



Code of Conduct

2011-2012

Introduction

This code of conduct reflects the acceptance of this school to take responsibility for both the success of all students and the security of the school environment. Acting as a district, this code of conduct preserves due process rights for students and is designed to provide a safe and secure learning environment for both students and faculty.

Without standards of conduct, behavior boundaries for students are unclear and repercussions for violations may not be equitable or accepted by the community as a whole.

This Code of Conduct not only provides for a safe and orderly learning environment, it also promotes responsibility within each student through the demands of the school community.

Basic Standards of Behavior as Identified by Student Council

The following “commandments” have been put together and endorsed by the school’s student council. There can be no stronger statements made about proper behavior. When the students define what is acceptable, then the rules are not simply adult rules but community rules.

From the desk of student government ...

1. In order to function as a vibrant artistic community, student-artists will show respect towards their peers, the faculty and environment. Therefore, the student body will work peacefully and productively.
2. In order to help fulfill the mission of the Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, all student-artists will exhibit exemplary behavior in classrooms, have the respect to arrive on time, pay attention in class and complete all work as mature and responsible young adults.
3. During school hours, and while on school property, student-artists should not participate in any illegal activities out of respect for themselves, their fellow peers, faculty members and community.
4. Violence of any kind towards fellow student-artists and faculty will not be tolerated so as to keep the peaceful atmosphere intact.

The student government believes that only by following these guidelines will Beacon Charter High School for the Arts succeed in providing a safe, secure, and artistic community for all of its student-artists.

Compliance Committee

The Compliance Committee is a body that has been authorized by the school’s board to intervene in discipline matters, hold hearings and enter into behavior agreements with students and/or make recommendations to the school’s board.

The compliance Committee is made up of a broad range of stakeholders including teachers, students, school support professionals, administration, parents and board members.

The committee will deliberate on cases that have been brought to it through administrative

action. Students will be afforded an opportunity to have rights to be heard, have the process explained to them, and have an advocate attend with them, hear specific charges and be given a clear explanation of the consequences. Consequences can range from detention to community service to the committee's recommendation for exclusion from school for 45, 90 or 180 days.

At the conclusion of a compliance meeting, the student will be informed of the committee's decision and a behavior agreement will be entered into.

School Regulations

Our location on Main Street means that Beacon students have a responsibility to demonstrate good behavior. The school's reputation will be affected, either positively or negatively, by the actions and attitudes of the students.

Violations of any of the school regulations as stated below will result in disciplinary action as defined in this code of behavior.

Every faculty and staff member in the school has the authority and responsibility to enforce this code of conduct. Additionally, students may be asked to stay after school by any teacher for breaking either school or class rules. However, the primary responsibility for dealing with negative student behaviors will be Ms. Murphy, the Dean of Students.

Attendance and Tardiness Policy

Perfect attendance is a rare occurrence in public schools. Even under the best of intentions and circumstances, absence and tardiness sometimes happen. In all cases of absence and tardiness a note from the student's parent or guardian is required. Without a written note, the absence or tardiness is to be considered unexcused. Notes signed by the parent/guardian are due on the morning that the student returns to school. Students who forge notes from their parent/guardian will be suspended.

Students absent for more than five consecutive days need a doctor's note to excuse the absences. The note should be handed to the front office on the day of return; notes will not be accepted at a later time to lower the number of days absent. **Teachers are not obligated to provide work for students who are unexcused from class.**

Daily attendance is taken in the first block of the day; a student arriving late to their first block class will be considered late to school. Students who are present in school but do not report to

class will be subject to disciplinary referral. When a student enters the school grounds or a school event, all school rules apply.

Any student arriving after 10:30 a.m. will be considered absent for that school day. Students who arrive late to school on a day there is a school-associated event (dance, field trip, play, etc.) will not be permitted to attend.

Only five (5) unexcused tardies will be allowed per quarter. Reasons such as oversleeping, missing the bus or missing a ride are not valid excuses for being late. These will count towards the 5 unexcused tardies even with a parent/guardian note.

Doctor, dental and court appointments are considered excused tardies if an official appointment card or letter is given to the main office upon arrival. Parent/Guardian notes are not accepted in these situations. The following consequences will occur for every tardy over the 5th one:

6th tardy – one-hour detention

7th tardy – two-hour detention

8th tardy – in school suspension – removal from after school activities

9th tardy – referral to compliance committee for further action

With extreme cases of tardiness and absenteeism, excused or unexcused, the administration reserves the right to forward students directly to compliance committee for disciplinary action.

Early dismissal – students will not be dismissed early unless a signed note from a parent or guardian has been given to the front office by 8 A.M. Phone calls will not be accepted unless it is an emergency.

Basic Rules to Protect our Collective Quality of Life (Category 1)

1. Respect

All students are expected to treat every individual in the building, including faculty, staff and fellow students with respect. We all share a learning community and the opinions of all members of our community are valued. Behaviors that detract from the learning community harm everyone. Racially or sexually offensive language affects our community negatively. Every student will be held accountable for his or her unruly and disorderly conduct. Respect of privacy and property is expected. The school's anti-bullying rules are specifically designed to prevent disrespect between Beacon School community members.

2. Dress Code

The dress code at Beacon attempts to balance the rights of expression of the individual with the legal requirement that the school provide a safe and orderly educational environment for all students. Clothing that promotes or portrays violence, offensive language, drugs or alcohol is not allowed. Clothing, for both males and females, that is revealing is not allowed. ***Tank tops, muscle shirts, sleeveless shirts, halter tops, or shirts that expose the midriff will not be allowed. Sleepwear, pajama bottoms or slippers will not be worn in school.*** With the exception of class requirements (in a dramatic production or in the kitchen) hats and hoods cannot be worn inside the school or school sponsored events off campus. Outdoor coats should not be worn inside the building. Detention/suspension can be assigned for repeated violation of the dress code.

3. Textbooks

All Beacon textbooks are to be returned before or upon completion of the final exam.

NOTE: If textbooks are NOT returned, students will be ineligible to take their final exam and/or receive credit for their course work. Students will pay for all lost/missing books.

4. Agendas

All students are issued an agenda at the start of the school year. Students are expected to have the agenda with them at all times and use it to keep track of homework and other school assignments. The school also uses the agenda as a hall pass. Students without their own agenda will not be permitted to leave the classroom unless an administrator is with them.

Random agenda checks will be conducted throughout the year to check for compliance with this policy. Students without an agenda may be assigned detention or suspension. Agenda use will also be part of a student's participation grade in class. Students who lose agendas may purchase a new one at the Dean of Students' Office.

5. Phones

No student is permitted to use the telephones in the Main Office. In case of emergency, students should obtain a pass to see a non-teaching staff member to make the necessary call. Cell phone use, including texting, during school time is prohibited, especially for contacting parents or guardians regarding early dismissal.

6. Food/Drink

Students are prohibited from bringing food/drinks out of the cafeteria. The only exception is water; all other food/drinks are to be consumed in the cafeteria only.

7. Electronic Devices

All electronic devices, cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, etc. are not to be used in school. Cell phones and MP3 players have proven to be a nuisance in the classroom. They can be stolen, cause interruptions to learning, and create tension between adults and students.

In emergency situations, parents should call the school rather than their child. When a parent calls the cell phone of their son or daughter then that parent is interrupting the entire class.

If a staff member or faculty member asks a student to surrender the electronic device then the student must do so. Failure to comply with the request for an electronic device will result in suspension. Confiscated electronic devices will be returned only after the issue has been resolved. If a student brings an electronic device to school, Beacon takes no responsibility, financial or otherwise, for a lost, confiscated, damaged or stolen device.

8. Smoking

Beacon is a smoke-free campus and students are not allowed to smoke within 1,000 feet of the school building. The three major reasons for this policy are:

1. smoking is bad for your health and has proven to be fatal;
2. RI State law requires that schools be smoke-free; and
3. smokers need to find smoking spots and spread litter and this adversely affects our many valued neighbors.

Violation of this policy may result in suspension, fines, or mandatory smoking cessation classes.

9. Vandalism / Defacement of Property

Students must respect our school and neighborhood. Vandalism/defacement of any school property will not be tolerated. Actions such as writing in school textbooks, writing on desks or walls, carving into woodwork, desks, tables, or walls, breaking/damaging walls or school furniture, and spray-painting (graffiti) are actions of vandalism/ defacement. Anyone caught vandalizing school or local property will be disciplined and required to pay for damages or make restitution. The police will be called if a neighbor's property is affected.

10. Plagiarism

Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who are caught plagiarizing or cheating will receive a zero for the assignment, and a one-day suspension. No make-up assignments will be given to recover the zero. If the student plagiarizes or cheats again, the student will fail the course automatically.

11. Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The use of the Internet has been provided to teachers and students as an educational tool and should be used as such. The use of the internet for illegal, commercial, or unethical actions is strictly prohibited. All illegal activities such as transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulations are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to; copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.

Beacon students will be utilizing digication.com to create an online portfolio for graduation requirements and are reminded that this is not a Beacon social networking page. What you place on this page is open for public viewing and represents not just yourself but Beacon as well.

Bullying can and does happen electronically and we refer students to the Bullying Prohibition and Prevention Policy on page 10 for further definition and actions that can be taken by the school for such acts.

Rules against Injury to Others (Category 2)

1. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is against the law and will not be tolerated. A student will not use words, pictures, objects, gestures, or other actions relating to sexual activity or a person's gender as defined by the law that violates the rights of any person. Sexual harassment will be reported immediately to the Principal of the school.

2. Theft/Possession of Stolen Property

A student will not, without permission of the owner or custodian of the property, take property nor have in his/her possession any property that does not belong to him/her.

3. Bullying

Bullying is clearly a violation of RI State law. Please see the Bullying Prohibition and Prevention Policy on page 10 of this document.

4. Creation of an Unsafe Environment

Students who pull fire alarms, set off fire extinguishers, smoke inside of the school building, incite others to unruly behavior, misbehave on busses, leave school grounds without permission and engage in other destabilizing behaviors create an unsafe environment and are subject to disciplinary action.

Major Offense (Category 3)

The school has ZERO tolerance regarding the possession of weapons, fireworks, alcohol and/or drugs, and the use violence. Students who commit any of these student Category 3 offenses will be referred to the Compliance Committee and/or the Board of Trustees.

1. Weapons

Any student found to be in possession of a weapon will be suspended and referred to the Compliance Committee for a hearing, which may result in exit from our school for up to 180 days or the duration of the school year in accordance with the Rhode Island State Law.

2. Alcohol and Drugs

Alcohol and Drug use is strictly prohibited. A student will not possess, use, offer to buy or sell controlled substances, dangerous drugs, prescription drugs, counterfeit drugs, intoxicating substances or alcohol. Any student who possesses drugs or alcohol will be automatically suspended and referred to the Compliance Committee. Students required to take prescription drugs during school hours must present a copy of the prescription showing required times and dosages to the school nurse.

3. Physical Violence

Any student who assaults another student or staff member will be automatically suspended and referred to the Compliance Committee.

INTERVENTIONS

Academic and Behavioral Process

All academic violations and behavioral issues will be handled with the following process:

STEP 1: Teacher intervention(s). It is expected, as part of basic teaching responsibilities, that individual teachers will intervene first on academic issues and low-level behavioral infractions that violate their own classroom policies.

STEP 2: If offense is very serious or teacher believes additional intervention is necessary, a written referral with recommendations will be sent to Dean of Students. The Dean will respond to the referral within 24 hours.

STEP 3: If student behavior continues, the Dean of Students or Principal will intervene with one of the appropriate actions: detention, in-school suspension, parent conference, out-of-school

suspension or a Compliance Committee Meeting.

If a student is sent to in-school suspension, all student activities will be conducted within the in-school suspension room until 2:30 PM. The teacher is responsible for supplying work to the student or the Dean of Students at the time of dismissal from class. The student is responsible for doing their classwork/schoolwork while in the in-school suspension room.

Parents of students with special needs should refer to their procedural safeguards handout for more information on interventions and discipline.

Outline of Due Process Rights for Students and their Parents and/or Guardians

In cases of suspension from school and possible exclusion from school, the process is:

1. The school gives notice in writing to the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) describing the problem, the length of suspension and instructions to appear at the date and time of a reinstatement hearing/appointment.
2. At this hearing/appointment the student and parent(s) and/or guardian(s) have the right to be heard.
3. Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) may bring an advocate with them for support.
4. If the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) disagree with the decision of the Dean of Students, Principal or Compliance Committee, a letter of appeal must be written to the chair of the Board's Discipline Committee. The board's committee will meet within the week and hold a separate hearing where the due process rights outlined above will continue to be in force.
5. The Board **may** instruct the student and their parents to visit and apply to the Exeter Job Corps Academy.
6. Failure to visit and apply within 15 days would signal to the Beacon School that this student and their family no longer desire to be part of the Beacon School and they would have therefore withdrawn voluntarily from Beacon School and voluntarily returned to their home district.

Bullying Prohibition and Prevention

The State of Rhode Island and the Dept. of Education have taken a strong stand against bullying in our schools. Beacon Charter High School for the Arts strongly supports their policies and is working to eliminate bullying and harassment in all forms within our school in order to provide a safe and secure school climate so that all students may learn.

As part of the Anti-Bullying Education Program at Beacon Charter High School for the Arts it is important that all members of our community are aware of school policies including what bullying looks like. All students and their parents/guardians should read the policies below.

Beacon Charter High School for the Arts' Statement of Non-Discrimination

No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity available in school on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, creed, political belief, age, national origin, linguistic and language differences, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, height, weight, marital or familial status, or disability.

Bullying Prohibition and Prevention Policy

Bullying is a form of harassment. For the purposes of this policy, bullying is defined as:

“The repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse, or through attacks on the property of another. It may include, but not be limited to actions such as verbal taunts, name-calling, and put downs, including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put downs, and extortion of money or possessions.”

Such conduct is disruptive of the educational process and therefore, bullying is unacceptable behavior at Beacon Charter High School for the Arts and is prohibited.

Students who engage in any act of bullying while at school, at any school function, in connection to or with any school sponsored activity or event, or while in route to or from school are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion. Law enforcement officials shall be notified of bullying incidents, as required by law.

There are many ways to bully someone. A bully wants to hurt the other person (it's not an accident). Bullying is UNFAIR.

There are four main kinds of bullying. Here are some examples:

- 1) **Physical bullying** when someone hits, shoves, kicks, spits or beats up on others, including damaging or stealing another student's property.

2) **Verbal bullying** name-calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, using comments of a sexual nature, humiliating or threatening someone, making people do things they don't want to do.

3) **Social bullying** excluding others from the group, spreading gossip or rumors about others, making others look foolish, making sure others do not spend time with a certain person.

4) **Electronic bullying** using computer, e-mail, instant messaging, and phone or cellular phone text messages to: threaten or hurt someone's feelings, single out, embarrass or make someone look bad, spread rumors or reveal secrets about someone.

Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct and Anti-Bullying Pledge

As parents/guardians, we agree to join together with the Beacon Charter High School for the Arts community to uphold its Statement of Non-Discrimination and the State of Rhode Island's safe schools legislation in order to stamp out bullying at our school. In addition, we agree to:

- keep ourselves and our children informed and aware of school bullying policies and behaviors that are considered bullying and harassment;
- work in partnership with Beacon Charter High School for the Arts to encourage positive behavior, valuing differences and promoting sensitivity to others;
- discuss regularly with our children their feelings about schoolwork, friendships and relationships;
- inform teachers of changes in our children's behavior or circumstances at home that may change a child's behavior at school; and
- alert Beacon Charter High School for the Arts staff if any bullying has occurred.

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Student Code of Conduct and Anti-Bullying Pledge

I agree to join together with the Beacon Charter High School for the Arts community to uphold its Statement of Non-Discrimination and the State of Rhode Island's safe schools legislation in order to stamp out bullying at our school. In addition, I agree to:

- value student differences and treat others with respect.
- not become involved in bullying incidents or be a bully.
- be aware of Beacon Charter High School for the Arts policies and support system with regard to bullying.
- report honestly and immediately all incidents of bullying to a faculty member.

- be alert in places around the school where there is less adult supervision such as bathrooms, hallways, and stairwells;
- support students who have been or are subjected to bullying;
- talk to teachers and parents about concerns and issues regarding bullying;
- work with other students and faculty to help the school deal with bullying effectively;
- encourage teachers to discuss bullying in the classroom; and
- provide a good role model for younger students and support them if bullying occurs.

I also acknowledge that whether I am being a bully or see someone being bullied, I have a responsibility to do something.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____