disability, including but not limited to a licensed physician, learning disability specialist, or psychologist;
- Include the testing procedures followed, the instruments used to assess the disability, the test results, and a written interpretation of the test results by the professional;
- Reflect the individual's present level of functioning in the achievement areas of: reading comprehension, reading rate, written expression, writing mechanics and vocabulary, writing, grammar, and spelling; and
- Reflect the individual's present level of functioning in the areas of intelligence and processing skills; and
- Be appropriately recent.

The assessment must provide data that supports the requests for any academic adjustment. In the event that a family requests an academic adjustment or accommodation that is not supported by the data in the assessment, or if the initial verification is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability, then it is incumbent on the family to obtain supplemental testing or assessment at the family's expense. If BCD requires an additional assessment for purposes of obtaining a second professional opinion, then BCD shall be responsible for any cost not covered by any third party payer.

#### E. Academic Accommodations

Academic accommodations are intended to preserve essential academic program requirements while minimizing the effect of a certified disability upon a student's performance. Each student's needs are individually assessed on a case-by-case basis.

**Sexual Harassment Policy:** BCD's policy is that no one be harassed on the basis of sex. "Sexual Harassment," whether verbal, written, or physical, is unlawful and will not be tolerated.

For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature when **(1)** submission to or rejection of this conduct by an individual is used as a factor in decision-making and/or **(2)** such conduct substantially interferes with an individual's life.

- Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or welcome social relationships.
- The policy prohibits any demand for sexual favors that is accompanied by a promise of favorable treatment or a threat concerning someone's status.
- The policy prohibits subtle pressure for sexual favors, including implying or threatening that someone's cooperation of a sexual nature (or refusal thereof) will have any effect on the person.
- The policy prohibits behavior of a sexual nature that is not welcomed and is personally offensive.
- The following are examples of conduct that may, depending upon the circumstances constitute sexual harassment:
  1. Repeated sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions;
  2. Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, sexually related comments and joking, graphic or degrading comments about a person's appearance, the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, or sexually suggestive or degrading behavior; or
  3. Any uninvited physical contact or touching, such as patting, pinching, or constant brushing against another's body.

Violations of this policy will not be permitted. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline that can range from a warning up to and including immediate discharge from school.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct that, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of circumstances including the severity of conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral reference to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experience; and,
- Discussions of one's sexual activities.

*Protection Against Retaliation:* It is unlawful to retaliate in any way against an individual who makes a report of sexual harassment and BCD will not permit it. It is also unlawful to retaliate in any way against an individual who cooperates in an investigation of a complaint for sexual harassment. Retaliation is a violation of this policy, subject to the same discipline as sexual harassment itself, and should be reported immediately as set forth below.

*Complaints and Investigation:*

- A. Anyone who believes that he or she is a victim of sexual harassment should immediately report the matter to his/her parent, advisor, Associate Head of School, or the Head of School (or, if the Head of School is allegedly involved in the forbidden conduct, to the President of the Board of Trustees). The matter will be thoroughly investigated.
- B. Any allegation of sexual harassment brought to the attention of one of the individuals referred to above shall be promptly investigated in a confidential manner so as to protect the privacy of the individuals involved. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout an investigative process to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances.
- C. Upon the completion of an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, the school shall communicate its findings and intended actions to the complainant and alleged offender. If, as a result of the investigation, it is determined that harassment has occurred, the offender shall be subject to appropriate discipline.
- D. If someone duly reports a violation of this policy and does not believe the situation has been satisfactorily resolved, the matter should be brought to the President of the Board of Trustees.

## **Homework**

Homework develops important study habits, as well as allows time for practice of critical learning skills, memorization of important information, and pursuit of knowledge and understanding. See Division Supplements for more specific information.

## **Learning Commons**

The Learning Commons is committed to encouraging a love of reading and learning and to stimulating curiosity about the world around us, what has gone before, and what may lie ahead. BCD makes every effort to provide information on any subject that arises and to answer any questions students and faculty may have. The librarian also communicates with teachers to learn their curricular plans so that the library can anticipate their needs.

The Learning Commons library's annual budget is supplemented each year by the proceeds from the Book Fair, as well as by the many valuable gifts the library receives each year from parents, teachers, and friends.

Guidelines for using the Commons follow:

- Students, parents, and teachers may borrow books.
- Gifts to the library are always welcome. Parents wishing to donate a book to the school library may choose an area of interest and see the librarian for specific details.

- Borrowers may take out books for two weeks.
- Students are encouraged to return books as soon as they finish reading them instead of waiting for the due date.

## **Lost Articles**

**Before the Fact:** The School makes every effort to help children keep track of their belongings, but finds it impossible to do so unless items are plainly marked. Names should be printed in full on all raincoats, coats, hats, jackets, sweaters, scarves, mittens, boots, book bags, etc. worn or used by each child. While parent and school are partners in the ongoing process of developing a child's sense of responsibility for his or her personal belongings, the results are often achieved only gradually.

**After the Fact:** Despite the best efforts of parents, teachers, and children, a constant stream of lost articles gets turned in to the Main Office almost daily. Parents of students suspecting that they are missing clothing should look through the Lost and Found, located in Fitzpatrick Hall. The School will keep track of unclaimed items for a reasonable period of time. After that, they are turned over to a charitable organization or sold at Fun and Field Day.

## **Lunch**

See Division Supplements for specific information.

## **Parent/Student Lists**

The alphabetical address list of all students with family contact information is sent home as close to the opening of school as possible. ***This Directory is for the use of our families only and must not be given to any outside organization or institution, or used to communicate with the BCD community about anything not related to school matters and events.*** The Main Office should be kept informed of any change of address, telephone number, email address, or marital status affecting a Parent/Student listing. In this way we will keep the Parent List current and also notify parents, faculty and staff of changes through updated Directories periodically sent home.

## **Parties**

Parties are important ways to celebrate milestones. Parties that are not inclusive, however, become divisive factors for the class dynamics as well as painful experiences for those who are left out. Please follow the following guidelines to ensure a positive experience for your child and his/her class.

- Any party given outside the school should not involve the school in any way. The host family is solely responsible for the actions of their guests.
- Parents may wish to bring to school enough fruit, cupcakes, or cookies to share with all classmates and teachers to celebrate a child's birthday or special occasion. Please notify the teachers of any planned refreshments well in advance, and please do not send in party favors.
- Invitations should be mailed from the home, groups should not leave from the school's carpool line, and presents should not be brought into school.
- If you choose to have a large party, the school requests that you either invite the whole class or the entire girl or boy population of the group.
- Exclusion of a small number of children in the class leads to hurt feelings and breaks down the class unity that the teachers work so hard to create. BCD encourages families to invite all students in a class or at least all boys or girls to a party.
- Parents of children attending parties are encouraged to call the host family to inquire about supervision. It is important that parents who are giving parties articulate to all guests the behavioral expectations for the event.
- BCD students should remember that they always represent their school when they attend a party in a public facility and that conduct off campus and outside of school hours which is illegal or reflects negatively on the school is considered a major disciplinary offense.

## **Playground**

In order to provide the space needed and to support our after-school programs best, we ask that families clear the larger playground area by 3:30 p.m. every day. At that time, when our after-school programs begin, families are invited to remain in the area closest to the wall, at the smaller play structure in the chipped area. The monkey bars, diggers, and larger play structure are reserved for students enrolled in our after-school programs. Thank you for your understanding as we strive to give our students participating in these programs full access to our campus.

## **Pond**

Use of the pond without the permission and supervision of BCD personnel is prohibited.

## **Student Information Sheets (S.I.S.)**

### **MUST BE ON FILE TO ATTEND SCHOOL**

BCD is responsible for all its students from the moment they step on a school bus or arrive at school until they are dropped off the bus or picked up by a parent. The SIS contains specific information about each student, including emergency telephone numbers and procedures, and also specific allergies or health problems that can be of concern. The form also provides medical authorities with authorization to perform medical procedures if a parent cannot be reached. The sheets are placed in notebooks (one for each division) and provide ready reference when the need arises.

The following information is asked on the SIS:

- **Parent and Emergency Information:** It is critical that we have this information so that we can notify parents or persons responsible for the child in the parents' absence, as quickly as possible should a child have an accident or become ill, or should we need to close school for some reason. ***Parents should notify the school at once of any changes of address, telephone number, emergency contacts, etc. so that the office can keep the SIS sheets current.*** (NOTE: Parents should inform their children if they are going out of town for the day or doing something out of the ordinary which changes their routine.)
- **Blanket Permission:** Having this permission simplifies the work of teachers when arranging field trips. Parents will be notified of each trip or activity in advance, but need not return an individual response unless one is requested.
- **Other Information:** The SIS also asks for miscellaneous medical information (i.e., allergies to foods or bee stings, corrective lens data, etc.) and details of the child's routine after-school transportation, all of which is important for homeroom teachers to have.

## **Summer Programs**

Throughout the summer, Berkshire Country Day School's campus is home to a number of different organizations for their summer program, including the IS183 Art Camp, Eden Hill Sports Camp and Boston University Tanglewood Institute.

## **Testing and Tutoring**

### **TESTING**

Berkshire Country Day School utilizes two standardized testing programs, both typically administered in independent schools. These are not "high-stakes testing," because results from these tests forms only one portion of a student's learning profile. More importantly, BCD uses data from the tests as important pieces of our program evaluation and curricular revisioning.

### **ERB CTP-5**

The Educational Records Bureau (ERB) Comprehensive Testing Program 5 (CTP-5) is a battery of achievement tests administered to third through eighth grade students in January. BCD sends the results of these tests to parents as soon as they have been received from ERB. Parents are encouraged to contact the Associate Head of School with questions about or to review students' CTP-5 scores.



## **ERB WrAP**

Students in fourth through eighth grade will participate in the Educational Records Bureau (ERB) Writing Assessment Program (WrAP). The WrAP will be administered in April, and results from it will be sent to parents with the year's final report card. Parents are encouraged to contact the Associate Head of School with questions about or to review students' WrAP scores.

## **Learning Support**

If a student begins to face a significant struggle with the academic demands that result from BCD's rigorous and challenging curriculum, psycho-educational testing may be required to help the school administrators, teachers, and the child's parents determine how best to meet the child's needs. This kind of evaluation results in a thorough list of recommendations. BCD administrators will judge which recommendations can be accommodated within the parameters of our BCD mission, philosophy, curricula and classroom structures, and will meet with the student's family to discuss the strategies that BCD's faculty and staff are able to implement, as well as to assess the student's continued success at BCD.

**Tutoring:** The school may recommend tutoring for any student who is judged to need remedial or compensatory work in one or more subjects. (This tutoring is not to be confused with the academic assistance offered by teachers during "help" sessions.) The Associate Head of School will work with the family to help find a tutor to meet the needs of the student. Whenever possible, BCD will also try to arrange for tutoring during the academic day. The financial arrangements for this service are between the tutor and the family.

## **Transportation**

*The speed limit for all vehicles on the school driveways is 10 mph. Please help to keep our students safe and drive carefully.*

**Arrival and Departure:** The school day starts for everyone at 8:00 a.m. Students may arrive to the gym as early as, but not before, 7:30 a.m. Students arriving at school later than 8:05 a.m. are considered tardy and must report to the Main Office and obtain a late slip in order to be admitted to class.

Parents wishing to accompany small children to their classrooms should park in the available spaces opposite Albright Hall or in the parking lot north of the maintenance building. Beginning in 4<sup>th</sup> grade we ask that students walk to class independently. No one is allowed to park in front of the stone wall.

Except for those taking part in school-sponsored programs (*e.g.*, after-school programs, sports, games, theater, or activities), no student is allowed to remain on campus following dismissal. Preschool, Lower School, and Middle School parents who have an unforeseen emergency that will affect the 3:00 p.m. pick-up of their child(ren) should notify the Main Office as soon as possible so that the child(ren) can be sent to the Extended Day Program. Upper School parents with similar situations affecting the pick-up should arrange to have their child(ren) go home with someone else and should notify the office of the arrangement.

To prevent a backup of cars onto Route 183, parents are asked not to arrive too early to pick up their children at dismissal, especially at the beginning of the year and at times when sports are not in session. Too many cars arriving at once cause a major back up in the school driveway. Once dismissal begins, the process goes smoothly and, usually, with no unnecessary waiting. If by chance cars coming from the direction of Lenox do back up onto 183, we ask that the drivers please proceed south of the school to the Stockbridge Bowl boat access (around the bend on the left) and wait for several minutes before returning to the campus. Please remember! **Never** allow a back up on Route 183!

The departure process starts at 2:55 p.m. for Preschool and Lower School, and 3:05 p.m. for Middle and Upper School. Buses begin loading in the driveway and parent pick-up begins at the stone wall where the children are waiting with the teachers on duty. The teachers on duty help the children into the cars. *Parents should **not** park and leave their cars to pick up their children—and children must **never** cross the driveway unaccompanied.*

Dismissal continues until 3:15 p.m. at which time all students go to Extended Day, Study Hall, Enrichment, or other after-school programs. Late dismissal is at 4:30 p.m., following sports, theater, or other after-school programs, with a pick-up of 4:40 p.m.

**Departure Changes:** Parents who make one-time or short-term changes in their children's departure routine—such as switching from one bus to the other, leaving early for a doctor's appointment, having a legitimate excuse from an after-school activity, going home with another child or in a carpool not his or her own— must notify the office in writing or by telephoning no later than 1:30 p.m. on the day of the change— **regardless** of the ages of the children. A change involving adding a rider to a bus must be cleared with the office to make sure there is room. If there is no room, the change request cannot be granted and the parents will be informed.

**The Chronically Late Parent:** Parents who arrive late to pick up their children (at regular dismissal times, after games, following field trips, etc.) keep BCD personnel waiting. No matter how responsible they may be, students cannot be left on their own while on campus.

Children left at BCD after hours must be supervised —by a teacher whose workday is over or by a staff member who has other work to do. Please make every effort to respect the BCD faculty and staff by picking up your child on time.

### **Traveling by Car:**

To ensure the safety of our children, parents, staff, and faculty, we ask that you follow the expectations for morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal:

- In the morning, for safety's sake, children should get out of their cars either at the stone wall (between Albright Hall and Oakes) or behind the buses if the buses have arrived.
- Parents **may not** drive onto the campus—*i.e.*, through the openings in the stone wall, along any pedestrian paths, or in front of Furey Hall - at any time during the school day. Children walk along these routes to attend classes in the various buildings.
- Parents **may not** park and leave their cars in the spaces adjacent to the stone wall during drop-off or pick-up times.
- Parents are asked not to drive up the road past the pond to let their child(ren) off closer to Peterson, Ryan, or Oakes Hall. Any car violating this rule poses a real danger to students roaming to shop class or taking recycled products to Clemons Hall.
- In the afternoon, parents must wait in line until the teachers on duty signal that pick-up is to begin.
- Teachers accompany all children to cars — no child is allowed in the driveway until his or her car is in the appropriate place for loading.

**Drop Off:** All cars must line up, single file, around the traffic circle. If the car line reaches Route 183, cars will be asked to go around the secondary traffic circle located at Clemons Hall. Students are to exit their cars **only** when the cars pull up to the stone wall. Students should be prepared with book bags and other items to quickly exit the car. Once the student has exited the car, parents are asked to drive on once the car in front of them moves on. **If you need to escort your child to the classroom, cars must be parked in designated parking only.** There is no parking along the carline or around the island to avoid congestion.

**Dismissal Pick-Up:** As with morning drop-off, cars must line up single file, starting in front of the stone wall. When your car reaches the stone wall, your child will be called and escorted to your car. **Drivers are not to leave their car unattended in the carline at any time to avoid congestion.** If you wish to meet your child on campus, cars must be parked in designated parking areas only.

**Traveling by Bus: NO FOOD IS ALLOWED ON ANY BUSES DUE TO ALLERGIES,** and also follow bus company rules.

**Pittsfield/Lenox Run:** BCD contracts with Dufour Bus Company to operate this bus run for the School. Dufour provides the bus and driver and works with BCD to set the route and time schedule. Parents wishing

to change a pickup or drop-off point on an existing route or who are having a bus problem should contact the Main Office. The route is designed to serve as many families as possible while limiting its length in order to keep both the distance from school and the riders' time on the bus as reasonable as possible. Rates for the Pittsfield bus are based on enrollment and must help cover costs without being prohibitive. Fees accommodate one-way or round-trip riders.

**South County Run:** The Massini Bus Company, Inc. is the contractor for the district. Each year, based on our compiled list of riders, Massini plots the route. We are fortunate that the BHRSD allows out-of-district riders to use the bus as long as they board and exit the bus at regular stops within the district and there is space available. Massini also adheres to BCD's time schedules and calendar. While BCD has no control over the South County route or the bus driver, Massini makes every effort to accommodate our riders. Anyone having a problem with the South County bus should contact the Main Office or Massini Bus Company directly. Fees for the South County bus are based on ridership and depend upon the amount of money that the Commonwealth reimburses to the school district; that is, the total cost less reimbursement is divided among the riders, with each out-of-district rider paying more than an in-district rider. (BCD forwards the district the funds for the morning and early afternoon bus for out-of-district riders.)

Both the Pittsfield and South County buses run at 3:15 p.m. and 4:40 p.m.

**Hudson/Columbia County Run:** Johnston Bus Company is the contractor for the district. They will set the route and specific stops based on the compiled list of riders. Afternoon departure is 4:30 pm on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday; 3 pm on Wednesday and Friday.

**New York State Buses:** BCD families whose homes in New York State are within 15 miles of BCD and who reside either in the Chatham or the New Lebanon school districts in Columbia County are entitled to free transportation provided by their districts. Parents are advised to contact the bus garage in their district to enroll their children on the bus and to obtain information about times and stops. New York buses run in the morning and at the 3:00 p.m. dismissal – there are no late buses to New York.

***Morning Arrival:*** All buses arrive in the morning where the drivers let students off at the opening in the wall by Albright Hall.

***Bus Departure Loading:*** Pittsfield and South County Buses depart from the driveway adjacent Oakes Hall. New York State transportation departs in front of Albright Hall.

**Bus Schedules in General:**

***Fall, Winter, Spring:*** 3:15 p.m. Monday – Friday; 4:40 p.m. late bus for South County and Pittsfield only, Monday through Thursday.

***Ski Fridays:*** No Ski Friday run at 3:15 p.m., January until March Break. The afternoon bus departs 1:15 p. m. There is no bus at 4:40 on Ski Fridays, as it true for every Friday.

***Bus Rules:*** Students must be on time for the bus in the morning and must wait safely away from the road at their stops. Riders should take particular care when leaving the bus and crossing the street. BCD makes every effort to avoid stops that require students to cross the street. The driver is in charge of the bus. He or she may give instructions to the riders for reasons of safety or discipline. Riders are expected to cooperate with the driver at all times. **DUE TO POTENTIAL LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES OF SOME RIDERS, THERE IS NEVER ANY FOOD ALLOWED ON THE BUS.**

***Behavior:*** Behavior that is dangerous, bothers other children, distracts the driver, or litters or damages the bus is forbidden and will be reported to an Associate Head or the Head of School for disciplinary action. This may include loss of bus privileges.

***Pittsfield Bus Rates and Route Schedules:*** These are sent to parents in the summer, together with the appropriate form to fill out.

**Bus Passes and Transfers:** Passes are available from the Main Office for non-regular riders for occasional use. Booklets of eight tickets may be purchased for cash or check or billed to student accounts. [Please note: single-ride tickets are also available, **but must be paid for in cash or by check — they cannot be billed.**] While the booklets are issued to students, they are in fact held in the office and the tickets are issued one at a time as needed. *Pass holders are not guaranteed rides on the bus; passes are usable only when seats are available.* At certain times of the year — i.e., days when the whole school is dismissed at once — chances of using a pass are slight. *Riders of New York State buses must have passes in order to ride either the Pittsfield or the South County bus.*

Regular bus riders may transfer to the other bus from time to time. Again, use of transfers cannot be guaranteed and depends upon availability of seats on the bus on any given day. *Under New York State law, Pittsfield or South County bus riders MAY NOT transfer to the New York State buses* as they are not residents of New York.

Each time a student wishes to use a bus other than his/her regular bus, he/she must present a note signed by a parent to his/her homeroom teacher and the bus driver at the beginning of the day, specifying the exact stop where the student is to get off the bus. The teacher includes the ticket request on the morning attendance list so that the office can issue the bus pass. Because the office must know the whereabouts of all students as long as they are in the school's care — and also must know that parents are aware of any changes in their child's after-school plans — everyone must adhere to the following procedure for using passes and transfers.

**The Missed Stop:** Sometimes — usually on the early run — no one is at the stop to meet the child. When this occurs, the bus driver keeps the child on the bus, radios the information to the bus garage, continues the run and then returns to BCD. The bus supervisor calls the Main Office and the parent is called to come to school to pick up the child. If such an incident occurs on the early run, it is NOT possible that the child can take the late bus — the child must be picked up at school as taking both bus runs makes it far too long a ride for a child. Parents, please be aware of this procedure.

## **Vacations**

Family vacations should be scheduled during BCD vacation periods. When students go on holiday during non-vacation times, their academic programs become disrupted and the faculty finds it difficult to maintain the integrity of their programs. In addition, the students nearly always find it difficult to make up the work they have missed. Some work is impossible to make up or to hand out in written form, thus students who plan to be absent for reasons other than illness should not expect teachers to prepare lessons for them in advance. If a student misses the introduction of new concepts or material, the School will help arrange tutoring to be done outside of school hours and at the family's cost. Please see the Absence Policy section in each Division Supplement for more detailed information about the School's policies regarding the extension of family vacations and unexcused absences.

## **Visitors**

Parents are welcome to visit on campus but must *check into the front office upon their arrival.* We strive to provide a comfortable yet serious learning environment for all of our students, and thus ask parents to refrain from roaming the campus and interrupting classes during the academic day.

Middle and Upper School faculty and students invite and welcome former BCD students to visit school during lunch/recess; however, hosting students for longer time periods creates an energy that may disrupt the learning process, particularly during an academic period.

## **Volunteers**

As a volunteer of Berkshire Country Day School, you are covered by our insurance in certain situations. Other situations will require your own insurance to be used.

BCD does not carry insurance for loss of wages or other monetary damages you may suffer as a result of injuries sustained while volunteering for BCD.

BCD does not insure your personal property while on premises owned by BCD or elsewhere.

If you, as a volunteer of BCD, transport any client or person in your vehicle, your Massachusetts auto insurance or other auto insurance policy will be the primary source of insurance for accidents or claims arising from the use of your auto. BCD does not carry "hired and non-ownership auto liability insurance" which may provide coverage in excess of your auto insurance.

Please be aware that BCD carries no insurance or protection of any type for damage to your auto that happens while you are volunteering for BCD. BCD does carry insurance policies that may defend you and pay settlements arising from claims or suits against you while acting within the scope of your duties as a volunteer of BCD.

As a volunteer for BCD, you agree to assume personal responsibility for your own safety in any and all areas of activities promoted by BCD.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

**Friday Ski Program:** Starting the first Friday after winter vacation and running for eight weeks, BCD offers elective downhill ski programs in cooperation with the Butternut Basin in Great Barrington. All students in Kindergarten through Grade 9 may take part. Program details and sign-up sheets for these extra-fee programs are sent home in late fall.

Many parents meet their children at the area with their equipment. Parents of Kindergarteners *must* meet their children and remain at the area until the conclusion of the program each Friday. Parents pick up their children at each area at the end of the ski session.

Students are transported by bus to Butternut. For non-bus riders, there is a nominal fee for this service. Students are not allowed to bring ski equipment on regular bus runs in the morning; however, those students who ski may bring equipment to school for transportation to the area.

**After-School Enrichment Program:** Recognizing that learning does not stop at the classroom door, BCD offers students in Kindergarten through grade 4 or 6 (depending on the trimester) a variety of activities on campus from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Our enrichment programs are offered to continue developing a sense of community after school. Programs may include Nature Explorations, Art, Science, Chess, and more. The programs vary from trimester to trimester and a nominal fee is charged for each course.

Program descriptions and registration forms are sent home to parents and also made available on the school's web site. Some courses have size restrictions and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Extended-Day Program:** An Extended-Day Program, for students in grades B2 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, is available Monday through Friday, from the end of the school day until as late as 5:30 p.m. for those families needing to extend the school day on either a regular or as-needed basis. Extended Day for PK through 6<sup>th</sup> is located on the back of the lower level in Oakes Hall, home of grades 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. (Extended Day for the Beginner Two (B2) class will be held in the B2's classroom).

During the Extended-Day Program, students participate in supervised outdoor play, games, and activities, and receive a snack. Information about Extended Day will be sent home to parents at the beginning of the school year for sign-up. Drop-ins are also accommodated if notice is given to the Main Office by 1:00 p.m. on the day the service is needed and if there is space in the program that day.

An hourly fee will be charged for participation in the Extended-Day Program. Please note that an additional higher charge will apply for students remaining past the 5:30.

While students' first priority in grades 4-9 (or optional sports for grade 3) is to participate in the School's sports or theater program, this is not always the case. Thus, an After-School Study Hall is available for them (students in 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> also have the option of the Extended-Day Program instead of Study Hall) in

Albright Hall from Monday through Friday, until as late as 5:30 p.m. Students should use this quiet time to study and complete homework, and should see an administrator or staff member if they have questions. An hourly fee is charged. Drop-ins are accommodated, space permitting, and if notice is given to the Main Office by 1:00 p.m. on the day the service is needed. Please be aware that this program fills quickly when co-curricular programs do not meet.

During our after-school programs, children are expected to follow and support school rules and behave in a polite, kind, and considerate manner. The instructors will communicate with parents and work with students towards success in these positive, caring, and cooperative programs.

**After-School Music Program:** BCD offers private, after-school music lessons on Wednesday afternoons on the BCD campus for students in PK through grade 9. We have a fine faculty of musicians who specialize on their instrument and who are experienced teachers. Currently, we offer piano, violin, viola, cello, guitar, flute, clarinet, and saxophone. If you are interested in lessons for your child, please contact the instructor directly to discuss scheduling, fees, and any questions you have about lessons. For more information, contact BCD's Music Teacher.

*Throughout the year, the late bus — at 4:40 p.m. on Mondays through Thursdays — is available for children (where available) participating in after-school activities.*

## TRADITIONAL SPECIAL EVENTS

**Grandparents' / Grand Friends' Day:** Grandparents' / Grand Friends' Day is traditionally celebrated on the Friday before Columbus Day weekend. All grandparents are invited to attend this special day at BCD — a highlight of the year. The morning is filled with activities planned by the students and teachers and includes grandparents visiting classes. Surrogate grandparents are welcome as well. A large number of parent volunteers are needed to plan this event as well as to serve as hosts and hostesses, guides, servers, and clean-up crew.

**Thanksgiving Soup:** The largest gathering of the year for the school community is Thanksgiving Soup—a meal shared by the entire school. Preparation of the Thanksgiving Soup itself begins on Monday when some Early Childhood and Lower School grades chop the vegetables that have been brought in by all grades. On Tuesday, the BCD community gathers to share the meal and give thanks together. The high point of the celebration is the welcoming back of BCD alumni/ae and the presentation of the check to be sent to UNICEF, representing all the money the students collected. Parents are invited to help set up and serve the meal.

**Holiday Outreach:** During holiday seasons BCD students participate in programs that help instill a sense of community involvement and sharing. In December, each division, or pairs of divisions, adopts a family. Students voluntarily select gifts that they purchase and wrap for the adopted family. In addition to adopting families, divisions or classes may elect to participate in other activities. In the past, BCD has collected canned goods for area organizations such as the Christian Center in Pittsfield, made decorations for the community or for nursing homes, and collected winter clothing for needy groups. The Chorus has sung for various community groups. These programs are a source of pride for students at BCD and help bring the school into the community. Parent volunteers are needed to help organize these activities. The Parents' Association sponsors the holiday collection effort.

**Community Campus Day:** Once a year in the fall, the School asks the community to roll up their sleeves in service to our campus. This fun, family day is filled with projects to upgrade and beautify our buildings and grounds. Skilled and unskilled workers of all ages are welcome to help. Childcare is offered for younger students and a picnic lunch, courtesy of the Parents' Association, is available for all. This is a great way to give back to our campus and get to know other families.

**Music Concerts:** During the school year the Arts Department designs special and entertaining musical programs involving the vast majority of BCD students. Each music class is showcased in these performances. The three BCD choruses (Lower for grades 1-3, Middle for grades 4-6, and Upper for grades 7-9) perform at school several times throughout the school year. At the spring concert in May, the Choruses join with the music classes for a music celebration. All parents are encouraged to attend to see their children perform, and to hear firsthand the wonders of the BCD music program.

**Alaska Day:** Once a year, the Lower School community celebrates wintertime in the Berkshires as well as the culture and customs of Alaska. *Alaska Day* was started by a former student, Kevin Hirt during his time in the Lower School, and is continued in his memory by his teachers and friends.

**Fun and Field Day:** In the last weeks of school, a day of outdoor activities is scheduled for each division. *The Preschool and Lower School Fun Day* includes a variety of activities, with no winners or losers and no ribbons. *Middle and Upper School Field Day* events range from short-, middle-, and long-distance running, to jumping, hurdling, and putting the shot. Students in Grades 4, 5, and 6 learn the fundamentals of track and field events during their in-school PE classes. Grades 7, 8, and 9 have several days of practice after the lacrosse season ends and prior to field day so they are prepared for their events. The day is complete with the presentation of Field Day ribbons and the traditional frozen treat. The Parents' Association sponsors a BBQ lunch and a number of fun activities for students during the day.

**End-of-the-Year Assembly & Picnic:** On the last day of the school year, the student body gathers in Fitzpatrick Hall to bring closure to the year by saying a multitude of "thank yous" to class parents and special friends who have helped make the year so grand. It is also a time to say goodbye to faculty and students who are leaving BCD as well as a last opportunity to recognize the tremendous leadership of the graduating class.

Immediately following the assembly, the BCD community — teachers, parents, and students — gathers for an informal picnic celebration in the courtyard. Parents should arrive a little early to set up their little piece of BCD turf (à la Tanglewood). The children look for their parents at the conclusion of the assembly. (Preschool students meet their families in their classroom).

**Ninth Grade Graduation & Upper School Awards Ceremony:** The 9th grade graduation ceremony is the culmination of the BCD experience, for some students a span of 12 years from their preschool years through Grade 9. Members of the 9th grade class receive certificates and individual recognition from the Head of School and faculty. Academic and Citizenship Awards are presented to 7th, 8th, and 9th graders. Students in Grades 7-9 are required to attend this event. Members of the entire BCD community are invited to the ceremony, which is held in Fitzpatrick Hall.

## **MASSACHUSETTS LAWS**

**Prohibiting the Purchase of Alcohol by Minors:** Any person under twenty-one years of age who purchases or attempts to purchase alcoholic beverages or alcohol, or makes arrangements with any person to purchase or in any way procure such beverages, or who willfully misrepresents his age, or in any way alters, defaces or otherwise falsifies his identification offered as proof of age, with the intent of purchasing alcoholic beverages, either for his own use or for the use of any other person shall be punished by a fine of three hundred dollars and whoever knowingly makes a false statement as to the age of a person who is under twenty-one years of age in order to procure a sale or delivery of such beverages or alcohol so such person under twenty-one years of age, either for the use of the person under twenty-one years of age or for the use of some other person, and whoever induces a person under twenty-one years of age to make a false statement as to his age in order to procure a sale or delivery of such beverages or alcohol to such person under twenty-one years of age, shall be punished by a fine of three hundred dollars.

**Prohibiting the Use of Tobacco in the Public Schools:** It shall be unlawful for any student, enrolled in either primary or secondary public schools in the commonwealth, to use tobacco products of any type on school grounds during normal school hours.

### **An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing:**

#### **Chapter 269: Section 17. Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined**

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

#### **Chapter 269: Section 18. Failure to report hazing**

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.



**Chapter 269: Section 19. Copy of Sections 17 to 19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report**

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

**Controlled Substance Act:** Any person engaging in controlled substances violations while in or on, or within one thousand feet of the real property comprising a public or private accredited preschool, accredited Head Start facility, elementary, vocational, or secondary school whether or not in session, or within one hundred feet of a public park or playground shall be punished by a term of imprisonment in the state prison for not less than two and one-half nor more than fifteen years or by imprisonment in a jail or house of correction for not less than two nor more than two and one-half years. No sentence imposed under the provisions of Chapter 94C and Section 32J shall be for less than a mandatory term of imprisonment of two years. Lack of knowledge of school boundaries shall not be a defense to any person who violates the provisions of Chapter 94C and Section 32J.

# THE PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK SUPPLEMENT

## ATTENDANCE

### Arrival

The school day starts right away with classroom exploration. This is an important part of our curriculum, so it is important that children arrive at school no later than 8:00 a.m. Parents should park in designated areas when escorting children to their classrooms. Parents and children should enter classrooms through the cubby room area. This is a good time to exchange brief pertinent information with the teachers regarding your child.

### Early Arrival (only for B3's and up)

If a child arrives at school between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., he or she should be escorted to the gym where supervision will be available for early drop-off.

### Tardiness

Children arriving after 8:10 a.m. should report to the Main Office with the adult who brings them to receive a late slip.

### Absences

Longer absences which are not family milestones (i.e. extended vacations) are discouraged, because it is extremely difficult for students to transition back into school and settle into the routines of school life. Also, students miss valuable learning experiences, which negatively impact their learning.

In the event of an extended absence, teachers should not be expected to provide work for the children.

## AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

An **Extended-Day Program** is available Monday through Friday, from the end of the school day until as late as 5:30 p.m. for those families needing to extend the school day on either a regular or as-needed basis. Extended Day is located on the ground level in the backside of Oakes Hall, where the 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms are housed.

Extended-Day for the B2's is in their classroom

During the Extended-Day Program, students participate in supervised outdoor play, games, and activities, and receive a snack. Information about Extended Day will be sent home to parents at the beginning of the school year for sign-up. Drop-ins are also accommodated if notice is given to the Main Office by 1:00 p.m. on the day the service is needed and if there is space in the program that day.

An hourly fee will be charged for participation in the Extended-Day Program. Please note that an additional higher charge will apply for students remaining past the 5:30.

## BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS/ADDRESSING INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

Teachers understand that in the early grades social skills development is as critical as academic skills. As children learn about following rules and expectations, as well as how to get along, mistakes will be made and feelings hurt along the way. To provide a safe and respectful learning environment for all students, BCD strives to nurture respect for self and others in the educational process.

When it does become necessary to address a student's inappropriate behavior, the following procedures may be followed:

- A student who behaves inappropriately is spoken to by his or her teacher and, if necessary, his or her homeroom teacher. If deemed appropriate, the Associate Head of School or Head of School may also speak to the student.
- The teacher may determine whether or not the behavior merits a consequence and/or a call home.
- Repeated misbehavior on the part of a student may require a conference with the parents to discuss the issue and make a plan.

- Should incidents of a more serious nature (a Major Code of Conduct offense) occur, parents will be notified, after the student meets with the Associate Head of School and his/her homeroom teacher, as such behaviors could result in suspension or dismissal.
- In any instance of misconduct by a student, the School may consider some or all of the following factors when considering an appropriate consequence: the severity of the offense, the past record of the individual, the impact on the student, the impact on the school community, and the student's and parents' ability to work in good faith with the School.

BCD makes every effort to communicate with the parents and to work with the students so they may find success as positive, caring, and cooperative members of our community.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Parties are important ways to celebrate milestones. Parties that are not inclusive, however, become divisive factors for the class dynamics as well as painful experiences for those who are left out. Please follow the following guidelines to ensure a positive experience for your child and his/her class.

- Any party given outside the School should not involve the School in any way. The host family is solely responsible for the actions of their guests.
- Parents may wish to bring to school enough fruit, cupcakes, or cookies to share with all classmates and teachers to celebrate a child's birthday or special occasion. Please notify the teachers of any planned refreshments well in advance, and please do not send in party favors.
- When bringing food to school for the class, please check with the teacher about food allergies.
- Invitations should be mailed from the home, groups should not leave from the school's carpool line, and presents should not be brought into school.
- If you choose to have a large party, the School requests that you either invite the whole class or the entire girl or boy population of the group.
- Exclusion of a small number of children in the class leads to hurt feelings and breaks down the class unity that the teachers work so hard to create. BCD encourages families to invite all students in a class or at least all boys or girls to a party.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is any act, often repeated, that causes intentional physical or emotional harm to another person. This can include punching, shoving, spreading bad rumors, teasing in a mean way, and getting others to "gang up" on others. Bullying can also include cyber bullying, which can include sending mean texts, e-mails or instant messages, posting nasty pictures or messages, or using someone's username inappropriately. Bullying is not tolerated and acts of bullying, especially if repeated, will be treated as a Major Code of Conduct issue. See the main *Parent Student Handbook* for bullying policies.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Berkshire Country Day School communicates with families in many ways, including:

- Classroom updates on faculty blogs
- Phone messages will be delivered to classroom teachers. Teachers will return phone calls within 24 hours when appropriate.
- Two Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled within the school year. Additional Conferences will be scheduled as needed.
- Student Progress Reports are sent home twice each school year.
- Faculty and administration maintain a 24-hour turn-around time for email correspondence.

## **DISMISSAL**

**Half-Day students:** Children may be picked up in the cubby room at 12:30 p.m.

**Full-Day students:** Parents are asked to wait in the car line that forms at the start of the stone wall and goes around the circle. All students are walked to their cars accompanied by a teacher. Preschool parents may pick up their children at 3:00 p.m. if desired. Please come to the classroom or the playground (weather permitting).

If a parent is delayed: After 3:15 p.m., all children are escorted to the Extended-Day Program, and can be picked up there. Please call the Main Office as soon as possible if you are delayed.

**Changes in departure procedures:** If a child is to leave school in any other way than the usual way, the parent must send a note with signature indicating how and with whom. Children will not be released to an unauthorized individual without prior parental authorization, nor will they be allowed to change bus stops, etc., without a written note.

## **DRESS GUIDELINES**

Children should dress in neat, comfortable clothing suitable for participation in an active program that includes daily outdoor time, even in cold weather. Please note the following:

- Label all items of clothing, including sweaters, sweatshirts, hats, mittens, etc.
- Children should wear clothing they can manage independently as much as possible.
- Clothing should be washable. Expect spills!
- Shoes should fasten securely. Please do not have children wear open-toed sandals, flip-flops, clogs, or shoes with high heels.
- In cold weather, please provide warm clothes, as the children go out daily. Children must have snow pants, winter boots, hats, and mittens in order to play in the snow. They will get wet!
- Provide children with adequate rain gear when appropriate.
- Have children wear sneakers and pants or shorts on their designated gym day.
- Send in a complete set of labeled clothing (including socks and underwear) in a labeled zip lock bag to be kept in your child's cubby. Please replenish as these items are used.
- Children staying for a full day may bring a small blanket and a small pillow in a drawstring bag for rest time. Please label.
- Parents may choose to send in a bike helmet for his or her child.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE**

Encouraging positive social interaction among classmates is a key part of the process of learning. To this end, preschool and lower school students are not allowed to bring electronic devices to school such as games, iPods or MP3 players, and cell phones. Such devices are also not permitted on school field trips.

## **LUNCH AND SPECIAL TREATS**

Students should bring a nutritious morning snack and lunch to school every day. Caffeinated drinks, sodas, drinks in glass containers, and all gum and candy are prohibited. Lunches should be sensible, well balanced, and easy for children to manage alone. It is helpful if eggs, oranges, etc. are peeled at home. When packing lunch, *please remember that children have no access to refrigerators or microwaves.*

Suggestions:

- Sandwich or hot dishes *in a thermos* (i.e. spaghetti, soup, stew, chicken, mac and cheese, etc.).
- Cheese and crackers
- Potato chips or sticks
- Cut-up raw vegetables (i.e. carrots, celery, tomatoes, and cucumbers).
- A drink (i.e. milk, fruit or vegetable juice – no soda).

Each student must have a lunch box or bag in which to bring lunch and a snack. This should be marked with the child's name. Parents are encouraged to use reusable containers to pack student lunches. Please send two napkins with your child's lunch, because one will be used as a tablemat.

BCD does have students with severe and life-threatening food allergies. You will be notified by the school if this is the case in your children's class. The School will provide a list of restricted food items as well as suggestions for alternatives.

Throughout the year class parents periodically provide lunch for the whole class. These “Lunch Bunch” occasions are organized by the class parents for each grade. As a ninth grade fundraiser, the School offers several Pizza Fridays throughout the year. Students may sign up for pizza and juice for the year. Pizza Friday forms are sent home in the August back-to-school mailing to parents.

There are also occasions where parents may want to provide a special treat for the class (birthdays, etc.). *Parents should always check with the homeroom teachers for any food allergies or restrictions so that all children are able to partake in the treat.*

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parents are invited to conferences with teachers in October or November and March or April. Parents sign up for conference times online several weeks before the scheduled conference days. All parents are encouraged to come for conferences in order to maintain an in-depth understanding of their children’s work at school.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

*(NB: the participation of the B2 class will be determined by teacher on an event by event basis)*

- **Mountain Day:** In October, students travel as a school to a nearby mountain hiking and picnicking and outdoor fun. Students bring their own picnic lunches.
- **Thanksgiving Soup:** A BCD tradition before Thanksgiving where the whole school gathers in Fitzpatrick Hall for soup (vegetables prepared by the students) and to give special thanks. Preschool parents are encouraged to volunteer to help set up the hall and serve the soup.
- **Alaska Day:** In mid-winter, students learn about the state of Alaska and participate in activities common to Alaskan culture.
- **Fun Day:** At the end of the school year, students spend a fun-filled day playing a variety of outdoor games and having a picnic. Students receive the *Penguin*, the school yearbook, on this day.
- **End-of-Year Assembly & Picnic:** On the last day of the school year, the student body gathers in Fitzpatrick Hall to bring closure to the year by saying "thank you" to class parents and special friends. It is also a time to say goodbye to faculty and students who are leaving BCD. The family picnic immediately follows the assembly.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION**

Students do not receive letter or numerical grades in PK. Instead, progress about a child’s growth and development at school is communicated at conferences through the use of skills checklists and written narratives. Communication between teachers and family members help children feel supported, loved, and nurtured. In this atmosphere of open and honest communication, children grow happily, develop new competencies, and gain confidence.

Many of the skills that PK students need to master are in the areas of socialization. BCD faculty members discuss assessment and standards of evaluation frequently. The faculty is committed to helping students develop and improve their skills and grow in their knowledge and understandings of the world and themselves. They are equally committed to regularly reporting information about student performance and progress with their parents.

## **TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

A warm and healthy relationship exists between our teachers and their students. From time to time, a preschool teacher may be in a classroom with a student alone and may need to help that student with a private situation, i.e., assistance in the bathroom, changing clothes, etc. In these situations, the utmost respect and privacy is given to that child.

# THE LOWER SCHOOL HANDBOOK SUPPLEMENT

## ATTENDANCE

### Arrival

The school day starts right away with a Morning Meeting. This is an important part of our curriculum, so it is important that children arrive at school no later than 8:00 a.m. Parents should park in designated areas when escorting children to their classrooms. Parents and children should enter classrooms through the cubby room area. This is a good time to exchange brief pertinent information with the teachers regarding your child.

### Early Arrival

If a child arrives at school between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., he or she should be escorted to the gym where supervision will be available for early drop-off. Students may not be dropped off or unattended before 7:30 a.m.

### Tardiness

Children arriving after 8:10 a.m. should report to the Main Office with the adult who brings them to receive a late slip. Please note that being on time is key to a successful school experience. Consistent lateness is discouraged and may be addressed by the administration.

### Absences

Longer absences which are not family milestones (i.e. extended vacations) are discouraged, because it is extremely difficult for students to transition back into school and settle into the routines of school life. Also, students miss valuable learning experiences, which negatively impact their learning.

In the event of an extended absence, teachers should not be expected to provide work for the children.

## AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

To extend the school day safely, a number of different after-school programs are offered for students in kindergarten through grade 3 to extend the school day.

### After-School Enrichment Program

Recognizing that learning does not stop at the classroom door, BCD offers students in Kindergarten through grade 3 (and grades 4, 5 or 6 depending on the trimester) a variety of activities on campus from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Our enrichment programs are offered to continue developing a sense of community after school. Programs may include Nature Explorations, Art, Science, Chess, and more. The programs vary from trimester to trimester and a nominal fee is charged for each course. Program descriptions and registration forms are sent home to parents and also made available on the school's web site. Some courses have size restrictions and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Extended-Day Program

An Extended-Day Program is available Monday through Friday, from the end of the school day until as late as 5:30 p.m. for those families needing to extend the school day on either a regular or as-needed basis. Extended Day is located in Oakes Hall in the classroom directly behind the 1st/2<sup>nd</sup> grade room.

During the Extended-Day Program, students participate in supervised outdoor play, games, and activities, and receive a snack. Information about Extended Day will be sent home to parents at the beginning of the school year for sign-up. Drop-ins are also accommodated if notice is given to the Main Office by 1:00 p.m. on the day the service is needed and if there is space in the program that day.

An hourly fee will be charged for participation in the Extended-Day Program. Please note that an additional higher charge will apply for students remaining past the 5:30.

## **Sports**

The foundation of the BCD sports program is the belief that every student should have an opportunity to participate in organized team sports at BCD. At a small school, there are many things that can be learned from team sports, including physical conditioning, sportsmanship, cooperation, social interaction, dependence on others, and a shared experience. Perhaps the most compelling reason for student participation in school sports is that this is the peak time for the development of their physical skill and coordination. Being on a team provides a means for this development through the skill and time requirements.

Sports students in grade 3 are invited to participate in BCD's farm teams for soccer in the fall and lacrosse in the spring. Sport practices are held from 3:10p.m. - 4:30p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students must participate in a minimum of two out of three practices per week.

Please contact the Athletic Director with questions or for more information.

## **BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS/ADDRESSING INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT**

Teachers understand that in the early grades social skills development is as critical as academic skills. As children learn about following rules and expectations, as well as how to get along, mistakes will be made and feelings hurt along the way. To provide a safe and respectful learning environment for all students, BCD strives to nurture respect for self and others in the educational process.

When it does become necessary to address a student's inappropriate behavior, the following procedures may be followed:

- A student who behaves inappropriately is spoken to by his or her teacher and, if necessary, his or her homeroom teacher. If deemed appropriate, the Associate Head of School or Head of School may also speak to the student.
- The teacher may determine whether or not the behavior merits a consequence and/or a call home.
- Repeated misbehavior on the part of a student may require a conference with the parents to discuss the issue and make a plan.
- Should incidents of a more serious nature (a Major Code of Conduct offense) occur, parents will be notified, after the student meets with the Associate Head of School and his/her homeroom teacher, as such behaviors could result in suspension or dismissal.
- In any instance of misconduct by a student, the School may consider some or all of the following factors when considering an appropriate consequence: the severity of the offense, the past record of the individual, the impact on the student, the impact on the School community, and the student's and parents' ability to work in good faith with the School.

BCD makes every effort to communicate with the parents and to work with the students so they may find success as positive, caring, and cooperative members of our community.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Parties are important ways to celebrate milestones. Parties that are not inclusive, however, become divisive factors for the class dynamics as well as painful experiences for those who are left out. Please follow the following guidelines to ensure a positive experience for your child and his/her class.

- Any party given outside the School should not involve the School in any way. The host family is solely responsible for the actions of their guests.
- Parents may wish to bring to school enough fruit, cupcakes, or cookies to share with all classmates and teachers to celebrate a child's birthday or special occasion. Please notify the teachers of any planned refreshments well in advance, and please do not send in party favors.
- When bringing food to school for the class, please check with the teacher about food allergies.
- Invitations should be mailed from the home, groups should not leave from the school's carpool line, and presents should not be brought into school.
- If you choose to have a large party, the School requests that you either invite the whole class or the entire girl or boy population of the group.

- Exclusion of a small number of children in the class leads to hurt feelings and breaks down the class unity that the teachers work so hard to create. BCD encourages families to invite all students in a class or at least all boys or girls to a party.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is any act, often repeated, that causes intentional physical or emotional harm to another person. This can include punching, shoving, spreading bad rumors, teasing in a mean way, and getting others to “gang up” on others. Bullying can also include cyber bullying, which can include sending mean texts, e-mails or instant messages, posting nasty pictures or messages or using someone’s username inappropriately. Bullying is not tolerated and acts of bullying, especially if repeated, will be treated as a Major Code of Conduct issue.

## **CHORUS**

Students in grades 1-3 are members of the BCD Lower School Chorus. This group rehearses weekly and for the school at the end of each trimester. Chorus also performs several times at local functions.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Berkshire Country Day School communicates with families in many ways, including:

- Weekly classroom updates on faculty blogs
- Phone messages will be delivered to classroom teachers. Teachers will return phone calls within 24 hours when appropriate.
- Two Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled within the school year. Additional Conferences will be scheduled as needed.
- Student Progress Reports are sent home twice each school year for kindergarten students and once per trimester for students in grades 1-3.
- Faculty and administration maintain a 24-hour turn-around time for email correspondence.

## **DISMISSAL**

Parents are asked to wait in the car line that forms at the start of the stone wall and goes around the circle. All students are walked to their cars accompanied by a teacher. If a parent needs to come to the child’s classroom, please park in the designated parking spaces.

If a parent is delayed: After 3:15 p.m., all children are escorted to the Extended-Day Program, and can be picked up there. Please call the Main Office as soon as possible if you are delayed.

## **Changes in departure procedures**

If a child is to leave school in any other way than the usual way, the parent must send a note, including signature, indicating how and with whom. Children will not be released to an unauthorized individual without prior parental authorization, nor will they be allowed to change bus stops, etc., without a written note.

## **DRESS**

All Lower School students are asked to dress for school each day in a neat, clean and appropriate manner. They should have the following clothing at school at all times:

- A sweater (temperatures can vary inside buildings);
- A pair of boots for outdoors (see below);
- A *separate* pair of sneakers for physical education and recess (non-marking soles only);
- An extra pair of slippers, sneakers or shoes for indoor wear (no boots—feet should breathe!);
- A complete change of clothes (K, 1, and 2);

In the winter season, all Lower School students are required to wear boots, snow pants, hats, and mittens (or gloves) when they go out for recess. During the 25-minute recess, students are often engaged in active child play.

*Please label all clothing with the student's name!*



## **ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE**

Encouraging positive social interaction among classmates is a key part of the process of learning. To this end, Lower School students are not allowed to bring electronic devices to school such as games, iPods or MP3 players, and cell phones. Such devices are also not permitted on school field trips, or during after-school programs (Extended Day, Enrichment Classes, etc.).

## **HOMEWORK**

Assigning homework helps students learn organizational and time management skills. Although we do strongly encourage a 30-minute read-aloud time each night, children in PK through grade 2 do not receive regular assignments. Formal homework begins in grade 3 when students will have more regular assignments in one or two subjects. It is anticipated that third-grade homework should typically take about 30 minutes to complete; however some children do take longer than others to complete this work.

## **LUNCH AND SPECIAL TREATS**

Students should bring a nutritious morning snack and lunch to school every day. Caffeinated drinks, sodas, drinks in glass containers, and all gum and candy are prohibited. Lunches should be sensible, well balanced, and easy for children to manage alone. It is helpful if eggs, oranges, etc. are peeled at home. When packing lunch, *please remember that children have no access to refrigerators or microwaves.*

Suggestions:

- Sandwich or hot dishes *in a thermos* (i.e. spaghetti, soup, stew, chicken, mac and cheese, etc.).
- Cheese and crackers
- Potato chips or sticks
- Cut-up raw vegetables (i.e. carrots, celery, tomatoes, and cucumbers).
- A drink (i.e. milk, fruit or vegetable juice – no soda).

Each student must have a lunch box or bag in which to bring lunch and a snack. This should be marked with the child's name. Parents are encouraged to use reusable containers to pack student lunches. Please send two napkins with your child's lunch, because one will be used as a tablemat.

BCD does have students with severe and life-threatening food allergies. You will be notified by the school if this is the case in your children's class. The School will provide a list of restricted food items as well as suggestions for alternatives.

Throughout the year class parents periodically provide lunch for the whole class. These "Lunch Bunch" occasions are organized by the class parents for each grade. As a ninth grade fundraiser, the School offers several Pizza Fridays throughout the year. Students may sign up for pizza and juice for the year. Pizza Friday forms are sent home in the August back-to-school mailing to parents.

There are also occasions where parents may want to provide a special treat for the class (birthdays, etc.). *Parents should always check with the homeroom teachers for any food allergies or restrictions so that all children are able to partake in the treat.*

## **PARENT TEACHER COFERENCES**

Teachers meet with parents in October or November and March or April. Parents sign up for conference times online several weeks before the scheduled conference days. In order to foster open communication and to maintain an in-depth understanding of a student's progress at school, all parents are encouraged to come for conferences.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

- **Mountain Day:** In October, students travel as a school to a nearby mountain hiking and picnicking and outdoor fun. Students bring their own picnic lunches.
- **Thanksgiving Soup:** A BCD tradition before Thanksgiving where the whole school gathers in Fitzpatrick Hall for soup (vegetables prepared by the students) and to give special thanks. Preschool parents are encouraged to volunteer to help set up the hall and serve the soup.

- **Alaska Day:** In mid-winter, students learn about the state of Alaska and participate in activities common to Alaskan culture.
- **Fun Day:** At the end of the school year, students spend a fun-filled day playing a variety of outdoor games and having a picnic. Students receive the *Penguin*, the school yearbook, on this day.
- **End-of-Year Assembly & Picnic:** On the last day of the school year, the student body gathers in Fitzpatrick Hall to bring closure to the year by saying "thank you" to class parents and special friends. It is also a time to say goodbye to faculty and students who are leaving BCD. The family picnic immediately follows the assembly.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT: CHECKLISTS AND WRITTEN NARRATIVES**

Students do not receive letter or numerical grades in Lower School. Instead, progress is communicated through the use of skills checklists and written narratives that provide parents with information about their child's growth and development at school. Communication between teachers and family members help children feel supported, loved, and nurtured. In this atmosphere of open and honest communication, children grow happily, develop new competencies, and gain confidence.

In Lower School, many of the skills that students need to master are rote in nature or in the areas of socialization. Waiting one's turn, listening to others, decoding and encoding the written word, memorizing the multiplication tables, learning the continents and major bodies of water, mastering basic vocabulary in a foreign language are examples of this kind of learning. At this level, parent involvement is an important factor in setting the stage for good work habits. That support is helpful in reinforcing the many drill exercises that are given and can help a child to master skills that may be difficult for her/him. As students climb grade levels, new skills and concepts are introduced and emphasized. Because of this, class assessments are based on different criteria from year to year.

BCD faculty members discuss assessment and standards of evaluation frequently. The faculty is committed to helping students develop and improve their skills and grow in their knowledge and understandings of the world and themselves. They are equally committed to regularly reporting information about student performance and progress to their parents.

## **TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

A warm and healthy relationship exists between our teachers and their students. From time to time, a Lower School teacher may be in a classroom with a student alone and may need to help that student with a private situation, i.e., assistance in the bathroom, changing clothes, etc. In these situations, the utmost respect and privacy is given to that child.

## **TESTING**

Berkshire Country Day School utilizes two standardized testing programs, both typically administered in independent schools for grades 3<sup>rd</sup> and above. These are not "high-stakes testing," because results from these tests forms only one portion of a student's learning profile. More importantly, BCD uses data from the tests as important pieces of our program evaluation and curricular vision.

### **ERB CTP-5 (3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up)**

The Educational Records Bureau (ERB) Comprehensive Testing Program 5 (CTP-5) is a battery of achievement tests administered to third grade students the end of January. BCD sends the results of these tests to parents as soon as they have been received from ERB. Parents are encouraged to contact the Associate Head of School with questions about or to review students' CTP-5 scores.

# **THE MIDDLE/UPPER SCHOOL HANDBOOK SUPPLEMENT**

In concert with the developmental growth of children this age, the Middle and Upper School divisions place increasingly high expectations on its students as they progress through grades 4 to 9. Students are asked to work independently, to accept responsibility for organizing their studies both at school and at home, and to move around the BCD campus to their many different classes without teacher direction or supervision. Middle and Upper School students are growing people capable of tackling the demands of our rigorous academic program, yet at the same time, faculty and administration members recognize that they must always be available to lend a helping hand and give guidance if necessary. This handbook is designed to provide students and parents of Middle and Upper School students all the necessary information about their division. Also included are Massachusetts State Laws and BCD Drug and Alcohol Policy that BCD students are required to follow. Please take the time to read this handbook thoroughly and call the Associate Head of School with any questions.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Arrival**

All Middle and Upper School students should arrive in their homerooms by 8:00 to be ready for their morning meetings. Students who arrive at school between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a. m. should report to the designated supervised areas until they are dismissed to their homerooms. There is no supervision provided prior to 7:30 a.m. and therefore, students should not be unattended on campus.

### **Absences**

Middle and Upper-School teachers understand that occasional circumstances, especially illness, may cause a student to be absent from school for a day or several. The faculty has created specific policies around students' making up missed class and homework in these instances. (See more information about the homework policy for short-term absences in the HOMEWORK section of this handbook.)

The Middle and Upper School faculty strongly discourages longer absences (i.e. extended vacations), because is extremely difficult for students to transition back to School and settle into the routines of school life. In addition to students' missing valuable learning experiences, extended absences place Middle and Upper School students in precarious positions as they attempt to make up all missed work. The faculty asks that students either make up their assignments within five (5) days of their return or present a doctor's note (which will serve as an extension). If a student accumulates more than 10 absences from a class during a calendar year, his or her promotion to the next level may be jeopardized and may require summer remediation. After May 1<sup>st</sup>, students are strongly advised not to miss school.

Teachers are not to be expected to provide work for children during longer absences that are not due to illness or family emergency. (See more information about the homework policy for long-term absences in the HOMEWORK section of this handbook.)

### **Late Arrivals and/ or Early Dismissals**

Repeated late arrivals or early departures result in missed academic class time and take away from critical learning experiences that can only take place in the classroom. Missed class time adversely affects student learning, *and teachers are not expected to spend time catching up nor meeting with students who have missed repeated portions of their classes due to unexcused reasons.*

In order to help our students perform to the best of their abilities and to encourage promptness, the Middle and Upper School homeroom teachers and administration have developed the following protocols and consequences for arriving late to homeroom:

- Students arriving after 8:05 a.m. must directly report to the upstairs office in Albright Hall to receive a late pass that they will then present to a homeroom teacher/ advisor. (Students who travel on busses that arrive late do not need to obtain a pass.)
- If a student is late and has a note from her/his driver to present to the office that provides a reasonable excuse, the lateness will be considered excused. If there is no note with a reasonable excuse, the lateness will be considered unexcused. (There is no need to provide a note if poor road conditions are the obvious excuse.)
  - *Examples of excused lateness:* poor road conditions, doctor appointment, religious observance, illness, family emergency, pulled over by a police officer on the way to BCD.

- *Examples of unexcused lateness:* woke up late, stopped to get a doughnut, needed to walk the dog, sibling couldn't decide what to wear, having a bad-hair day.
- Three or more unexcused late arrivals will result in a consequence such as missed recesses or a conference with the parent(s) and student.

Although doctors' visits fall into the category of excused absences, please try to make appointments on vacation days or after or before school hours if at all possible. The student must provide his/her teacher with an appointment note (forms provided in homerooms) to the teachers of the classes s/he will miss 24 hours prior. Repeated missed class time may result in one of the following consequences to be decided by the subject teacher, the student's advisor and an administrator:

- Required tutoring
- Required summer work

Class attendance is necessary in order to participate in BCD's co-curricular program, games, performances, and extra-curricular activities such as field trips. In order to take part in co-curricular programs of any given day, a student must attend six out of the eight periods of that school day unless special permission is obtained from the Associate Head of School. This means a student must arrive at school no later than mid-morning snack in order to be eligible to participate in a game or theater performance and, at the discretion of the teacher, sports practice or rehearsal as well.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

As a community, we place a very high value on integrity, and academic honesty serves as the cornerstone of this philosophy. Cheating, plagiarism, and other breaches of academic integrity are major disciplinary offenses, so, from an early age, teachers work with students to understand plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Disciplinary measures for academic dishonesty may include: failing the assignment; failing the course; academic probation; suspension; or expulsion. Following a first offense of academic dishonesty, a student will receive a "3" in effort in the subject for the term. His/ her conduct grade may also be adversely impacted.

### **ADMISSIONS BUDDY PROGRAM**

During the year, the Director of Admission may ask students to serve as "buddies" to visiting prospective students. Called "Admission Buddies," these students represent BCD in an appropriate manner, make the visitor feel comfortable with peers and faculty, and create a safe and welcoming environment for the student. The Admissions Buddy Program provides a welcoming environment to prospective students and also gives current BCD students an excellent opportunity to develop leadership skills.

To provide the prospective student a snapshot of the "day in the life" of a BCD student, during most of a visit, his/her Admission Buddy will be from the visitor's current grade.

### **CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS**

Co-Curricular Programs reflect our mission and philosophy as an institution and complement our core academic day. They have been designed to help students develop confidence, self-expression, and leadership potential. The goal of BCD's co-curricular programs is three-fold:

1. to provide extended opportunities for our students to stay connected as a community,
2. to provide opportunities for our students to experience and develop new skills and interests, and
3. to provide opportunities for our students to grow as individuals and as a group.

In addition, whether through enrichment, extended care, theater, or sports, co-curricular programs aim to nurture our children in several areas. Faculty and staff are committed to fostering respect of self and others, developing a spirit of cooperation, group work, and good sportsmanship as a team or ensemble. Emphasis is placed on the importance of individual commitment as well as commitment to the larger group.

### **BCD Theater**

The mission of BCD's Theater Department is to expose students to the ancient tradition of live theater, developing their appreciation for theatre as a viable and relevant art form. Engaging students early in their educations will create a lifelong interest. Also imperative in the experience of production is the ability of each child to learn the skill of ensemble and respectful community. They will emerge from the process with a stronger sense of self as well as the commitment of being part of the whole. Students will participate in all aspects of production under professional direction. Rehearsal and production work is structured and mindful while encouraging creative growth and self-expression. Each student will bring his or her unique talent, viewpoint, and desire to the adventure. The hope is that students will proceed equipped with the skills they need to continue pursuing their own development in these disciplines and at the very least, possessing a deeper understanding of the relevance of theater as means of communication in our contemporary world.

***Middle School Theater:*** Middle School students are offered the opportunity to choose to participate in a theater workshop, concluding with a demonstration, between the fall and winter sports seasons.

***Upper School Theater:*** Students in Grades 7, 8 or 9 may choose to participate our winter term of theater.

The production in the Upper School theater program is presented in the Winthrop Theater, and the specific material selected is always dependent upon the individuals in the ensemble each season.

In addition to regular after school rehearsals on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, the theater production involve some additional amount of time for rehearsals or shooting days as production nears. Rehearsal and performance calendars are distributed during the first week of the production. Parents and students are asked to review the dates and both sign an agreement committing to the schedule and indicating any conflicts. Ensemble members must be at every rehearsal unless they are ill. Parents should make every effort not to schedule appointments on rehearsal days. A large part of the experience for students is learning the value of commitment and follow-through in an ensemble project.

***Parent Volunteers:*** The Theater Program is supported by a wonderful team of parent volunteers. Making cast dinners, providing props and costume support, baking for concession stand, taking tickets, and set building are just some of the ways parents make a huge impact and share the experience with their children. Without this support, the program would fail. To get involved as a volunteer, please contact the theater director.

***Minimum Sports Requirements for Theater Participants:*** Upper School students are encouraged to remain active and physically fit, whether through the BCD sports program, or by completing their physical education requirements in the manner outlined below.

## **Sports**

The foundation of the BCD sports program is the belief that every student should have an opportunity to participate in organized team sports at BCD. Among the many things that can be learned from team sports are physical conditioning, sportsmanship, cooperation, social interaction, dependence on others, and a shared-experience. This last point is particularly important at a small school and is a major reason for offering only one sport each season through the ninth grade. Perhaps the most compelling reason for participating in team sports is that the peak time for physical skill and coordination development in a person's life is from ten to thirteen years old. Being on a team provides a means for this development through the skill and time requirements.

BCD sports are strongly encouraged for all students in Grades 4 through 9. No Physical Education classes are scheduled during the school day for grades 7 through 9 and this is why involvement in the after school program is highly recommended. Please contact the Athletic Director for more details.

**Upper-School PE/ Sports Requirement:** Upper-School PE requirements vary depending on the grade of the student.

- *Students in grade 7* may do three, but **must** complete a minimum of **two** seasons of sports, one of them on campus
- *Students in grade 8* **must** complete a minimum of **one** season of sports, one of them on campus
- *Students in grade 9* are **strongly encouraged** to participate in at least **one** season of sports and may choose to participate in the theater program. All ninth-grade students must participate in at least one co-curricular activity on campus during the academic year.

The following seasonal sports are offered.

FALL: soccer

WINTER: cross-country skiing

SPRING: lacrosse

**Upper-School PE/ Sports Requirement:** In the Middle School (grades 4-6), a physical education program is offered during the school day. This program provides each child with a fitness program along with an introduction to a wide variety of game and sport activities.

**Farm, JV, and Varsity Teams:** Our Fall Farm Team Soccer Team (for Grade 4 and select Grade 5 students) emphasizes learning skills, so there are a limited number of interscholastic games at this level. Game time for players on the JV and Varsity teams in lacrosse, basketball, and soccer depends upon the athlete's attitude, attendance, and effort. Level of skill also begins to be a consideration, but to a much lesser extent than attitude, attendance, and effort.

**Participation on Varsity Teams:** To ensure that all players have a positive sports experience within their skill sets, BCD utilizes a "cut" system for Varsity teams. Participation on Varsity teams is voluntary and students must be in the seventh, eighth, or ninth grade.

In order to promote team spirit and develop the cohesiveness of the teams, those playing at the Varsity level must

1. attend all games;
2. be at practice Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays (although some games and practices may be scheduled on Wednesdays and Fridays); and
3. participate fully in the program. If a student has a scheduling conflict, s/he must speak directly with the coach.

### **Excused from Sports**

A student may be excused from participating in after school sports at BCD only if he/she is participating in regular physical activity (dance, horse riding, swimming) outside of school. A letter stating the alternate program must be submitted to the Athletic Director.

**Friday Ski Program:** The Friday Ski Program is available to all students in K through Grade 9. School closes early on Friday during the months of January and February so students can be transported to Butternut. All levels of skiing, beginner to advanced, are taught.

**Game Schedules:** Full schedules, complete with parent pick-up times at BCD, are printed early in each sports season and available on the Google calendar portion of the school's website. Games are also listed on the calendar with the necessary revisions.

**Game Days:** Parents must pick up athletes playing in games, either at home or away. For "away" games, the BCD bus will make a return stop in Great Barrington or Pittsfield (depending on where the game is played). Parents, of course, are welcome to go to the host school to watch the game and pick up their children. Your support and understanding are greatly appreciated when games are canceled at the last minute or postponed.

**Directions to Away Games:** See the BCD website.

**Sports Cancellation:** If the cancellation of practice or a game due to weather or unforeseen factors is made, parents will be notified during the day through the school web site, which will post the cancellation as soon as notified.

When weather forces cancellation of sports practice and/or a game, all students participating in sports practice or a game remain at school. Participants will attend a study hall, team meetings, games in the gym, or be picked up by their parent at the coaches' discretion. The possibility always exists that the weather may improve, in which case teams will take to the fields. Attendance is taken daily.

**Equipment, Uniforms and Apparel:** BCD interscholastic teams wear uniforms when competing with other schools. These uniforms are issued to team members. Athletes are expected to wear shorts and shirts for practice, and they should also have sweatpants and sweatshirts for cold-weather wear.

All students who play soccer and/or lacrosse must have cleats. A pair of indoor sneakers is also a necessity for use in the gym. Additionally, all soccer players are required to wear shin guards.

Players on all teams who wear corrective glasses must have plastic or safety-glass lenses with unbreakable frames and must secure their glasses with appropriate elastic holders (worn between the ear pieces and around the back of the head). Players whose glasses are breakable must either obtain sports glasses or wear protective goggles.

## **SOCCER**

Soccer players with braces are required to wear mouth guards, supplied either by their orthodontists or by BCD. (While not required for other soccer players, mouth guards are certainly recommended and are available at BCD.)

## **LACROSSE**

Without exception, lacrosse players are required to wear mouth guards. Each lacrosse player must also purchase his/her own lacrosse stick (team discounts are available through BCD). Boys must purchase gloves, and athletic cups are highly recommended. Girls may also purchase gloves (optional). Lacrosse helmets for boys and protective eyewear for girls are provided by the School.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

BCD strives to create an environment in which students can grow academically, physically, socially, and spiritually. BCD middle and upper-school students are expected to be respectful members of this community, so we set high standards of behavioral expectations for our students. The manner in which students choose to conduct themselves affects them directly and affects those around them and the entire school community. To make sure that BCD provides a safe haven for each and every student, a **Code of Conduct** exists to articulate clearly the School's expectations regarding the behavior of each student, to provide a list of major code of conduct offenses, and to outline the manner in which BCD may address inappropriate conduct.

Students are expected to read the *Student Handbook Highlights* (distributed during orientation) and be able to articulate their understanding of the expectations and processes for addressing any and all infractions. The *Handbook* will be discussed during advisory blocks the first week of school. In addition, all students and their parents are asked to sign an acknowledgment, to be returned to the school, stating that both parties have read and understood the entire

Students are expected to follow and support the school rules. They should be polite, kind, considerate, and supportive of others in the School community, and they must respect the School's property and the property of others. Children are expected to treat each other with respect. In keeping with BCD's school philosophy, bullying, teasing, unnecessary exclusion, and other acts of unkindness are not tolerated. The School emphasizes the importance of students taking responsibility for themselves and their actions. The School expects all students to conduct themselves in a manner harmonious with this goal.

BCD is a drug-free zone. It is illegal for students, parents, faculty, or staff to be in possession of, to distribute, or use any illegal drugs or substances on the BCD campus or at BCD-related events/trips. Use, possession,

or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, or any other illegal substance on campus or during any school-related activity by a student also will not be tolerated. It is important to also note that alcohol will not be served to or purchased by parents or their friends or school employees at any school-sponsored and/or school activity-related event (off or on campus) in which students are in attendance. Examples of such events include, but are not limited to, field trips, class trips, athletic events, ski trips, cast parties, theater banquets, dinners, and dances.

BCD will not tolerate bullying or hazing. Bullying is any act, often repeated, that causes intentional physical or emotional harm to another person. This can include punching, shoving, spreading bad rumors, teasing in a mean way, and getting others to “gang up” on others. Bullying can also include cyber bullying, which can include sending mean texts, e-mails or instant messages, posting nasty pictures or messages, using someone’s username inappropriately, or E-mailing or posting messages of retaliation. Bullying is not tolerated and acts of bullying, especially if repeated, will be treated as a Major Code of Conduct issue. Hazing refers to any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. (MA Anti-Hazing Law, see Chapter 269, Section 17 or page 32 of the General Handbook.) See the **Bullying** section, below for more specific details.

All BCD students sign a *Technology Acceptable Use Policy* (which includes a section on cyber bullying) and are expected to follow these guidelines during any communication with or regarding the BCD community. Acts of bullying, especially if repeated, will be reported to and investigated by the Associate Head of School and handled as a Major Code of Conduct offense. In such cases, it will be paramount for the administration and the student’s teachers and advisor to restore a sense of safety for the victim. For more information, see the portion of this handbook entitled COMPUTER POLICY.

### **Addressing Inappropriate Conduct**

When it becomes necessary to investigate or address a student's inappropriate conduct, each matter is dealt with and the consequences determined on an individual case-by-case basis at BCD’s sole discretion. BCD does not employ automatic or predetermined processes or consequences when addressing conduct matters, but may, at its sole discretion, use some of the following methods:

- A direct discussion between a student who behaves inappropriately and that student’s teacher, homeroom teacher, or advisor.
- A direct discussion between a student who behaves inappropriately and the Associate Head of School or Head of School.
- In the Middle and Upper Schools, a written notification may be recorded and a copy sent home to the parents to be discussed with the student. Written notifications shall not become part of a student’s official school transcript.
- Depending upon the nature, severity, and/or frequency of a student’s inappropriate conduct, BCD may require a conference with the parents to discuss the issue(s).
- Incidents that BCD considers to be, at its sole discretion, of a more serious nature (e.g., a major Code of Conduct offense) may result in immediate probation, suspension, or expulsion, without warning or notice.
- When deciding upon the consequences of a student’s inappropriate conduct, BCD may, at its sole discretion, consider some or all of the following factors: the severity of the offense, the past record of the individual, the impact on the student, the impact on the school community and the student’s and parents’ ability to work in good faith with the School.

**Major Code of Conduct Offenses:** The following is a list of some, but not all, of the types of inappropriate conduct that, when they involve BCD students, happen on the BCD campus or happen at BCD-related events/trips, shall be considered major Code of Conduct offenses that may result in immediate probation, suspension, or expulsion, without warning or notice:

- Conduct which is illegal or reflects negatively on the School.
- Interference with the rights of others, including but not limited to physical, sexual and verbal abuse, bullying, hazing, teasing, exclusion, lying, cheating, and stealing.
- Conduct that subverts the order and discipline of the School and compromises the integrity of others.



- Damage or abuse to any school property or personal property of others.
- Possession, use, distribution, or sale of drugs listed in the current Federal Controlled Substances Act or otherwise considered illegal.
- Possession, use, distribution, or sale of alcohol, any tobacco substance, or inhalants.
- Possession, use, distribution, or sale of firearms, explosive materials, fireworks, knives, or matches.
- Repeated use of obscene, profane, threatening, or intimidating written or verbal language.
- Repeated disruptive or uncooperative behavior.
- Violation of the school-wide Acceptable Computer Use Policy.
- Repeated situations involving academic dishonesty.

**Response to Major Code of Conduct Offenses:** If BCD determines that a Major Code of Conduct Offense has occurred, BCD shall determine how best to address the issue on a case-by-case basis. At its discretion, BCD may convene a disciplinary committee comprised of faculty members and the Associate Head of School for the purpose of reviewing the inappropriate conduct and/or recommending consequences for such conduct. If such a disciplinary committee is convened, it may consider some or all of the following factors when making a recommendation for consequences: the severity of the offense, the past record of the individual, the impact on the student, the impact on the school community and the student's and parents' ability to work in good faith with the School. If a disciplinary committee is convened, it shall make a recommendation to the Head of School who solely shall determine whether to accept or reject the recommendation. The Head of School is responsible for making all final decisions regarding the consequences for a Major Code of Conduct Offense.

If the Head of School's disciplinary decision results in a formal probationary period, a suspension, or expulsion, a letter explaining the circumstances and the decision will be added to the student's permanent, official school file. This record will be included with the student's transcript.

## **Bullying**

Berkshire Country Day School is committed to providing its students with a safe learning environment that is free from all forms of harassment, including bullying. The School will not tolerate any form of bullying that occurs on School grounds or in connection with any School activity or that otherwise interferes with the educational experience of any student at the School. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our School community. We will provide annual training for all employees on this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. We will provide information to all students and parents about the Plan at least annually.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. We will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. We afford all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

We will respond promptly and effectively to any report of bullying or retaliation against any person who has any information about bullying or participated in an investigation of bullying. We will promptly investigate the report. If we find that bullying or retaliation has occurred, we will promptly take action to end that behavior and restore a sense of safety for those who were the target of it. We will impose disciplinary sanctions in appropriate cases, up to and including dismissal from the School or termination from employment. We will report to local law enforcement incidents of bullying that may constitute a violation of criminal law.

**What constitutes bullying?** Massachusetts has adopted a law relative to bullying in schools, which broadly defines bullying as "the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school's staff (including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to any extracurricular activity or paraprofessional) of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim/targeted student, that:

- (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim/targeted student or damage to the victim's/targeted student's property;
- (ii) places the victim/targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or damage to his/her property;
- (iii) creates a hostile environment [defined below] at school for the victim/targeted student;
- (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim/targeted student at school; or
- (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school."

The law defines a "hostile environment" as "a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education."

Bullying includes "cyber-bullying," which Massachusetts law defines as "bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication ... including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications."

Cyber-bullying also includes "(i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (iii) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying."

Cyber-bullying also includes "the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying."

**Definitions and School Policy:** It is important to bear in mind that stricter standards of behavior may apply under the School's policies in order to prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct before a student has been subject to bullying as it is defined under the law. For example, although the Plan defines bullying as "repeated use" of certain expressions, acts, and/or gestures, the School reserves the right to impose disciplinary measures or other corrective action in a case of a single expression, act or gesture, as well as in a case of inappropriate conduct that may not rise to the level of the legal definition of bullying. This may occur if the School determines that the behavior is of sufficient severity to warrant disciplinary measures or other remedial action, or if the repetition of an expression, act, or gesture might result in bullying as defined under the Massachusetts anti-bullying law.

**Prohibition Against Bullying:** The School prohibits bullying:

- on School grounds, which means any building or property that the School owns or uses for educational, athletic, or other purposes;
- on any property immediately adjacent to School grounds;
- at or in connection with any School-sponsored or School-related activity, function or program, whether or not the activity occurs on School grounds;
- on any vehicle or other form of transportation owned or used by the School; or
- through the use of any technology or any electronic device owned, leased or used by the School.

The School also prohibits bullying that does not meet any of the above criteria, but that nonetheless:

- creates a hostile environment at school for the victim/alleged target;
- infringes on the rights of the victim/alleged target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the School.

**Prohibition against Retaliation:** The School also prohibits retaliation against any person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. "Retaliation" means any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against any such person.

**Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation, Students:** Any student who feels that he or she or any other student has been the subject of bullying or retaliation should promptly report the matter to the Head of School, the Associate Head of School, the School's counselor or any other staff member or teacher with whom they would feel more comfortable making the report. Student reports of bullying may be made anonymously, although the School is prohibited from taking any disciplinary action against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

**Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation, Students:** Any parent or guardian who feels that any student has been the subject of bullying or retaliation should promptly report the matter to the Head of School or the Associate Head of School. Such reports of bullying may be made anonymously, although the School is prohibited from taking any disciplinary action against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any parent or guardian who wishes to file a claim/concern or seek assistance outside of the School may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pgs>, emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu), or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the Superintendent's office. If a parent or guardian knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, the School may terminate the enrollment of any child (ren) of that parent or guardian.

**Teachers and Staff:** All administrators, teachers, and staff – every person who is employed by the School in any capacity – must immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation that the person has witnessed, or otherwise become aware of, to the Head of School. If the Head of School is unavailable, reports should be given directly to the Associate Head of School. An employee who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation or who fails to immediately report an instance of bullying or retaliation of which they are aware shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

If a teacher or staff member witnesses an act of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation in progress, the teacher or staff member is expected to take reasonable steps to stop the act by communicating directly with the person where behavior is considered unacceptable, offensive, or inappropriate.

**Anonymous Reporting:** Employees may not make reports under this policy anonymously. The School urges students and their parents and guardians not to make reports anonymously. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously. While the School cannot promise strict confidentiality, because information must be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation, the School releases information concerning complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation only as needed to address concerns.

**Responding to Reports of Bullying or Retaliation:** Upon receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School, or the Head of School's designee, will promptly conduct an investigation. The nature and extent of the investigation will depend on the circumstances.

If the Head of School or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred after completion of the investigation, the Head or designee will take the following actions:

- Notify the parents or guardians of the alleged victim/target and, to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of any action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. The Head of School or designee shall also inform the parents or guardians of the alleged victim/target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.
- Notify the parents or guardians of the alleged perpetrator.
- Assess the alleged victim's/target's need for protection and take appropriate steps as necessary to restore a sense of safety for the victim/target.

The following is an outline of the procedure that is pursued once a complaint has been brought forward:

An impartial investigation of the complaint is conducted by the Head of School or designee. That investigation may include (but will not necessarily be limited to) interviews with the person who made the complaint, with the student who was the target of the alleged bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, with the person or persons against whom the complaint was made, and with any students, employees, or other persons who witnessed or who may otherwise have relevant information about the alleged incident.

Depending on the circumstances, the Head of School or designee conducting the investigation also may choose to consult with other teachers and/or the School Counselor.

**Resolution, Notification, and Follow-Up:** Following interviews and any other investigation undertaken, as the School deems appropriate, the Head of School or designee will determine whether and to what extent the allegation of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been substantiated. If it is determined that the policy set forth in this Plan has been violated, the Head of School or designee will determine what disciplinary action and/or other remedial action is appropriate and how it will be implemented. When necessary, the following steps may be taken

- In consultation with the school counselor, refer perpetrators, victims/targets, and family members of such students for counseling or other services as appropriate.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action, which may include any form of discipline that the School imposes for other violations of its rules and policies, up to and including dismissal. In accordance with Massachusetts law, any disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior, and no disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- Notify local law enforcement if the Head of School or designee reasonably believes that criminal charges may be pursued against a perpetrator. Depending on the nature of the conduct, bullying may involve, for example, the crimes of stalking; making threats; harassment; or making harassing, annoying or molesting electronic communications. In addition, retaliation or threats of retaliation may involve, for example, the crime of witness intimidation.
- Notify the appropriate administrator of another school if an incident of bullying or retaliation involves a student from that school.

For all reports of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School or designee will keep a file of the report, the investigation, and any steps taken in response to a finding of bullying or retaliation.

**Notification and Training:** The School will provide written notice of the relevant student-related sections of this Plan to students and parents/guardians at least annually. The notification to students will be in age-appropriate terms. Relevant portions of the Plan will be included in the Parent/Student Handbook.

The School will provide training on this Plan for all employees at least annually. The training at a minimum will include a review of the reporting obligations for all employees and the processes that the School will follow in response to a report of bullying or retaliation. The Plan, or relevant portions thereof, will be included in employee handbooks.

**Reviewing and Updating the Plan:** The Plan will be updated at least once every two years. In connection with that update, the Head of School, or the Head of School's designee, will be responsible for reviewing the Plan, reviewing the file of reported incidents of bullying or retaliation in at least the preceding two years, and undertaking such other steps as may be appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of this plan and the School's compliance with the Plan and any laws or regulations relating thereto.

At least once every four years, the School will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in the School. Additionally, the School will annually report bullying incident data to the Department as may be required by law.

## **Conduct Grade**

In order to reinforce the development of good attitudes and behavior among our students, a conduct grade is included with the academic and effort grades on the progress reports, which families receive three times a year.

Unlike the effort grades, which are given individually in each subject, the conduct grade is determined by the collective judgment of the faculty. It reflects the student's attitude and behavior during the school day and beyond, including all school-sponsored activities. Teachers, coaches, and chaperones who work with the student and share responsibility for that student's academic, athletic, emotional, and social well-being determine the conduct grade for the student.

The conduct grades are as follows:

### **S (Satisfactory)**

Conduct is satisfactory and behavior, with occasional reminders, is in accord with the Code of Conduct.

### **N (Needs Improvement)**

Frequent adult intervention is required to maintain conduct within the expectations of the Code of Conduct (For example, a student who repeatedly does not adhere to the dress code despite multiple reminders will receive an N in conduct.) A serious disciplinary infraction may also have occurred. An N conduct grade generally results in a meeting between the student, one of her/his parents, the student's advisor and a BCD administrator so that an action plan to improve the student's behavior may be devised.

### **U (Unacceptable)**

Despite constant adult intervention, behavior does not reasonably improve. A U may also reflect one or more serious disciplinary infractions. Students receiving a conduct grade of U will be required to hold a meeting with his/her advisor, one of her/his parents, and a BCD administrator. At that time, the group will work together to develop an action plan to improve behavior.

A U in conduct disqualifies a student from the Honor Roll during that trimester, regardless of his/ her academic average. Additionally, a conduct grade of U may jeopardize a student's continued enrollment at BCD.

## **COMPUTER POLICY**

Students at Berkshire Country Day School use technology in their classes as one of many learning tools. The School has taken measures to prevent such access to inappropriate information through the use of a firewall. However, BCD cannot control all information available on the Internet. The School shall not be held liable for inappropriate access or exposure to inappropriate materials resulting from student Internet use. The School trusts its students to know what is appropriate and inappropriate, however, to clarify; the School feels that any non-educational use is clearly inappropriate. The following guidelines are intended to help students use technology appropriately. Failure to adhere to the acceptable use policy will result in disciplinary action and/or the loss of technology use privileges. Depending on the infraction, disciplinary responses may include a written notification, and in egregious cases, including the violation of major school rules, dismissal from school as well as possible legal referral.

### **User Agreement**

The use of school technology resources must be in support of education, research, and the educational goals and objectives of Berkshire Country Day School. Students are personally responsible for this provision at all times when using technology on school premises. The use of the school network or technology resources must comply with rules appropriate to that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States statute is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. While some students may use their personal e-mail to communicate with peers and teachers, computers used on school property, e-mail addresses, and/or web pages may not be used for commercial, non-profit, political, personal, or religious purposes, or any other

non-educational use. If you have any questions about these rules call the Technology Office or the Associate Head of School to clarify specifics. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the School's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The student (or any guest on campus) is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the School's computer resources. The students are advised never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

## **21st Century Learning**

As we strive to meet the needs of students in the 21st century, new tools, innovative ways of connecting and learning continue to be developed. BCD seeks to incorporate the use of various technologies and Web 2.0 tools in the curriculum where appropriate, as a compliment to or by means of integration with core subject classes. Students throughout the school may use various technological and may also utilize online tools (i.e. websites, apps, blogs, webquests, podcasts, etc.) both to collaborate with others and/ or to showcase their work. At times, students will be communicating with other classes, teachers, mentors and experts throughout the world. In all cases, student safety and privacy is a vital concern.

## **The Rules**

**Student Guidelines:** These are guidelines to follow to prevent the loss of network privileges at school. All student devices must be registered with the Technology Office in order to be used on the campus network. Forms are available in the Technology Office or in homerooms. Students are not allowed in the computer labs or other classrooms with Internet access without a teacher present.

- Do not use the printers without permission.
- Students are not allowed to stream music and/or videos to their computers or personal devices.
- Food and drink are not allowed in the computer labs.
- Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work.
- Do not damage the computer or the network in any way.
- Do not install any software, shareware, or freeware.
- Do not violate copyright laws.

Please be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources is a violation of school rules, and may be in violation of local, state, and federal laws, and that you can be prosecuted for violating these laws.

**Privacy:** Network storage areas may be treated like school cubbies. Network administrators may review communications to maintain system integrity and to insure that students are using the system responsibly. Students should not attempt to access information stored by others.

**Downloads:** Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks.

**Inappropriate materials or language:** Profane, abusive or impolite language should not be used to communicate nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. A good rule to follow is never view, send, or access materials which you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Should students encounter such material by accident, they should report it their teacher immediately.

## **DANCES**

Throughout the school year, students in grades 7 - 9 have the opportunity to participate in school dances, chaperoned by faculty. Students must ask chaperones prior to the dance for permission to bring a guest(s). Guests should be introduced to the chaperones, and that guest becomes the responsibility of the student.

To ensure healthy and safe evenings for all, specific behavioral expectations and rules are spelled out to all students before the first dance. Students are expected to follow the Code of Conduct and to heed chaperone

requests, such as checking book bags, coats, and purses for the duration of the dance. At the end of the dance, parents must pick students up promptly.

## **DRESS CODE**

**Middle and Upper School students** are asked to adhere to a general dress code. The dress code is designed not to be restrictive, but rather to provide a guideline so that BCD students dress neatly and appropriately for our school environment. At their discretion, teachers may ask students to change clothing in the instance that it is not in accordance with the following guidelines or that does not represent the School well.

### **General:**

- Clothes must be worn so that underwear and midriff are covered.
- Undergarments may not be worn as outside clothing.
- Students should not wear hats, or hoods indoors unless there is a problem with the heating system. Students also should not go outdoors without coats and hats in sub-zero weather.

### **Tops:**

- Collared shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, T-shirts, and sleeveless shirts may be worn. Shirts may display tasteful designs or logos. The design may not include words or pictures that refer to alcohol, drugs, violence, or sex.
- Students may not wear tube tops or halter tops.

### **Bottoms:**

- Students may wear respectable jeans with no holes above mid-thigh, or athletic shorts worn no shorter than mid-thigh.
- Dresses or skirts should reach mid-thigh.
- When wearing leggings, it is recommended that the shirt/top are of an appropriate length.
- Track pants, fitted and without large logos, may be worn.
- Track pants made of sweatshirt material are allowed for PS/LS and MS students.

### **Footwear:**

- **Middle School:** Footgear must be flat and cover the toes, due to safety concerns resulting from our rural environment, playground activity, and the type of work conducted in our science labs and shop classrooms.
- **Upper School:** Students may wear sandals (no flip flops) with the exception of days when they have science or shop class. On those days, the Upper School students' toes must be covered.

### **Accessories:**

- Students are allowed to wear make-up if it is applied sparingly.
- In accordance with Massachusetts's Interscholastic Athletic Regulations, piercings must be removed before playing sports.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

To promote an environment conducive to learning and a sense of community, students are not permitted to use cell phones, digital cameras, music players (iPods or the iTunes function of their phones) or hand-held gaming devices during classes and during after-school programs, unless *express permission is given by a teacher*. The School is not responsible for the loss of students' personal property.

All personal cell phones, music players, and laptops must be kept, **turned off**, in the student's pocket or backpack. Students may choose to check in their cell phones with their homeroom teachers for safekeeping. If a cell phone being used without permission during the academic day, it will be confiscated and the student may lose his/her privilege to bring the device to school. If a student needs to reach a parent during the school day, the student should use a school phone.

At the discretion of the supervising faculty member(s), the use of electronic devices may be permitted during study halls, field trips, and away games.

Laptop or tablet use for academic tasks throughout the day is permitted. However, students may not use laptops/tablets to stream music or video/films (including on YouTube or Vimeo), as our infrastructure cannot support this activity and the system will become overloaded and lead to slowed access or total inaccessibility for all.

Laptops may not be used during recess unless they are used alongside a teacher for educational purposes. Otherwise, the laptop will be confiscated and the student may lose his/her privilege to use the laptop.

School-owned computer labs and laptop/ tablet carts are monitored by faculty and used throughout the Middle and Upper School curricula.

## **FACULTY ADVISING**

Each Middle and Upper School student is assigned a member of the faculty. This individual is responsible for monitoring his/her academic, athletic, social, and emotional development at school. The advisor is your child's advocate at BCD, and each parent is encouraged to call or email the advisor with questions or concerns. Advisors will return calls and emails as soon as possible. Additionally, the advisor will meet regularly with his or her advisees as well as their teachers.

## **GRADES AND ACADEMIC REPORTING**

### **Grading**

Along with the conduct grade, an academic (A - F) and an effort grade (1-4) system are introduced in the Middle School. Academic Letter Grades the culmination of grades on projects, tests, quizzes, etc. from the term, and the Effort Grade represents the student's affect toward and work ethic in a course.

**Effort Grades** (*detailed rubric located in the final page of this Handbook*)

- 1= Exemplary
- 2=Meets Expectations
- 3=Needs Improvement
- 4=Unacceptable

### **Academic Letter Grades**

Teachers use the following hundred-point scale to calculate grades:

A+ = 97 – 100	B+ = 87 – 89	C+ = 77 – 79	D+ = 67 – 69
A = 93 – 96	B = 83 – 86	C = 73 – 76	D = 63 – 66
A- = 90 – 92	B- = 80 – 82	C- = 70 – 72	D- = 60 – 62
F = below 60			

Since BCD's mission is to support the academic achievement of each student while also nourishing each student's well-rounded development, particular students may be graded on a scale different from the standard outlined above. If, despite sincere and conscientious efforts on the part of the student, s/he is struggling in a class to such a degree that most assignments would earn D's, and if such low marks are deemed to be detrimental to the child's self-esteem and long-term ability to make academic progress, a Pass/ Fail grading system may be implemented. A team including subject teacher(s), advisor, and Associate Head of School will put forth a proposal to the Academic Affairs Committee. This Committee will then decide whether or not to approve the proposed a Pass/Fail grading system. In such cases, to assist the student make progress in the subject(s) as well as to continue to have success at BCD, a follow-up review of the student's academic plan will be conducted, including an evaluation of a potential need for academic testing and/or tutorial support.

*Progress Reports* are distributed to parents three times a year at the end of each trimester (December, March and June). Midway through a marking period, however, *Interim Reports* may also be sent home. Typically an Interim Report keeps parents informed if a child's work habits and/ or achievement has shown an unusual decline.



## **Honor and High Honor Rolls**

The BCD Honor Roll recognizes academic achievement. A student who demonstrates high academic achievement (maintains an average of 87) is placed on the Honor Roll. A student who demonstrates superior academic achievement (maintains an average of 93) is placed on the High Honor Roll.

To receive Honors, or High Honors, a student must receive an “S” mark or better for conduct and have no effort mark of “3” or “4.”

Grades will be received for Arts Blocks courses; however, these grades are weighted as a half-credit as opposed to the 3 credits applied to an academic course.

**NB:** If a student receives one “3” in effort earning Honor Roll or High Honors is still possible with a grade point average which is on par or above; however, this is only true for one term. The student will not be eligible for High Honor Roll or Honor Roll in subsequent terms, even if the grade level is in accordance with policy, if an effort grade of “3” is reported in the same subject.

## **Exams**

Students in grades 7 - 9 are required to take end-of-the-year exams in their major academic subject areas. Time is devoted in the spring to review and prepare for these exams. Each exam generally counts as 15% of a student’s final grade for that class for the year; however, in order to prevent a poor exam performance from devastating a good year’s effort, if a student fails an exam with a score lower than 40%, his/her grade will be calculated as 40%.

## **Conferences and Faculty Contact**

All parents are encouraged to come for conferences, in order to maintain an in-depth understanding of their children’s work at school. Formal conferences are scheduled in the fall, but parents are encouraged to contact a teacher to arrange additional meetings at any time. Parents sign up for conferences online several days before the scheduled meetings.

A Middle or Upper School child’s advisor is always the first contact for academic or social concerns, and we also ask that parents keep their child’s advisor abreast of any academic difficulty the student may face. BCD faculty members are always available by email or for a phone call at school or at home, but please be mindful not to abuse this relationship. We ask that no home phone calls be made after 8:30 p.m.

## **Academic Support**

The student’s advisor is the direct link between home and school. A student’s advisor and his/her other teachers hold regular meetings to discuss academic progress. Should a student experience academic difficulties, he or she is responsible to seek appropriate help him or herself, but the advisor and subject teacher will also work together to make specific recommendations designed to address the issues at hand. Academic support strategies may include tutorial support and follow-up conferences.

Should a student continue to struggle academically (i.e. receive two grades in a trimester at or below a grade of C- or a single F, receive two or more effort marks of 3, Needs Improvement or 4, Unsatisfactory Work, or receive any year-end failing grade), a meeting will be scheduled by his or her advisor to discuss the academic problems and to develop a plan to address them. Based on outcomes of this meeting, the student, his or her advisor, the appropriate subject teacher(s), the School Psychologist and the Associate Head of School will design and implement strategies to support the student and to assist him/ her in the process of regaining his/her solid academic standing. The student is expected to continue to meet regularly with each teacher in whose course a low grade was received.

In the event that a student’s performance does not improve after this intervention, a more extensive evaluation of the cause(s) for the problems will be undertaken. Some combination of social or motivational issues, personal or familial problems, and an obvious academic weakness in a given area may have created the poor performance. Along with the advisor, the student and parents, and the teacher(s), the Associate Head of School and the School Psychologist (as indicated) will attend the evaluative meeting. The goal of this meeting will be to develop and implement a more extensive plan to address the student’s academic

difficulties. Minutes of the meeting will be included in the student's file. In such cases, tutoring and continued meetings with the referring teacher will likely be prescribed.

Tutoring sessions may not be scheduled during a required class period. Instead, tutoring sessions should be held after school or during a free period (study hall or activity period). Exceptions must be discussed with and approved by the Associate Head of School.

*A student who suffers recurrent and unaddressed academic weaknesses suggests that the student cannot flourish at BCD, and s/he may therefore be asked to leave BCD.*

### **Failure of a course**

In all cases involving a failing year-end grade for a course, it is expected that the student, teacher of the course involved, parent, advisor, Associate Head of School, the appropriate department chair, and, if warranted, the School Psychologist, will meet to discuss the circumstances surrounding the failure and the options for redress. If a student has failed two or more courses in the same academic year, the team may determine that his/her ability to remain in the School will be in jeopardy. A written summary of this meeting will be placed in the student file for future reference.

Options for receiving academic credit for a single failed class may include retaking the course during the summer through an approved program, retaking the course during the subsequent academic year, or, if department prerequisites allow, taking a different course in the same subject matter the subsequent academic year.

### **Summer Remediation**

Students earning a year-end grade below C- in a major academic course should expect to do summer work to address the areas of their performance that were particularly weak. The teacher may recommend options for remediation, including, but not limited to: summer work with a tutor or in a remediation program, repeating the course in the subsequent year, and/or tutoring during the subsequent academic year. The advisor, student, teacher, and Associate Head of School then will meet to discuss options for meeting the student's needs. BCD makes an effort to develop a list of tutors and summer programs to help families to arrange for this type of follow-up remediation, but the actual arrangements for summer work are the responsibility of the family to set up.

A student may also be asked to retake his/her BCD year-end exam (or a school-approved facsimile) in the subject area of difficulty. As determined by the department on a case-by-case basis, the student must demonstrate some improvement on this exam. Some students may also be recommended for ongoing tutoring while school is in session.

In all cases, the tutor, student, teacher, and advisor must be in close contact to ensure that the appropriate assistance is being given.

### **GROUP PROJECTS**

Student group projects are frequently assigned in Middle and Upper School in order to provide opportunities to learn valuable teamwork and decision-making skills and to enhance the learning process. Students learn best when they are actively involved in the process. Researchers report that students working in small groups tend to learn better and retain material longer than when they work on their own. Group work is often conducted during class time, and periodically group projects are assigned that require students to work at home.

While very positive social and learning outcomes usually result from collaborative projects, there are sometimes initial struggles and occasionally there are disasters. Teachers will set specific guidelines and grading procedures to help frame each project, structure the students' approach to the learning task, and clarify expectations regarding the process and the outcomes.

If project work is done at home, parents need to become involved in scheduling appropriate work times and providing transportation. Parents are encouraged to try to allow the students to direct their learning as much as possible and to help mediate issues rather than to step into managerial roles. If, however, a

significant breakdown occurs, please call the teacher who assigned the project during calling hours to seek advice about how to proceed. The Middle and Upper School faculty members need and appreciate parent support in this important form of student learning.

### **HELP SESSIONS/ TUTORIALS**

The Middle and Upper School faculty schedule special academic help sessions on a regular basis throughout each week. If a student has fallen behind or needs to make up a quiz or test, a teacher will request that he or she attend a help session. But tutorial help sessions are open to any students wishing to attend.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is a crucial piece of the BCD experience. Faculty, students, and parents work in partnership to enhance our classrooms' curricula by means of daily homework and long-range projects throughout the year. A student's academic success depends on whether s/he takes responsibility for the completion of homework in a timely manner. Each teacher develops his/her own homework guidelines, including whether late work will be accepted, receive partial or full credit, or receive no credit. These guidelines will be distributed to the students at the beginning of the school year, handed out to the parents at Back-to-School Night.

Homework expectations increase each year through the Middle and Upper School grades. Students are asked to record all assignments in their assignment planners. The faculty develops homework schedules and the number of assignments for each evening is kept to a manageable level. To this end, a master homework and test calendar for each class is made maintained. Students and parents should subscribe to the Google Homework Calendar for their child's grade.

Fourth graders should expect to work between 30 and 45 minutes nightly. Fifth and sixth graders have approximately 1-1/2 hours of work at home. Seventh and eighth graders should expect to work a minimum of two hours nightly, and ninth graders, two to three hours nightly.

### **Homework policy for short-term absences**

When students are absent from school for a short time (i.e. due to illness), the following procedures should take place:

1. Parents need to contact the advisor for their child(ren) [arrangements should be in place prior to the day of illness]. When a child is absent, parents should call the main office to alert the school and to request that the advisor collect the child's books. The parent should then come by the child's homeroom and/or cubby at the end of the day to collect all materials.
2. If a classmate is asked to bring materials home for the absent student, parents should arrange to pick up books when it is convenient for the classmate and his/her family.
3. The absent student should check the grade's homework calendar, or call friends in his/her classes to get the day's assignments.
4. Worksheets and/or handouts given that day will be delivered by the subject area teacher to the homeroom teacher. These will be included with the books that are gathered.

### **Homework policy for extended absences**

Cases involving extended absences due to a longer illness or other personal crisis will be addressed on an individual basis by the teacher(s), an administrator, and the family. A case in which a student demonstrates recurrent problems completing homework across several subject areas may indicate a larger learning issue. In these situations the family will be asked to meet with the School Psychologist who may recommend educational testing so that the School may best serve the student's needs.

### **Absences and late work**

A student who misses school will be required to submit all work assigned or due during his/her absence within one week of his/her return to school. It is the student's responsibility to determine the scope of all assignments by consulting with a classmate. If extra work is required to catch the student up, the School will try to assist the family in finding a tutor, but the family will be responsible to pay the tutoring fee. Work completed late due to an absence (other than an illness or family milestone) will be subject to a grade

reduction determined by the teacher or department. It is possible that a student will not be allowed to take a quiz or test for credit when it is missed due to such an absence, resulting in a zero for the assignment.

### **Homework policy for vacations and religious holy days**

A maximum of a one night's homework assignment may be given over a school vacation and/or during a long weekend. Students may not be given subject assignments that require more than one night's attention during these vacations. No major project may be assigned for students to work on during a school vacation or to be due immediately following the break.

In the case of a religious holiday occurring on a school day, students observing that religious occasion are allowed the rest of the week and the weekend to catch up on work missed. Teachers will not require students observing a religious holiday to take a test or turn in a paper the day after the observance. Students should make arrangements with their teacher outside of class to discuss and clarify any deadlines for work due.

### **LUNCH, SNACK, AND RECESSES**

Students are encouraged to bring healthy snacks and lunches to school. Please strictly adhere to classroom guidelines concerning food allergies and other dietary restrictions our students may have. A letter from the Associate Head of School will be sent to the parents and students of the grade(s) in which this is the case.

Each student must have a lunch box or bag in which to bring lunch and a snack. This should be marked with the child's name. *School-wide, students may not bring caffeinated drinks, sodas, drinks in glass containers, or any sort of gum or candy to school.*

About once per month, class parents in most grades arrange a "Lunch Bunch" for the students. This is when lunch is provided and students do not need to bring lunch from home. There are also 8 "Pizza Fridays" over the course of the year when students do not need to bring their lunch to school if they have pre-ordered pizza.

Middle and Upper School students have a daily snack time from 9:45-10:00. This takes place in their homeroom class, and is a time to eat a snack from home and socialize with their classmates.

Students are not allowed in or on the ponds without adult permission, nor are they allowed in any non-designated area. Physical contact sports/games (i.e., tackle football, rugby, kill-the-carrier) are not permitted during recess/break.

### **OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS**

Overnight trips planned for grades 5-9 are an important part of the Middle and Upper School experience. Please note that students with medical complications or students diagnosed with life-threatening health issues may be required to have a parent accompany him/her on day and/or overnight field trips. School administrators, along with the school nurse, will evaluate individual student needs, based on diagnoses, the student's independent maintenance (self-care), travel distance, and emergency needs.

In May, grade 4 students may participate in an overnight trip, such as the Boston Museum of Science.

In the fall, grade 5 students head to Wakefield, Rhode Island for a weeklong scientific study of a specific ecosystem. This hands-on learning experience provides the foundation for the fifth-grade science program and helps the class become a cohesive unit early in the year.

Grade 6 students head off-campus in the fall to the Hulbert Outdoor Education School in Fairlee, Vermont. During their week away, they will be challenged by a 15-mile hike up one of Vermont's highest peaks, engineer their way through the rigorous ropes course, and enjoy of a multitude of cooperative game activities. Team-building exercises enhance group dynamics, which in turn, help get the year off to a solid start for this age group.

In the spring of grade 7, students head off on a weeklong trip to Washington D.C. The class spends a day in Baltimore on the way down to D.C., and a day on the battlefield at Gettysburg on the return trip. This

experience is coordinated by the arts and history departments and integrates learning across both these areas of study.

Grade 8 also heads off in the spring for a week to the Everglades National Park in Florida. The students study specific ecosystems that provide a hands-on experience tying in with their eighth grade science course.

Grade 9 begins its year with a class retreat during the first week of school. During this time, the class sets goals for the year and works on building teams and exhibiting leadership, skills that will serve them well as the most senior role models of the school. In the fall or spring, the class experiences a capstone trip, typically overseas to France and Spain. The trip is tied directly to the French and Spanish curricula.

Finally, as you probably have seen on most group trips, sporting events/ and other activities that involve risk, it is standard to require parents and children to sign a waiver/release/indemnification form as a condition of participation for all overnight trips.

### **PARTIES AND BIRTHDAYS**

Please refer to the Parties section of the general section of the *Handbook* for BCD's policy regarding birthday celebrations.

### **PHYSICAL INTIMACY**

Public displays of affection can be disconcerting and alienating to other members of a group, especially the School's younger students. Recurrent breaches of public decorum will be referred to the Associate Head of School and will result in disciplinary action.

### **SECONDARY SCHOOL GUIDANCE**

BCD is committed to helping parents make decisions on which secondary school path will be in the best interest of their children. Parents are encouraged to avoid focusing prematurely on the "next school" and should instead allow their children to grow and develop through the elementary, middle, and upper-school grades without this preoccupation. The Head of School will work closely with each student and family to map out a timetable for the process of secondary school investigation, to assist with discerning the best match between program and student, and to facilitate the application process. There will be no processing fee for the first three applications completed by BCD's December application deadline. However, a \$30 fee will be charged thereafter for each application processed.

As part of the secondary-school selection process, BCD arranges a Secondary School Admissions Fair in the spring of the eighth grade year to help answer families' questions and to introduce school programs and the application processes.

### **STUDENT COUNCIL**

The purpose of Student Council is to help make BCD a caring, cooperative learning community by:

- fostering an environment that is based on respect and responsibility
- being helpful to all BCD students, teachers, staff members and visitors
- promoting outreach projects at BCD and in the greater community
- listening to fellow students and representing the student body in matters that relate to student life
- enhancing school spirit
- running Middle and Upper School monthly morning meetings

The BCD Student Council is composed of students from the seventh, eighth, and ninth-grade advisories. A faculty member works directly with the Student Council to facilitate its meetings and the work that the students decide to do.

### **STUDY HALL EXPECTATIONS**

Study hall periods are incorporated into the fourth through ninth-grade grade schedules. When attending a study hall, a student is expected to work diligently on class assignments or to bring a book to read, and to

maintain a silent a silent and focused period. If a student needs to use a computer to complete a homework assignment during study hall, the supervising teacher must receive a note from the subject teacher. Additionally the student may be required to have the computer screen facing the proctor.

## **TESTING**

Berkshire Country Day School utilizes two standardized testing programs, both typically administered in independent schools. These are not "high-stakes testing," because results from these tests forms only one portion of a student's learning profile. More importantly, BCD uses data from the tests as important pieces of our program evaluation and curricular vision.

### **ERB CTP-5**

The Educational Records Bureau (ERB) Comprehensive Testing Program 5 (CTP-5) is a battery of achievement tests administered to students in grades 3-8 at the end of January (May). BCD sends the results of these tests to parents as soon as they have been received from ERB (usually in early summer). Parents are encouraged to contact the Associate Head of School with questions about or to review students' CTP-4 scores.

### **ERB WrAP**

Students in grades 4-8 will participate in the Educational Records Bureau (ERB) Writing Assessment Program (WrAP). The WrAP will be administered in April, and results from it will be sent to parents around the same time or along with those of the CTP-4. Parents are encouraged to contact the Associate Head of School with questions about or to review students' WrAP scores.

## **VISITORS**

Parents are welcome to visit on campus but must *check into the front office upon their arrival*. We strive to provide a comfortable yet serious learning environment for all of our students, and thus ask parents to refrain from roaming the campus and interrupting classes during the academic day.

Middle and Upper School faculty and students invite and welcome former BCD students to visit school during lunch/recess; however, hosting students for longer time periods creates an energy that may disrupt the learning process, particularly during an academic period.

<b>EXEMPLARY</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>UNACCEPTABLE</b>
<p>Consistently demonstrates full investment in class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is always organized and prepared for the class</li> <li>• Completes all related assignments with precision and excellence</li> <li>• Commendable participation in class discourse and team work</li> <li>• Asks questions to clarify understanding</li> <li>• Possesses a positive attitude even in the face of challenge</li> <li>• Always respect the rules for discussion, including not talking out or cross talking</li> </ul>	<p>Most often demonstrates investment in class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comes to class organized and prepared</li> <li>• Completes all related assignments</li> <li>• Participates in class discourse and team work</li> <li>• Frequently asking clarifying questions</li> <li>• Usually exhibits a positive attitude, even in the face of challenge</li> <li>• Respects the rules for discussion by not talking out and limiting cross talk.</li> </ul>	<p>Lacks full investment in the class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent in organization and preparedness for class</li> <li>• Completes some assignments</li> <li>• Participates inconsistently</li> <li>• Lacks consistency in a positive attitude in/for the class</li> <li>• Can disrupt the learning in class by talking out, cross talking or needing redirection from the teacher.</li> </ul>	<p>Lacks investment in the class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unorganized and unprepared for class</li> <li>• Does not complete all assignments</li> <li>• Does not actively participate in class activities or discussions</li> <li>• Lacks a positive attitude in/for the class</li> <li>• Disrupts the learning of others by talking out, cross talking and needing frequent redirection from the teacher.</li> </ul>