



730 7th Street  
Charleston, IL 61920

office 217-348-0151  
fax 217-348-0171  
[roe11.org](http://roe11.org)

**Kyle Thompson, PhD**  
Regional Superintendent  
[kthompson@roe11.org](mailto:kthompson@roe11.org)

**Jon Julius, PhD**  
Asst. Regional Superintendent  
[jjulius@roe11.org](mailto:jjulius@roe11.org)

## **About Our Program**

**BRIDGES** is a Regional Safe School program serving students in grades 6-12 who are suspended, expulsion eligible and/or expelled from the general education setting. "The Safe Schools Act" is an Illinois law that created a community resource to provide an alternative education option for students in grades 6-12 who have been suspended several times or are on the verge of being expelled because of gross misconduct. Provided with a new setting, students can learn coping strategies to foster academic and emotional maturity. Funding is provided by the Illinois State Board of Education through the RSSP and ADA grants.

Within the Bridges Regional Safe School program, an optional education program exists to serve students struggling with attendance problems. The Illinois School Code authorizes the establishment of Alternative Education programs that serve students with attendance problems. The Bridges program offers an educational option for truant and chronic truant students who wish to catch up to grade level or retrieve credits missed because of poor school attendance. Truant students are eligible to enter the Bridges program up to their 17th birthday. Funding is provided by the Illinois State Board of Education through TAOEP and ADA grants.

The Regional Office of Education #11 operates Bridges locations in Lerna, Paris, and Shelbyville. The goal of the Bridges program is to maintain a student to staff ratio of 12 students to one classroom teacher in our academic classrooms, allowing for more academic support for students. The maximum capacity for enrollment at Lerna Bridges is 48 students, Paris Bridges is 24 students, and Shelbyville Bridges is 24 students.

**Curriculum:** Academic instruction is designed to align with state standards and requirements of the home school district. Bridges provides a blended learning model with core instruction taught in the subjects of English/language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, and career exploration through in classroom instruction. Online coursework is offered as supplemental instruction for additional learning and credit opportunities using the Edgenuity program. Bridges works in partnership with local school districts to determine the credit requirements for graduation.

### **Available Services:**

#### **AIM (Attendance Improvement Matters)**

The purpose of AIM is to provide direct services to students that will assist them in overcoming barriers that interfere with school attendance.

The AIM attendance specialists provide services to our Bridges students by developing positive relationships with truant students and their families through home visits, school/classroom visits, incentive programs, mentoring, monitoring and any other activities that are relevant to the intervention process. Flexibility in the design of the service plan ensures that individual needs are met.



## **Regional Safe School Career and Technical Education Program**

The overall goal of the program is for each student to complete a transition plan that outlines short-term and long-term goals for completing high school, acquiring work skills and entering the workforce. The cooperative education program was established using the ISBE Handbook for Cooperative Education. Integrated instruction is provided to each student regarding the necessary skills and practices to help obtain employment and perform successfully in the workplace. Each individual student's "Transition Plan" is reviewed and updated to provide students with a solid plan of implementation following high school graduation. Information regarding setting long-term education and career goals is provided in individual and group settings.

### **Student Case Worker**

Bridges strives to support the social and emotional needs of their students. A full time student caseworker is on staff to meet the unique individual needs of students. Bridges also works with local community organizations to provide additional services for students.

The Regional Office of Education #11 also employs a full time McKinney-Vento liaison who works closely with our districts in meeting the needs of their homeless students enrolled in the Bridges program.

**Disciplinary Policy:** 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.

The Bridges program utilizes Character Based Responses to Behavior. Character Based Responses to Behavior may include Classroom Managed response, Administrative and Classroom response, a Student Behavior Contract, and Personalized Corrective Response. In addition, 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 may include immediate removal from the Bridges 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 or causes a serious disruption to the learning environment.

**Daily Schedule:** The school day is scheduled from 8:15 AM until 2:30 PM. Bus riders are subject to the bus schedules of their home districts.

**Extracurricular Opportunities:** Bridges does not offer extracurricular activities. Participation in extracurricular activities is a decision determined by the student's home district and based upon district policy.