



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

# FAMILY HANDBOOK

School Year 2020 – 2021

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

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# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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## **Mission**

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

## **Vision**

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

## **Leadership Team**

Alexandra Buckmire, Head of School  
Kendra Lueken, Lower School Director  
Farah Assiraj, Upper School Director

Stacia Copeland, Special Educator  
Evelyn D. Lee, Director of Visual and Performing Arts  
Phil Littlehale, Chief Financial Officer

## **Board of Trustees**

Lupita Colon – Chair  
Brian Keith – Co-chair  
Kelly Williamson – Clerk  
Alexandra Buckmire, Head of School  
Fred Lowery  
Edwine Alphonse  
Shaumba Dibinga

# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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

### **Pledge To Me**

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

### **Renaissance Pledge**

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

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

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

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

- 1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.
- 2) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 – prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.
- 3) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, prohibits discrimination on account of age, including school age students.
- 4) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.
- 5) Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) – prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public schools, public accommodations and telecommunications.

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

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

***Complete Policy may be found on pages 43-47 of your Family Handbook.***

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## **Family Handbook**

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

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

### **School Hours**

Students Report Between: 7:15 am and 7:50 am

Students Dismiss: 3:10 pm

\*Students arriving after 7:50 am will be marked tardy

### **School Registration**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Registration**

A child's birth certificate or other proof of age and place of birth must be submitted when a child registers at the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School. In addition to birth certificate, documents acceptable for this purpose include passport (showing date of birth), or Alien Registration Card. To enter kindergarten 1, a child must be four years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>. To enter kindergarten

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2, a child must be five years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>. In addition to a birth certificate, an up-to-date record of immunizations must be provided at registration. No child will be allowed to attend school without the required record of immunizations. All children who have been found eligible for special education services in their prior schools must provide an accepted Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in order for the IEP to be implemented at the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School.

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

## **Student Records**

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

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

## **Transfer**

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

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

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

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

## **Change of Address**

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

## **Change of Name**

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

## **Programs**

### **After School Program**

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

## **Student Services**

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

CST is the Child Study Team. CST is a regular education student review process centered upon enhancing student's success within their educational setting. It is a venue to discuss social, emotional, academic and health needs of students. Attending members of CST meetings may include, but are not limited to: school social workers, school psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, regular education teachers, special education teachers, student support specialists, administrators and other educators. Students discussed (referred) in CST may be given additional classroom strategies and or supports, referred for school-based counseling or referred to outside agencies, recommended for special education evaluation(s) or "Section 504" evaluation(s) (explained below).

### **Counseling Services**

School based counseling services are available for BRCPS students. Services are provided by Renaissance employees as well as external on-site providers. Counseling requests are prioritized based on student need and capacity. If capacity has been reached a referral to an outside agency will be provided. If you are interested in your child receiving counseling services please contact Stacia Copeland, Director Unified Student Services.

### **Special Education**

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

### **Section 504**

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

1. Has mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities include activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working);
2. Has a record of such an impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such impairment.

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

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding Section 504 to Stacia Copeland, Director Unified Student Services.

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

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

All BRCPS employees are mandated reporters. In the event of suspected abuse or neglect, the Department of Children and Families may be contacted by the Head of School's designee.

## **Health Office**

### **School Nurse**

School health services are available daily to all students. There will be mandatory health screenings during the school year including vision, hearing, height, weight and scoliosis. Health services are provided for students who are genuinely ill. Students will not be allowed to visit the nurse's office unless there is a valid need for medical attention. Over-the-counter and prescription medications must be delivered by the parent/guardian to the nurse for administration in the School Health Office. Only a nurse licensed to practice nursing in the state of Massachusetts may administer any medication in school.

### **Medication**

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

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

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



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- Any side effects of which the staff should be aware
- The duration of the prescription

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

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

## **Logistics**

### **Transportation**

Transportation to and from school is provided by Boston Public Schools Transportation Office and is offered to all eligible students. Transportation to and from school is a privilege (not a right) and should be treated as such. It is critical that all parents reinforce the need for proper behavior on the school bus. School bus behavioral requirements are contained in the Bus Safety Policy of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School. Students who violate these rules and regulations may be suspended or excluded permanently from school transportation vehicles.

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

### **Parent Pick Up Policy**

Parent Pick-up begins at 3:05 PM.

The school does not provide coverage for your son or daughter post 3:45 PM; therefore **your child must be picked up by 3:45 PM.**

Procedures if students are not picked up by 3:45 PM

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

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

### **Visitor's**

#### **Visitor Guidelines**

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

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

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

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

## **Volunteers**

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

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

## **Food Services**

### **Food Service Program**

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

### **Breakfast**

BRCPS has universal breakfast which means breakfast is free to all students. Breakfast is only served until 7:50 am for grades 1-6. Kindergarten students eat breakfast in the classroom. Students who are tardy and arrive after 7:50 for school will not be able to have breakfast.

### **Lunch**

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

## **School Uniform and Supplies**

The Parents of Renaissance (POR), formerly Parent Advisory Board, the Board of Trustees, and the administration and staff of the BRCPS have voted to enforce a mandatory dress code policy.

Parents may purchase light blue polo shirts bearing the school logo from **J.B. Edwards and L&M Bargain Store Inc.** J. B. Edwards is located at 745 South Street, Roslindale, MA, and L&M Bargain Store Inc is located at 640 American Legion Highway Roslindale, MA. Parents may purchase other items, navy pants, skirts, and jumpers at a retailer of their choice.

**Parents also have the option to purchase a sweat suit directly from the school (pants and jacket) which must be worn with the light blue polo shirt with school logo beneath the jacket.**

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

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

- Boys may wear navy blue trousers with a belt and a light blue long or short-sleeved polo shirt, bearing the school logo, tucked in.
- Girls may wear navy blue slacks, skirts with white or navy blue tights, or jumpers (no shorter than two inches above the knee) and a light blue long or short-sleeved polo shirt bearing the school logo.
- Boys and Girls may also wear the school sweat suit with light blue polo shirt bearing the school logo available for purchase at the school.
- On days that students have movement class, boys and girls can also wear gym uniforms, which consist of navy blue cotton sweat pants and a navy blue sweatshirt
- Navy blue shorts, capris and skirts, no shorter than two inches above the knee, and light blue polo shirts with the school logo may be worn May 15 through September 30
- Navy button-front sweater or solid navy button-front sweatshirt with *no hood* may be worn if desired.
- Due to safety concerns, flip-flops are not to be worn anytime.

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

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

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

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

## **Movement Classes**

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

## **Hats and Outerwear**

Hats and outerwear may not be worn in school at anytime. Outerwear should be hung up or put in cubbies. **No hooded sweatshirts** may be worn in class at anytime during the school day.

## **Labeling Clothing**

All items of clothing such as backpacks, boots, raincoats, hats gloves, jackets, coats, sweaters, etc., should be labeled with the student's name. This avoids loss and confusion and helps students identify their own belongings. Lost articles are kept in the Lost and Found area for approximately 30 days.

## **Sports Equipment**

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

## **Bicycles**

Bicycles and scooters may not be brought to school.

## **Elevators**

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

## **Recess**

All K-6 students will have regularly scheduled recess each day for 15 minutes. Classroom teachers will give students many opportunities to move around in the classroom and will provide breaks as necessary for everyone during the day

## **Library Media Center**

The Library Media Center, located at the front of the building is a bright, colorful, and welcoming space for students, staff and our visitors. There is a comfortable seating area where our guest can just sit and relax, or have a meeting, when library classes are not in session. The Library Media Center is a comprehensive resource center that contains books, periodicals and computers. All of these materials help to enrich the education of children by improving their research skills and empowering them to become critical thinkers and discriminating users of information. Teachers are also able to use these resources to develop individualized instruction.

## **Overdue and Lost Books**

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

## **Electronics**

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

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

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

## **Parent Involvement**

### **Notices to Parents**

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

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

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

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

This elected representative group meets throughout the school year in order to assist in establishing the agenda for the Parents of Renaissance Meetings. Also, members of the Executive Committee provide a communication link between the larger Parents of Renaissance and the school. The purpose of the Parents of Renaissance Executive Committee is to serve in an advisory capacity to the Head of School.

### **Family Engagement Specialist**

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

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

## **Student Led Conferences**

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

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

## **Parent Involvement Opportunities**

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

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

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

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

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

- Read aloud with your child every night for at least 20 minutes.
- Talk to your child about school. Ask specific questions, such as, "What did you do in math class?" or, "What did you talk about in science class?"
- Establish and enforce an appropriate time to go to bed each night.
- Check homework for completion and neatness.
- Talk about your own positive learning experiences.

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- Share the importance of appropriate behavior in school and on the way to school.
- Provide both quiet time and a quiet space for a child to do their homework.
- Volunteer to become a Room Parent.

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

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

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

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

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

## **Field Trips**

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

## **Homework Policy**

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

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

## **Upper School:**

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

## **Promotion Policy**



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This policy was developed to complement the expectations and requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School.

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

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

## **Attendance**

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

## **Tardy Policy**

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

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

Three (3) tardies or three (3) early dismissals per trimester are equal to one unexcused absence for that trimester.

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

## **Absence Policy**

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

➤ Here are a few examples of excused absences:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Family Vacation**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Media**

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

## **Solicitation**

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

## **Confidentiality**

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

## **Acceptable Use Policy for Technology Resources**

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

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

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

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

## **RULES:**

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

- Using email or the Internet for non-academic reasons while at school
- Visiting inappropriate websites (i.e. music lyric sites, social networking, or chat rooms that do not contain information related to academics)
- Using personal email accounts such as “hotmail” or any instant messaging
- Displaying inappropriate material on a computer screen (especially backgrounds and screen savers)
- Playing music, CDs, DVDs, or portable music devices at school, unless they are being used for a class project
- Downloading music and/or videos
- Using the School Network for illegal activity including, but not limited to, violation of copyright or plagiarism
- Using the computer or other technology resources without supervision
- Placing software or external data on any computer, whether stand-alone or networked, without permission from a member of the Technology Department
- Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state law or regulation
- Submitting, publishing or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, racially offensive, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, or threatening materials or messages either public or private
- Knowingly placing a computer virus on a computer or the network
- Attempting to or harming equipment, materials or data
- Attempting to or sending anonymous messages of any kind
- Sharing of network passwords
- Wasting of limited resources such as disk space or printing capacity
- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to programs or equipment
- Exhibiting any other action that would in any way subject the user or the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School to any civil or criminal action
- Cell phone usage

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

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

- Students will have access to the technology resources for class assignments and research with their teacher's permission and/or supervision
- Users will be required to maintain password confidentiality by not sharing their password with others

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- Any technology resource user identified as a security risk or having violated Boston Renaissance Charter Public School's Acceptable Use Policy for Technology Resources may be denied access to the system

### 3. **Individual User Responsibilities**

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

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

### 4. **Vandalism Prohibited**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy BRCPS equipment or materials, data of another user of the BRCPS system, or any of the agencies or other networks to which BRCPS has access is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of BRCPS guidelines and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses.

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

### 5. **Forgery Prohibited**

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

### 6. **Network Etiquette**

System users are expected to observe the following network etiquette:

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

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

- Termination/Revocation of System User Account

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Parent/Family signature page (page 48) acknowledges that the parent has read the entire handbook and understands its contents including the Acceptable Use Policy for students.

## **SCHOOL BASED RULES**

### *Grades K1-Grade 2*

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

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

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Unacceptable behavior includes but is not limited to:

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

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

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

## Grades K1 and K2

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

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

## Grades 1 and 2

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

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

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

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

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

- Repeated disrespect to school staff
- Repeated disruption to classroom environment
- Hurting any other person or threatening to do so
- Coming to school with a dangerous object of no reasonable use
- Damaging or stealing private or school property, or threatening to do so
- Sexually harassing another person
- Using racial slurs, profanity, or obscene language or gestures through verbal, written, or electronic communication
- Being in an unauthorized area of the building
- Leaving school or class without permission
- Failure to serve an assigned detention
- Physical aggression including fighting
- Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28)
- Assault on a Director, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games. pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28 )
- Issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½ on page 30)



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

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

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

## **SCHOOL-BASED RULES**

*GRADES (3-6)*

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

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

Generally, unacceptable behavior includes but is not limited to:

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

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

Detention Offenses:

- Showing disrespect to school staff
- Repeated refusal to follow directions
- Repeated disruption of class
- Insulting others

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- Being out of class without a signed and dated pass
- Inappropriate language
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Disregard for School Dress Code
- Possession of electronics (e.g. cell phones, iPad, video games, etc.)
- Leaving Supervision

## Suspension Offenses:

- Physical fighting
- Consistent disrespect to school staff
- Consistent disruption to classroom environment
- Hurting another person or threatening to do so
- Bringing to school a dangerous object of no reasonable use
- Damaging or stealing private or school property, or threatening to do so
- Sexually harassing another person
- Using racial slurs, profanity, or obscene language or gestures through verbal, written, or electronic communication
- Being in an unauthorized area of the building
- Leaving school or class without permission
- Failure to serve an assigned detention
- Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 27 )
- Assault on a Director, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games. pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H on page 28)
- Issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½. (see full text of M.G.L. c.71 § 37H½ on page 28)
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## Expulsion Offense: (all grades)

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

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

## Detention

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

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

## **For Afterschool Detention only:**

Detention Room rules are as follows:

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

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

## **Discipline Process**

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

Step 1: Time out within the classroom, with optional classroom-based consequence.

Step 2: Time out in a neighboring classroom, with optional classroom-based consequence.

Step 3: Time out with Lead Teacher and parent notification by a staff member (**detention**).

Step 4: Student sent to Student Support Specialist and an incident report is written (**detention or suspension**).

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

# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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## LEGAL REFERENCES

### **Chapter 71: Section 37H. Policies relative to conduct of teachers or students; student handbooks**

Section 37H. The Superintendent/Charter School Leader of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Said policies shall further restrict operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, from idling such vehicles on school grounds, consistent with section 16B of chapter 90 and regulations adopted pursuant thereto and by the department. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the Director of every school within the district.

Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures ensuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as the procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the department of education for informational purposes only.

The school shall prepare and distribute to each student a student handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct of students. The school shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Director.

(b) Any student who assaults a School Director, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Director.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Director.

After said hearing, a School Director may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the School Director to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

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(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Head of School. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Head of School of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Head of School. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the Head of School of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the Head of School of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

## **Chapter 71: Section 37H½. Felony complaint or conviction of student; suspension; expulsion; right to appeal**

Section 37H½. Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the School Director or designee in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said School Director or designee if said School Director or designee determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Head of School.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Head of School. The student shall notify the Head of School in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Head of School shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Head of School shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the School Director or designee, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the School Director or designee of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such School Director or designee determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written

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notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Head of School.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Head of School. The student shall notify the Head of School, in writing, of his/her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Head of School shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Head of School shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the School Director or designee, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student

## **Chapter 71: Section 37H** $\frac{3}{4}$ Suspension or expulsion on grounds other than those set in 37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$

(1) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.

(2) Any School Director/designee or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(3) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the School Director, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the School Director, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The School Director, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meetings may take place without the parent or guardian only if the School, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a School Director's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(4) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the School Director, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The School

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Director or a designee shall notify the Head of School in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(5) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the Head of School. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the Head of School in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The Head of School or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the Head of School, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the Head of School, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(6) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

## **Discipline for Students with Disabilities**

### **Students identified as having special needs**

1. All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this Handbook. Chapter 71B of the Mass. General Laws, formerly known as Chapter 766, requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation TEAM to have special needs and whose individualized program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).
  - a. Students with Special Needs may be suspended for up to ten (10) consecutive days, and may also be suspended in excess of ten (10) cumulative days, as fully outlined under M.G.L.c. 71B, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Such suspensions may be carried out without any further or additional process.
  - b. Suspensions or exclusions in excess of ten (10) consecutive days or ten (10) cumulative days may also occur, provided that the conduct for which the student is being disciplined is not a manifestation of his/her disability, and the District provides educational services which will allow the student to access the general curriculum and to make progress toward his/her goals.

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## **c. School-Wide Education Service Plan for students on Short- or Long-term suspension**

(1) Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension, shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The school director shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

(2) Any student who is suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

(3) Each school has a process for developing school-wide education service plans for education services that the school district will make available to students who are suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days. Each plan is individualized to the needs of each student and is developed in collaboration with the Student Support department, special education department, school director and classroom teachers, as applicable. Students and their parents will be notified of the process for developing and arranging such services at the time of suspension. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension; Enrollment Reporting.

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

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

2. The Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) and M.G.L. c. 71B allow school personnel to move a student with disabilities to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, if that student is in possession of a dangerous weapon at school or a school function or on school property, is in possession or uses a controlled substance or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function or on school property, or inflicts serious bodily injury on a person, including him/herself. The appropriate interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP TEAM.



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3. The IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B also allow school personnel the option of asking a hearing officer or a court to move children with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days, if they are substantially likely to injure themselves or others in their current placement.
4. When a special needs student has been suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive or cumulative days in a school year, such that a substantial change in placement is occurring or will occur, the IEP TEAM will meet to conduct a manifestation determination. Relevant members of the TEAM meet for the manifestation determination, and they answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:

Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's IEP? And

Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the Parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

5. If the TEAM finds that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be disciplined according to the discipline policy in this handbook. The student will receive educational services during this period of suspension or exclusion. If the TEAM finds that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the school may still be able to implement an IAES (see # 2 and 3 above). If the IAES is not possible, then the student will remain in his/her current placement, and the TEAM will arrange for a functional behavioral assessment (if one has not been conducted on the student) and the development or modification of a behavior intervention plan.
6. The Director (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of offenses that warrant a suspension of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such notices.

## **Students identified as having a disability and provided with a Section 504 plan**

1. Students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in this handbook. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days, expelled or suspended for more than ten (10) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination review shall be conducted. The student's 504 team shall convene, and answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:

Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's 504 plan?

Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the

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Parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

When a student with a disability is reported to the police for an alleged crime, special education and disciplinary records may be furnished to the police.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Regulations at 34 CFR 300.535 state the following:

Nothing in this part prohibits an agency from reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities or prevents State law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of Federal and State law to crimes committed by a child with a disability.

An agency reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability must ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the child are transmitted for consideration by the appropriate authorities to whom the agency reports the crime. An agency reporting a crime under this section may transmit copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records only to the extent that the transmission is permitted by the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(6)).

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

If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:

- a. The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
- b. The parent had requested an evaluation; or
- c. District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.
3. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

## **Bus Transportation Discipline Policy**

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

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

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

1<sup>st</sup> offense will result in a **warning** and a phone call home to parents/guardians.

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

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

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

5<sup>th</sup> offense will result in the student being **permanently excluded from riding the morning and afternoon** bus for the remainder of the school year.

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

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

## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

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

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

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## **Definitions**

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

*Bullying* is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

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

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

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

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

## **Prohibition Against Bullying**

Bullying is prohibited:

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

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

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## **Reporting Bullying**

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

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

## **BRCPS Procedure**

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

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

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

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

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

**B.** Ongoing professional development. The goal of professional development is to establish a common

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

- (i) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- (ii) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- (v) *information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.*

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

Additional areas identified by the school for professional development include:

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

C. Written notice to staff and school community. The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School has posted the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan on our website: [www.brcps.org](http://www.brcps.org) under Family Resources.

## **Notification of Rights under FERPA** **Elementary and Secondary Schools**

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

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

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School Director [or appropriate school official] a

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written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

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

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School Director [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

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

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

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

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

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

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

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

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

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

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



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10. The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School will provide parents/guardians the following:

- An annual meeting to provide information about the Title 1 program.
- School performance reports.
- Parent/teacher conferences to include individual student education plans
- Child's assessment results.
- Opportunities for regular meetings related to the education of their children.
- Information on the right of parents to request information regarding the qualifications of their child's teachers.

If you would like to become involved in the planning, evaluation or implementation of the Title 1 program, please contact Monique Taylor at extension 2201.

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## SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

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

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

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

*We agree to:*

- ✓ Come to school prepared to teach every day.
- ✓ Show respect for all students and parents.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for Parents to participate in school activities
- ✓ Show appreciation for individual differences of students.
- ✓ Improve the performance of every child in the areas of vocabulary, phonemic awareness, listening, speaking, writing, and reading comprehension.
- ✓ Improve the mathematical performance in the areas of problem solving and math concepts.
- ✓ Provide frequent assessment and continuous feedback on how your child is progressing both academically and socially and provide the opportunity for parent/teacher conferences.
- ✓ Provide a safe and orderly school environment.
- ✓ Respond to parent phone calls within thirty-six hours of receipt.
- ✓ Communicate issues/concerns to parents as they arise and in a timely manner.
- ✓ Provide an environment that allows for positive communication between the teacher, parent, and student.
- ✓ Will discuss compact with students at morning meeting prior to teacher signing and sending home.

*I agree to:*

- ✓ Show respect for All Staff and students.
- ✓ Take an active role in my child's homework to ensure that it is completed daily and to provide study time in a quiet place.
- ✓ Check with my child daily about information that is sent home.
- ✓ Help my child to accept that there are consequences for negative behavior.
- ✓ Support school discipline code as outlined in the code of conduct
- ✓ Respond to teacher communication within twenty-four hours.
- ✓ See that my child is dressed daily in accordance with the school uniform policy. Agree to purchase uniform shirt(s) with the school logo.
- ✓ Read with my child and engage in mathematical activities on a nightly basis
- ✓ Send child to school on time and ready to learn for the full school day.
- ✓ Show an interest in my child's well-being by attending school functions, supporting school activities, and making every effort to attend Open House.
- ✓ Attend *both* parent teacher conferences each year.
- ✓ Attend *at least two* Parents of Renaissance meetings
- ✓ Monitor the completion of vacation and summer assignments.

*I agree to:*

- ✓ Come to school prepared ready to learn, with provided supplies and wearing the school uniform.
- ✓ Show respect for all staff members and students at BRCPS.
- ✓ Know that I can learn, and that I will learn.
- ✓ Ask for help when I don't understand.
- ✓ Listen to and follow directions.
- ✓ Allow the teachers/staff to help me work through my challenges.
- ✓ Share papers with my parents and return signed papers to my teacher.
- ✓ Complete and return homework on the date that it is due.
- ✓ Follow the student Code of Conduct.
- ✓ Accept responsibility for my actions.
- ✓ Pay attention in class and participate in class discussion.
- ✓ Read at home with my parents.
- ✓ Strive for perfect attendance.
- ✓ Complete and return vacation and summer assignments.

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

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

### **I. Introduction**

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religion, disability, marital status or age, are not tolerated.

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School prohibits harassment and discrimination, sexual or otherwise, of any of its students, as such conduct is contrary to the mission of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School and its commitment to equal opportunity in education.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on a characteristic protected by law, such as race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religion, disability, or age. It is prohibited by the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School, and violates the law. For purposes of this policy, “school” includes school – sponsored events, trips, sports events, similar events connected with school or employment. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination or harassment, or any retaliation against any individual who has cooperated with an investigation of a discrimination, harassment or retaliation complaint, is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School takes allegations of discrimination and harassment seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that harassing conduct which violates the law and this policy, has occurred, the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, which may include school-related discipline.

### **II. Definition of Discrimination and Harassment**

“Harassment” is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age. Discrimination and or harassment include, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group based upon the criteria listed above.

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- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of an individual or group described above because of one of the criteria listed above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group (as described above) to participate in or benefit from a school program or activity of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

Many forms of harassment have been recognized as violations of the civil rights laws (including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the ADA, Title VI, Title IX and state statutes like M.G.L. 151C) by federal courts, state courts, the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.

“Sexual harassment” is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment, academic standing, school-related opportunities, or as a basis for employment decisions.
- Such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s academic or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work or educational environment.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may be considered sexual harassment, the following are examples of conduct that violate the law and policy and which, if severe and pervasive, constitute sexual harassment. In each case, such a determination will depend upon the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not.
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments.
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or verbal references to sexual conduct, comments about an individual’s body, comments about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess.
- Discussions of one’s own sexual activities or inquiries into others’ sexual experiences.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons.

The definitions of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment are broad. In addition to the above examples, other unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, that has the effect of creating a school environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to either male or female students may constitute discrimination, harassment and/or sexual harassment.

### **III. Reporting Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment.**

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If any Boston Renaissance Charter Public School student believes, in good faith, that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment or any other form of harassment or discrimination described above, the individual has a right to file a complaint with the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School through the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources. This may be done orally or in writing.

Teachers or other staff members who observe incidents of harassment involving students shall report such incidents immediately to the student's Director. Administrators aware of harassment involving any employee shall report such incidents to the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources.

If you wish to file a complaint, you may also do so by contacting your immediate supervisor, your teacher, or your Director. Teachers who receive complaints of discrimination or harassment shall report such incidents immediately to the student's Director. Directors who receive complaints of discrimination or harassment shall report such incidents immediately to the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources.

Please note that while these procedures relate to the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School's policy of promoting an educational setting free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, as detailed further in this policy, these procedures are not designed nor intended to limit the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School's authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School deems unacceptable.

## **A. General Policies**

1. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any employee or any student for processing, in good faith, a complaint, either on an informal basis or formal basis, or for participating in any way in these complaint procedures.
2. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any employee or any student who, in good faith, has testified, assisted or participated in any manner in any investigations, proceeding, or hearing of a complaint or for otherwise participating in any way in these complaint procedures.
3. Whenever possible, a conference should be scheduled during a time that does not conflict with regularly scheduled work and/or school programs.
4. The Boston Renaissance Charter Public School will work with an individual who files a complaint of discrimination or harassment; including conducting an investigation and holding conferences, in order to fairly and expeditiously resolve the complaint.

## **B. Procedures**

### **1. Informal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Complaints:**

Before initiating the formal procedure, the student may wish, if possible, to resolve the complaint on an informal basis.

- a. The student can raise the issue with the his/her teacher or Director,

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The appropriate school administrators shall attempt, within his/her authority, to work with the individual to resolve the complaint fairly and expeditiously within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint.

Whichever option is chosen, attempts will be made to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the student who has made the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution, or if the student does not choose informal resolution, then the student can begin the formal complaint process.

## **2. Formal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Concerns:**

A student may file the complaint in writing to the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources no later than twenty (20) calendar days after the alleged discriminatory practice occurred in order for an expeditious investigation to be conducted, unless extenuating circumstances exist. However, all students should know that the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School will investigate any complaint no matter when it is filed. The student shall fill out a *Discriminatory Practice Review Form* that will state the name of the individual and the location of the school/department where the alleged discriminatory practice occurred, the basis for the complaint and the corrective action the student is seeking. An employee, at the request of the student, may put the complaint in writing for the student.

The Head of School or the Director of Human Resources will conduct the necessary investigation promptly after receiving the complaint. In the course of its investigation, the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources shall contact those individuals that have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. This process shall include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was filed and/or the Director or appropriate authority involved. Strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. For example, sometimes the employees or students that are involved in the complaint are not immediately available. The Head of School or the Director of Human Resources, however, will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within thirty (30) working days. When more than thirty (30) working days is required for the investigation, the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources shall inform the student who filed the complaint that the investigation is still ongoing.

After completing the formal investigation of the complaint, the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources shall make a decision on the complaint, and shall inform the complainant and the person against whom the complaint, of the results of the investigation. If the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources finds that there is reasonable cause for believing that a discriminatory or harassing practice has occurred, the Head of School or the Director of Human Resources will refer the matter to the Head of School of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School and/or his or her designee for appropriate action, up to and including discipline for either the employee or the student(s) who engaged in the harassing conduct.

If no satisfactory resolution can be reached through either the informal or formal resolution procedures detailed above the student or employee has the right to take the complaint to an appropriate state or federal agency. Moreover, it should be noted that using the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School's complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. For

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students, complaints may be taken to the Office for Civil Rights, John W. McCormack Building, Post Office and Court House, Boston, MA 02109-4557 or to the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

## Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)

Boston Office:  
One Ashburton Place  
Room 601  
Boston, MA 02108  
Phone: 617-994-6000  
TTY: 617-994-6196

Springfield Office  
436 Dwight Street  
Room 220  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Phone: 413-739-2145

United States Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
33 Arch Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110  
Phone 617-289-0111

# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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## FAMILY HANDBOOK TRANSLATION REQUEST

### *English*

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

### *Haitian French Creole*

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

### *Spanish*

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

### *Cape Verdean Creole*

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

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

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



# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

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## Family Handbook 2019-2020

### Parent/Family Signature Page

I have received a copy of the 2019-2020 Boston Renaissance Charter Public School Family Handbook (“the handbook”). I have read the handbook and understand its contents.

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

- ❖ I understand that BRCPS is a school of choice and I agree to adhere to all school policies.
- ❖ *A signed copy of this page is to be returned back to the Boston Renaissance Public Charter School within one week of receipt of this Family Handbook.*

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

### ❖ PARENTS' PERMISSION FOR PUBLICATION OF STUDENT WORK/PICTURES:

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

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

**Yes No** (circle one)

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

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

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