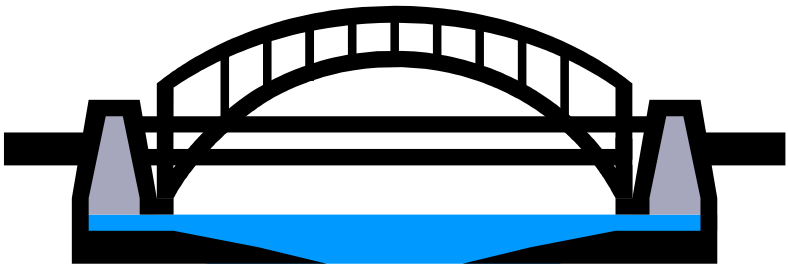


BRIDGES

Student/Parent Handbook



REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION #11

SAFE SCHOOLS ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

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The Youth Services Vision

The goal of Youth Services is **to empower students through relationships and opportunities.**

Program Goal #1: Attendance

Students will achieve and/or maintain acceptable (90%) school attendance. Good attendance provides a necessary foundation for achieving success in school and the workplace.

Program Goal #2: Attitude

100% of Bridges/Beacons students will participate in character education class and self-assess on the six pillars of character. 100% of AIM students will receive character education mentoring.

Managing your emotions and using them to respond appropriately to stimuli are essential to success in school and the workplace.

Program Goal #3: Academics

90% of students will move ahead a grade level or recover enough credits to be on track for high school graduation.

Poor academic performance linked to retention or falling behind in credits is the single strongest school-related predictor of dropping out.

Program Goal #4: College and Career Transitional Plan

90% of students will participate in the creation of their post secondary transition plan.

Effective transitions increase the success rate for students in a new learning environment. Leaving high school is the beginning of adult life for students. Transition planning provides an opportunity for the student to take a leadership role in setting goals and direction for their future.

The Bridges Character Education course

is designed to examine the following pillars:

TRUSTWORTHINESS

- Keep promises & commitments, refrain from spreading rumors, tell the truth at all times.

RESPECT

- Maintain a positive attitude, refrain from use of profanity & inappropriate/hurtful comments, and refrain from the use of violence.

RESPONSIBILITY

- Always do our personal best, demonstrate self-control & appropriate behavior, and complete all assigned work on time.

FAIRNESS

- Refrain from judging others unfairly, support and encourage your classmates, and live by the rules.

CARING

- Show compassion & kindness, treat others the way we would like to be treated.

CITIZENSHIP

- Follow all rules, respect the authority of all staff members show school pride by taking care of our school property, and appropriate dress.

ATTENDANCE

Students who miss more than 10% of the school semester for any reason may lose placement in the BRIDGES/BEACONS program.

Students are expected to be in school, on time, for every scheduled school day and to remain for the entirety of the scheduled day.

Parents are expected to follow the following guidelines when a student **must** be absent.

1. A parent should call the school before 8:30 AM
2. Absences other than illnesses must be arranged and approved in advance.
3. Students must take responsibility to obtain make-up work.
4. A doctor or court excuse may be requested for extended or repeated absences.

CURRENT PRACTICES

Current practices and procedures are reflected in this handbook. Though students are expected to follow all school rules, Bridges administrator and staff respects the uniqueness of our students. Consequences for non-compliance will be applied with fairness; that is doing the right thing for the individual affording specific differences and needs. Bridges administrator and staff may make additional rules as deemed necessary.

Academic instruction is designed to align with the state standards and requirements of the home school. In addition to the core content areas, students are **required to participate in learn and serve, physical education, and character education which will include writing assignments.**

Student records will be maintained by the home school district. Parents have the right to inspect and copy records.

School day is scheduled from 8:15 to 2:30. Students providing their own transportation are expected in the building from 8:15 to 2:30. Bus riders are subject to bus schedules of home districts.

Free school lunches and breakfasts are ordered and eaten at the Bridges/Beacons site. Students may bring their lunches from home.

Medication Policy: All medication, prescribed or over-the-counter **must** be registered with the Bridges/Beacons staff. Any prescribed medication must have a signed physician's form. Over-the-counter medicine must have a signed note from the parent/guardian.

Emergency School Closings: When local districts close/dismiss early because of inclement weather, Bridges/Beacons students will be excused or dismissed according to the home districts transportation schedules.

Field Trips: Field trips may be taken as part of the educational program. Students must have a signed permission slip from a parent or guardian. Charges may be levied for transportation and/or food costs.

Nondiscrimination. Bridges shall treat all persons fairly. There will be continuous examination of all parts of the curriculum by the administrator and staff to ensure that:

- Respect is being shown for all individuals regardless of economic status, intellectual ability, race, creed, color, religion, sex or age
- Respect for cultural differences
- Respect for the right of others to seek and maintain their own identities
- Respect for economic, political, and social rights of others.

CHARACTER BASED RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOR

Students at Bridges have chosen the alternative educational opportunity: therefore, it is **expected** that students choose to be successful and make decisions that will keep them in good standing with the program.

CLASSROOM MANAGED RESPONSE

Bridges/Beacons students are expected to behave in ways that promote their own educational achievement, contribute to the positive educational climate of the classroom, and do not disturb or disrupt the learning of other students. Corrective responses may be utilized for inappropriate behavior that is managed by the teacher in the classroom and usually does not warrant a discipline referral.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND CLASSROOM RESPONSE

Additional corrective responses may be utilized for inappropriate behavior that is managed by the teacher, with possible assistance from an administrator. Additional responses are appropriate when responses and supports have been put in place to address a behavior, but the behavior continues to negatively impact the learning of the student and others and/or the safety of students or self.

PERSONALIZED CORRECTIVE RESPONSE

Personalized corrective responses may be utilized for discipline incidents that significantly interfere with others' safety and learning, are of a threatening or harmful nature and/or are legal violations that warrant administrative involvement. Committing one of these infractions may result in immediate removal from the program as determined by the Bridges administrator.

SERIOUS VIOLATIONS

Corrective responses may be utilized for violations that seriously affect the learning environment or the safety of the student and/or others in the school and/or are legal violations. Responses at this level could include immediate removal from the program and/or referral to law enforcement.

Bridges staff and administration reserve the right to determine behavioral responses. Termination of Bridges alternative education services may be recommended when a student's behavior significantly deteriorates.

Examples of behaviors that may warrant corrective responses. (not an inclusive list)

TYPES OF VIOLATIONS	LEVELS OF RESPONSE	
	Classroom Managed Response	Administrative Managed Response
Inappropriate Language	●	
Tardiness	●	
Unauthorized Leaving of Building	●	●
Student Dress Code	●	
Academic Dishonesty	●	
Improper Use of Technology	●	●
Disrespectful Behavior	●	●
Possession/Misuse of Personal Property (i.e. cell phone)	●	●
Failure to Comply	●	
Disruptive Behavior	●	●
Intimidation/Threats/Bullying	●	●
Injury to Others/Aggression	●	●
Transportation/Bus Misconduct	●	●
Prohibited Substances	●	●
Weapons		●
Theft/Stolen Property	●	●
Repeated Rule Violations		●
Trespassing		●
Possession or Use of Fireworks and/or Ammunition		●
Arson		●
Threat of Illegal Conduct		●

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS AND SCHOOL SAFETY

Safety of BRIDGES/BEACONS students and staff is our top priority. Any violation of public law regarding drugs, alcohol or violence will be reported to the proper authorities. Severe consequences for violations will be enforced by BRIDGES staff in addition to any ordered by public law.

Anything that students bring to the Bridges/Beacons learning center which interferes with the functions of school is prohibited and may subject the students to the terms of the Behavioral Intervention Plan.

Trading or selling personal possessions is not allowed at Bridges.

The following items will not be allowed at Bridges/Beacons:

- ⊗ Any object (including look-a-likes) that can be used as a weapon
- ⊗ Personal electronic items
- ⊗ Tobacco products, lighters, matches
- ⊗ Amounts in excess of \$10 are considered excessive. Bridges will not be held accountable for lost or stolen cash.

All students will be subject to daily searches by metal detectors.

Students must also show all personal effects in their possession (i.e. coat, purse, book bag) for inspection.

If the metal detector is activated, student will remove metal items and be rescanned. If item cannot be removed, the operator shall visually check the person's explanation of the activation (for example jewelry, belt buckle) or may lightly touch, but not grab, the article causing the activation.

Any student found to possess a dangerous weapon shall be arrested. Discovered contraband may be confiscated and disciplinary action taken.

Students who refuse metal detector search will not be permitted to enter classrooms.

The best interest of our students always comes first!

School Violence Tipline

The School Violence Tipline provides a means for students to anonymously report threats of violence and weapons violations on school grounds. If you think someone is planning a violent attack at your school, please call the School Violence Tipline at **1-800-477-0024**

POLICY: Rights of Homeless Students

Bridges/Beacons shall provide an educational environment that treats all students with dignity and respect. Every homeless student shall have equal access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are not homeless. This commitment to the educational rights of homeless children, youth and youth not living with a parent or guardian, applies to all services, programs and activities provided or made available.

POLICY: Personal Appearance

Students dress should reflect pride in themselves and their school. Inappropriate dress will be disciplined according to the Behavioral

Intervention Plan. *Staff members have the final determination regarding the appropriateness of student dress.*

POLICY: Attendance

According to Illinois law, whoever has custody or control of a child who is enrolled in any of grades 1 through 12 shall cause such child to attend school the entire time it is in session during the regular school term (105 ILCS 5/26-2). For purposes of this policy, “parent” is defined as the parent, legal guardian, or other person having legal custody of the student.

Procedures – Any time a student is absent from any part of the school day, the student’s parent must notify the school by 8:30 a.m. If such notification is not received, the absence may be considered truancy. Such notification must include the following: the name of the parent, legal guardian, or other person having legal custody of the student, the student’s name, date(s) and time absent, and, **valid cause** of the absence.

Valid cause includes the following:

1. illness,
2. observance of a religious holiday,
3. death in the immediate family,
4. family emergency, or
5. other circumstances approved by the administration (105 ILCS 5/26-2a).

POLICY: Student Computer

It is the policy of Bridges/Beacons to mandate and expect that students will use the Internet in a responsible manner. Accordingly, Bridges/Beacons has established a policy and procedures for the use of the Internet along with rules governing the behavior of students who access the Internet. *Students who do not comply with the standards of behavior outlined in the student conduct and discipline plan or with the Internet rules below may lose their privilege to use the Internet and/or be subject to other disciplinary action.*

1. Students are only allowed to use their Bridges school login and must always be on the Bridges network.
2. Any attempt to bypass the Bridges internet firewall and filter will result in loss of computer privilege.
3. Students may not bring or use files from home unless instructed to do so by their teacher.
4. Bridges/Beacons technology is to be used only for instructional purposes. Students are not to log in to chat rooms, e-mail, social

media or other websites not directly associated to an assignment issued by a classroom teacher.

POLICY: DRUGS/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO

Substance Abuse

Bridges/Beacons is a tobacco, alcohol, and drug free program. Drugs are defined as any mind altering substance. Students found in possession of tobacco, alcohol (or look-alikes), drugs (or look-alikes) will be subject to disciplinary action, and the contraband will be confiscated. Students found guilty of selling or dispensing drugs may be subject to dismissal from the program.

Substance abuse means the consumption or use of any substance for purposes other than for the treatment of sickness or injury as prescribed or administered by a person duly authorized by law to treat sick and injured human beings. When Bridges personnel have reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, parents will be called to remove the student from the program. The Bridges administrator may request that a student have a drug test, at parent expense, and that the results be turned over to the school before the student will be readmitted. Depending on the results of the test, Bridges may require that a student successfully participate in and complete a substance abuse program as a condition of remaining in the program: proof of participation and completion will be required through the use of a “release of information” form.

POLICY: Harassment/Bullying

Bullying – in any form – will not be tolerated at Bridges or Beacons. It disrupts the learning environment and adversely affects the quality of a student’s education. It harms the victim, the students exposed to it, and in many cases, the actual bully.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal/physical conduct of sexual nature. Sexual harassment is a violation of federal law.

Bullying is defined as when a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons. Bullying may be a violation of the law.

Cyber bullying is defined as the use of information and communication technologies (such as e-mail, cell phone, instant messaging, and personal Web sites) to support deliberate, hostile behavior intended to frighten or harm others.

Bridges and Beacons have adopted the following policy to address bullying actions of our students which occur at school or off campus.

1. Any student who uses a school-provided or personal communication device (a) with the intent to intimidate, harass, or coerce another person, or (b) to use vulgar, obscene, profane, lewd, or lascivious language to communicate such harassment, or (c) to threaten an illegal or immoral act, shall be subject to school disciplinary procedures.
2. In any instance in which cyber bullying, bullying, or harassment creates a climate of fear and/or causes a substantial disruption of the work of the school or impinges on the right of other students, the person committing the act shall be subject to school disciplinary proceedings.
3. Students and staff are required to report to site principal any incidents of cyber bullying, bullying, or harassment about which they are aware. Reports must be put into writing but may be made anonymously. The principal will investigate all reports, using any electronic communications records currently kept by Bridges/Beacons.
4. If harassment/bullying is significant or persistent:
 - The administrator meets with the offender asking for written or verbal response
 - The administrator and/or teacher will notify parents of both sender & receiver
 - The administrator will review all information and determine consequences

Possible consequences of harassment/bullying incidents are: verbal warning, written warning, out of school suspension, or dropped from the program. The sender's past record concerning harassment/bullying may be used in decisions regarding consequences.

Retaliation: If the student accused of harassment/bullying physically retaliates, there will be additional and more severe consequences.

Time Limits: Harassment/bullying complaints should be made immediately. A time limit of two weeks is ample time to report an incident.

POLICY: Student Transportation

Responsibility of the transferring district unless alternative arrangements are mutually agreed upon by the district, parents/guardians, and the ROE program administrator. The ROE program administrator may arrange for cooperation between school districts for providing transportation.

Student drivers are not permitted unless the district, parent/guardian, and ROE administrator have agreed to these terms in writing. Students will forfeit vehicle access during the school day.

BRIDGES/BEACONS STUDENT AGREEMENT

As a BRIDGES/BEACONS student, I agree to the following guidelines:

- I will strive for 90% attendance. If I must be absent, I will have my parents contact the teacher before the beginning of class time.
- I will dress to school standards.
- I will demonstrate a positive attitude by behaving according to the school principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.
- I will strive for academic progress and complete work as assigned.
- I will participate fully in all activities including learn and serve projects, physical education, and character education.

I understand that if I violate any of these guidelines, I will be disciplined using Character Based Responses to Behavior. I further understand that my parents, my home district, and any other special agencies that I deal with can be notified of any inappropriate behavior on my part.

I agree to the use of a metal detector to search my person and personal belongings.