

# **Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy**



## **Family and Scholar Handbook**

**2022-2023**

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## MESSAGE TO OUR FAMILIES

Dear BVP Team & Families,

I am thrilled to introduce myself to you as the incoming CEO and Superintendent of Blackstone Valley Prep and welcome you to the 2022-2023 school year! While I am new to this role, I am entering my 8th school year at BVP, having spent many years leading our academic program. I look forward to the opportunity to spend more time engaging directly with our families.

We have lots of exciting work to do together! Our children and classrooms continue to be impacted by the pandemic, which has led to significant personal losses among our community as well as lost time learning and connecting to each other. It is my sincere hope that this year will feel more “normal,” and that we will continue to be able to bring back many of the traditions that make BVP an incredible place for young people to learn. To do that, we need to recommit to strong attendance and timeliness, while remaining vigilant about keeping our families and classmates safe from COVID-19. The most important thing I ask of you this year is that your scholar be in school every day, all day, unless they are sick. As our [updated Covid-19 policies state](#), please monitor your children for symptoms carefully, communicate with your school nurses, and follow the guidance for when to stay at home. If you have any questions relating to health guidance, please reach out to your school nurses, whose contact information is linked below, or to our Lead Nurse Colleen McCormick, [colleen.mccormick@bvpri.org](mailto:colleen.mccormick@bvpri.org).



I look forward to meeting many of you at ice cream socials, school playdates, BVP sporting events, academic nights, and performances! In the meantime, I invite you to reach out to me any time at [Sarah.Anderson@bvpri.org](mailto:Sarah.Anderson@bvpri.org).

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Anderson', written over a horizontal line.

Sarah Anderson  
Incoming Chief Executive Officer

[BVP Nurse contact list](#)

## OUR MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

Blackstone Valley Prep (BVP) Mayoral Academy is a network of intentionally diverse public charter schools providing a high quality public school option to the communities of Central Falls, Cumberland, Lincoln and Pawtucket.

### OUR MISSION

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The mission of Blackstone Valley Prep is to prepare all scholars for success in college and the world beyond.

### OUR VISION

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BVP will be a model of rigorous college and career preparatory public education:

- Creating an intentionally diverse and inclusive school community
- Collaborating with educators across Rhode Island
- Proving what is possible for all kids

### OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

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Blackstone Valley Prep is committed to the academic success, social and emotional growth, and health and wellness of 100% of scholars in an intentionally diverse school that celebrates the racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, and sexual-orientation differences of our scholars, staff, and families by:

- Actively engaging in courageous conversations about the value of peoples' differences;
- Raising awareness of self and society's structural inequities; and
- Empowering all people to engage in an open and honest dialogue with an active voice.

### OUR CORE VALUES: PRIDE

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**Perseverance.** *Never give up. Ever.* Our scholars, teachers, and families are expected to work as long and hard as it takes to be successful. Throughout their time at Blackstone Valley Prep there will be an array of challenges and successes. To ensure that all scholars are successful, teachers and families need to do whatever it takes to reach the goals that are set. Scholars approach problems and opportunities to work independently with a positive attitude.

**Respect.** *I'm nice to you, be nice to me.* Our community is built on respect. Teachers respect scholars by expecting them to achieve great things and by treating them with dignity and fairness. Scholars respect all teachers and staff because without respect, precious learning time is wasted. Scholars respect each other because they are part of a team that works together to achieve goals. Scholars support each other, especially when they are struggling.

**Integrity.** *Always display honesty.* We must be truthful in our interactions, take responsibility for our mistakes, and speak honestly with one another. Scholars do not plagiarize and are always prepared for class.

**Discipline.** *We do our best or do it again!* Our scholars, teachers, and staff understand that

discipline is the key to success. We have clear rules and high expectations. Scholars follow these rules so they can learn in a safe and orderly environment, and teachers and staff enforce these rules so as to empower scholars to succeed. We support our scholars as they build the internal discipline necessary to do the hard work that it takes to get them to college.

**Enthusiasm.** *Excited scholars, our school has them!* When you work hard, it is essential to find joy in your work. We believe in teaching children how to be joyful in their learning by approaching it with curiosity, gratitude, and tons of spirit! Scholars approach difficult problems with excitement.

**PRIDE +1.** At the core of our work is a *love* for education. A *love* for the scholars we teach. A *love* for the impact we make on the future. ***We love all children as they are, however they come to us, and not for who we want them to be.***

## **SCHOOL & NETWORK SUPPORT STRUCTURES**

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To support our teachers and leaders in achieving our mission and desired values, Blackstone Valley Prep has designed support structures at the school and network level.

BVP's Network Support Team exists to support the work of our schools and to continue to build systems and processes to support our growing school network. With this in mind, the team focuses its efforts on curriculum development, finance, operations, external affairs, family engagement and human capital.

## **THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY PREP STAFF, SCHOLAR, AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY CODES**

### **TEACHERS & STAFF**

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We fully commit to Blackstone Valley Prep in the following ways:

- Ensure that valuable school time is utilized thoughtfully and efficiently so that the school can provide our scholars with an education that is both academically rigorous and culturally responsive.
- Make the school a safe and inviting environment by consistently reinforcing school values.
- Communicate regularly with families regarding their child's behavioral and academic performance through progress reports, report cards, family conferences, telephone contact, and by welcoming families to the school.
- Exemplify and model the value of respect for self, scholars, families, and others in our school community
- Constantly monitor the strengths, weaknesses, and progress of our scholars, both academically and emotionally. We will provide extra support to our scholars on a regular basis.

### **SCHOLARS**

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We fully commit to Blackstone Valley Prep in the following ways:

- Show perseverance by always working hard to achieve my personal best.

- Show respect for myself and others in our school community, and the learning environment by being part of a team and supporting my fellow classmates.
- Show integrity by being honest with myself and others, and always trying to do the right thing whether or not others are looking.
- Show discipline by making appropriate choices about my behavior and my work.
- Show enthusiasm by bringing a passion for learning and growing.

## **FAMILIES**

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We fully commit to Blackstone Valley Prep in the following ways:

- Ensure that my child arrives at school on-time and attends school regularly. I have read the attendance policy in the BVP Family Handbook and understand the school's policy regarding lateness, early dismissals, excused and unexcused absences.
- Ensure that my child wears the appropriate school uniform daily, as explained in the dress code section of the BVP Family Handbook and the School Supplement.
- Make the school a safe space by supporting and modeling the school's PRIDE values and behavioral expectations.
- Communicate regularly with my scholar's teachers regarding academic and behavioral performance. I will attend as many events as I can at the school including family conferences.
- Reach out to the school directly to provide feedback and discuss the growth of the school community.

## **BASIC OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS**

### **SCHOOLS & LOCATIONS**

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#### **Phone Number (All Locations): 401-335-3133**

Blackstone Valley Prep Elementary School 1  
*Serving grades K-4*  
 Head of School: Ms. Rebecca Boswell  
 291 Broad Street  
 Cumberland, RI 02864

Blackstone Valley Prep Elementary School 2  
*Serving grades K-4*  
 Head of School: Ms. Sara Tucker  
 52 Broad Street  
 Cumberland, RI 02864

Blackstone Valley Prep Elementary School 3  
*Serving grades K-4*  
 Head of School: Ms. Alisha Smith  
 3357 Mendon Road  
 Cumberland, RI 02864

Blackstone Valley Upper Elementary School  
*Serving grades 5-6*  
Co-Head of School: Ms. Alyson Chatham  
Co-Head of School: Ms. Dillon Falk  
3 Fairlawn Way  
Lincoln, RI 02865

Blackstone Valley Prep Junior High School  
*Serving grades 7-8*  
Head of School: Ms. Marielle Emet  
909 Lonsdale Avenue  
Central Falls, RI 02863

Blackstone Valley Prep High School  
*Serving grade 9-12*  
Head of School: Mr. Joshua Falk  
65 Macondray Street  
Cumberland, RI 02864

## **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL**

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An on-time arrival is crucial to laying the foundation for academic success. Being on time also communicates an important value. We expect all of our scholars to value punctuality and adopt the belief that being on time demonstrates accountability, discipline, and respect. Scholars are always expected to arrive on time for school and school events. At each grade level there are consequences for tardiness.

*Please refer to your individual school supplement for school specific arrival and dismissal times.*

### *Late Arrivals*

On-time arrival is critical in setting the tone for the rest of the day. In order to ensure a safe arrival, if a scholar arrives after the official start of the day, they may be asked to wait to enter the building. Families will need to escort their scholar into the main office to sign in. At our UES, JHS and High schools, scholars may be permitted to sign themselves in at the main office, but additional consequences may result.

*School-specific late arrival consequences are included in the Individual School Supplement.*

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICIES**

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As a regional public charter school, BVP will provide transportation to scholars. Scholars will be assigned to depot stops within their communities with designated times for daily pick-up and drop-off. Buses are not provided to scholars within the following “Walk Zones”

- Elementary School (Grades 1-4) - 1.0 miles
- Upper Elementary and Junior High Schools (Grades 5-8) 1.25 miles
- High School (Grades 9-12) 1.5 miles

BVP and its transportation vendor accept responsibility for scholars during their time traveling on school buses to and from BVP schools. Families are responsible for the supervision and safety of their scholars before boarding the bus in the morning and after departing from the bus in the afternoon. For scholars in grades kindergarten-fourth grade, a family member or designee must be at the bus stop in the afternoon to greet their scholar. Anyone picking up an elementary school

scholar at a bus stop must have a BVP issued placard to pick up their scholar in the afternoon and need to be out of their car to greet the bus.

### *Registration*

Families may register for any bus that services their scholar's campus. To ensure space on buses for as many scholars as possible, families may not register any scholar for more than one bus. Registration requests may take up to two school weeks to process. The school will notify families when the bus change has either been approved or when a scholar has been placed on the bus wait list.

Scholars may not ride a bus for which they are not registered. After the beginning of the year, all requests are subject to seat availability. If a bus reaches capacity, a waitlist will be created for families interested in riding that bus. Families are encouraged to register for transportation before the start of the school year.

### *Active Ridership Policy*

To be considered an active rider, a scholar must consistently ride the bus for which he/she is registered at least one day a week. In the case that a bus is at capacity and a waitlist for ridership exists, scholars who do not consistently ride the bus for which they are registered may be contacted by the school. If, after documented communication with the family, it is determined by BVP that the scholar does not have plans to begin riding the bus consistently, then they may be unregistered and placed at the end of the waitlist.

UES, JHS, and High School scholars will be provided with a Student ID card that will also act as a bus pass. School administrators will mark the ID/Bus Pass to indicate the bus number for which a scholar is registered, and scholars will be responsible to show their ID/Bus Pass with the correct marking to board the bus.

BVP will maintain responsibility and records to ensure that no registered scholar is denied access to their assigned bus should they forget their ID/bus pass. However, families of scholars who repeatedly forget their ID/Bus Pass may lose riding privileges. Scholars who have lost their ID/Bus Pass should notify their school office immediately. ID/Bus Pass cards will be replaced for a fee of \$5.00. If a scholar requests a bus change that is confirmed as described above, they should present their ID/Bus Pass to the main office to have it updated appropriately.

### *Late Pick-Up Policy*

For scholars in grades K-4, if a parent/guardian or designee is not present at the time of pick-up, the scholar will remain on the bus for the duration of the route, and will be brought to the YMCA program at either ES1 or ES2. This policy also applies to scholars at schools with an on-site YMCA program who are not picked up at the designated school dismissal time.

Scholars in grades 5-8 will be dropped off at their designated bus stop, regardless of a parent/guardian being present at the time of drop off. A scholar may refuse to get off at their stop if a parent or guardian is not present, in which case they will be brought to the YMCA program at ES2.

The family of any scholar checked into the YMCA after school hours will be responsible for any charges accrued according to YMCA policies.

### *Bus Discipline Policy*

Riding the school bus is a privilege not a right and the school may revoke this privilege for safety and discipline infractions. Scholars who ride the school bus may do so only if they display safe and reasonable behavior. Choosing and/or continuing to follow unacceptable behavior will result in loss of bus service. The bus driver and monitor are responsible for the safety and discipline of the scholars on the bus. The scholar's Head of School, in accordance with this policy, will determine the

consequences of misbehavior and the reinstatement of bus service for the offending scholar(s) should a suspension become necessary. A suspension applies to all buses (daily transportation, sports, etc.)

### *Code of Behavior*

- Scholars shall conduct themselves in an orderly and respectful manner consistent with BVP's PRIDE values. The school bus is a classroom on wheels. Scholars should act on a school bus as they do in the classroom.
- BVP does not allow shouting, or loud talking/laughing on the bus.
- BVP does not allow scholars to use radios or other electronic devices, unless headphones are used and the driver and bus monitor have given permission (when approved, headphones can only be used in one ear so that scholars can still hear directions from the driver and monitor).
- BVP does not allow scholars to take or place calls on cell phones while on the bus.
- BVP does not allow food, candy, drinks, or tobacco products on the bus or at the bus stop.
- The Head of School and/or driver may assign scholars a seat. Scholars will remain in this seat at all times unless permission to change is given.
- No scholar, at any time, shall extend his or her head, hands, or arms out of the bus windows, whether the bus is in motion or standing still.
- No scholar shall throw or drop any item out of the bus windows.
- No scholar shall open a window on the school bus without first getting permission from the bus driver.
- Scholars must leave the bus in an orderly manner, and obey the orders of the school bus driver and monitor.

Families are responsible for explaining to their scholars what are considered safe school bus ridership practices. Violations of the school bus code of behavior, or any other action not specifically listed which interferes with or threatens the safe operation of the school bus, shall constitute grounds for suspension of bus privileges. In the event of a suspension of bus privileges, the family will provide transportation for their scholar. Scholars' misconduct on a school bus will be sufficient reason to discontinue providing bus transportation to those scholars involved.

BVP considers families as an extension of the scholar who must conduct themselves with BVP's PRIDE values. In the event that a parent/guardian or designee witnesses misconduct on a school bus, they are to report it to the appropriate authorities. Parents/guardians should report any incidents to their respective Head of School.

### Examples of Unacceptable Behavior

- Shouting or otherwise making loud noise on the bus creating a distraction to the driver
- Moving about within the bus while the bus is in motion
- Opening the windows of the bus without the driver's permission
- Blocking of aisles

- Eating or drinking on the bus
- Spitting on the bus
- Fighting or assault on the bus
- Possessing or using illicit drugs or alcohol
- Smoking or lighting flammable objects
- Insulting or exhibiting unseemly behavior towards the driver, bus monitor, or fellow scholars
- Causing a disturbance by teasing or threatening the driver, bus monitor, or fellow scholars
- Damaging school bus property and/or personal property (it will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian of those scholars involved for proper reimbursement of the school or bus company)
- Tampering with or using the emergency door without the permission of the driver
- Throwing an object or objects at or from the bus

#### *Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior*

In the event that a scholar exhibits unacceptable behavior on the school bus, or walking to/from school, potential consequences include written warnings, short or long-term bus suspensions, community service, loss of participation in extracurricular activities and athletics, or other school-based discipline as appropriate.

#### *After-school Buses*

During the year, our UES, JHS, & High School campuses offer after-school activities, including enrichment, sports, and academic support. When after-school activities are in session, after-school buses will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Bus routes are pre-determined and operate one or two depot stops in each of our four communities.

For sports activities, BVP will make its best efforts to provide transportation to the event or game if it is off-site, but families are responsible for securing transportation after the event. Refer to your scholar's coach or our Athletic Director for more specifics on sports transportation.

#### *Scholar Drivers*

If a scholar wishes to drive a vehicle to school they must follow scholar parking regulations. Only those scholar-operated vehicles for which car permits (a numbered, decal sticker) have been issued may be parked in the designated scholar areas. The price of a parking permit is \$15. The criteria for determining eligibility for a parking permit will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

Scholars may not park in non-scholar spaces of BVP parking lots, or park on the streets surrounding the school. Failure to park in the proper area will result in the scholar's car being towed at his/her expense.

All scholar-operated motor vehicles driven to school and parked in the designated area must be in safe operating condition and each driver must certify that the vehicle for which a car permit is requested is legally and properly insured and that the driver has a valid license.

The parking lot is an extension of the school building and all school rules apply. Scholars are not to loiter in their cars at any time during the day, including before and after school hours. Scholars are not permitted to access their cars once they enter the school building for the day prior to dismissal.

All vehicles parked in BVP parking lots are subject to search by school administrators and police. Scholar parking permits may be revoked at any time, including for disciplinary reasons not related to driving to school.

## **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS & DELAYS**

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Blackstone Valley Prep will announce school closings on public media, identified as “Rhode Island Mayoral Academy-Blackstone Valley” or “Blackstone Valley Prep.” When possible, the school will communicate using ParentSquare, and social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

Whenever possible, BVP will run buses through all four sending communities, but please note that buses for Central Falls, Cumberland, Pawtucket, and Lincoln may follow the delay or cancellation schedule for those districts. For example, if BVP has a regular day, but Lincoln cancels, it is possible there will be no Lincoln busing, but BVP will still have school. Please carefully read any closing or delay announcement for special busing considerations.

To sign up for text alerts on weather updates through RI Broadcasters Association, use the link here: <http://www.turnto10.com/category/256735/closings-and-delays>.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

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Attendance is vital for the well-being and academic success of individual scholars and the school community. Families are expected to ensure that their scholar regularly attends school.

If your scholar must be absent for a sickness or emergency, please notify the school with as much advance notice as possible, and no later than the start of school on the day of the absence. The school will work with the family and scholar to determine the appropriate procedures for receiving and completing missed assignments.

In order for the absence to be verified, families must provide documentation following the absence explaining the nature of the sickness or emergency (e.g. doctor’s note or a detailed note including the date(s) and reason(s) of the absence).

**Undocumented absences are not acceptable.** A record of all absences and absence notes will be maintained by the school and consulted if retention becomes a possibility. Blackstone Valley Prep does not delineate between excused or unexcused absences. Missing school for illness or for a family event has the same effect: missed instruction. Excessive absences (more than 10) in a year may lead to retention.

Scholars are expected to arrive at school on time every day. Scholars who arrive late are considered tardy and will be marked as such on their attendance records. Excessive tardiness will impact scholars’ attendance records. When determining calculations for retention and/or truancy court referrals, every five tardies may count as an absence.

Families are strongly discouraged from scheduling appointments for their children during school hours. If a doctor’s appointment must be scheduled for which a scholar must leave school early, the scholar’s parent/guardian must notify the school with as much advance notice as possible. Scholars may not miss a full day of school for a doctor’s appointment. In the event that a doctor’s appointment cannot be scheduled after school, scholars must come to school prior to and following all appointments.

Blackstone Valley Prep is required to report scholar attendance daily to the Rhode Island Department of Education. In addition, BVP is required to submit truancy reports for scholars who are absent 10 or more days in an academic year.

As critical as attendance is, scholar health and wellness is critically important as well. Ill children should not be in school and need to be seeing a doctor or at home recovering. Please consult the school nurse if you are unsure whether your child should not attend school due to their illness, but the following are guidelines:

- Scholars with a fever greater than 100°F should remain home until fever-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours
- Scholars with vomiting or diarrhea should remain home until free of symptoms for 24 hours
- Unusual rashes should be evaluated by medical professionals with documentation provided prior to return to school
- Follow the recommendation (and provide documentation) of your pediatrician if your scholar is taking antibiotics, has extreme pain, or is experiencing flu-like symptoms.
- Follow up-to-date guidelines regarding testing and quarantine if your child or any household members experience symptoms of COVID-19

## **FOODS AND MEALS**

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Blackstone Valley Prep participates in the National School Lunch Program, which provides free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch to eligible scholars and sells a healthy breakfast and lunch to any interested family. Additionally, scholars in grades K-6 are provided a snack daily.

Applications and eligibility criteria for free or reduced-price meals are required to be completed by all families annually.. In some situations, filling out the form may also allow families to qualify for benefits offered by State or Federal programs, such as the P-EBT program that was made available during previous school years.

Scholars are permitted to bring breakfast and lunch items to school, but must adhere to school rules regarding the appropriate time and place to eat any food items brought from home. All breakfast and lunch items must meet guidelines for a healthy meal. Soda and candy are never acceptable items. Pastry, sugary snacks, and highly caloric snacks should not be sent. Families who send scholars to school with questionable lunches may be asked to meet with the School Nurse or Health Teacher. BVP reserves the right to confiscate any items not meeting these guidelines and replace them with a BVP-approved item.

Other than breakfast or lunch, scholars should not bring food from home to eat during the school day (note: scholars with diabetes, severe allergies, or other dietary restrictions should meet with the school nurse to develop an appropriate plan).

*Based on scholar and staff allergies, Blackstone Valley Prep is a nut free school in grades K-8. Nut-based meals and snacks will be discarded at these grade levels BVPHS will have nut-free locations and the school nurse and administration, based on needs of the community, may also declare the school nut-free, though at this age the allergy precaution needs are managed by the individual.*

## *Lunch Account Balances*

### Pre-paying for meals

Blackstone Valley Prep (BVP) and our food service provider strongly encourage families to prepay for meals. Families who purchase meals without prepaying will be contacted by their school to request payment. Unpaid balances negatively impact BVP's ability to use funds to support scholar learning and in classrooms.

Families can prepay for meals by setting up an account for their scholars through the My School Bucks website or mobile app, or by submitting checks to their school's main office. Families are strongly encouraged to set up account alerts to notify them of when their scholar's meal balance is low through My School Bucks.

### **Negative Balance Procedures**

Both BVP and SLA Management, Inc. are committed to providing meals for scholars who choose to participate in the lunch program. However, families must fulfill all financial obligations to the lunch program in a timely manner. To provide the families at BVP with the best possible service, transparency, and accountability regarding the school meals program, the following procedures regarding scholar lunch account balances are in effect:

If your scholar has a negative balance on their meal account at the end of the week, you will receive a notice on ParentSquare. You will continue to receive this notice weekly until your balance is paid in full.

BVP will take reasonable measures to work with families who fall behind in meal payments. These may include, but are not limited to,

- Setting up a payment plan with a family
- Forgiving some or all of the outstanding balance in lieu of family action, as agreed upon between family and school (i.e. volunteer hours)
- Connecting families with supportive resources in the broader community

BVP reserves the right to take the following actions if a family has significant and/or long-standing unpaid balances:

- Require a meeting with the Head of School, CEO, School Social Worker, or designee
- Disqualify parents from serving as field trip chaperones or participating in other school events
- Other actions as deemed appropriate by the Head of School or CEO, which will be communicated with families before they are implemented.

## **SCHOLAR UNIFORM**

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Uniforms create a sense of unity, professionalism, and discipline for the scholars and the school. All Blackstone Valley Prep scholars must come to school every day wearing the required uniform.

On occasion schools may host dress down days in support of specific causes (i.e. to raise money for an event, aid to hurricane relief efforts, etc.). Any dress down days will be messaged to families in advance.

*School specific uniform requirements are included in the Individual School Supplement.*

## **SCHOLAR SUPPLIES**

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Blackstone Valley Prep makes every effort to equip scholars with the supplies they need for the start of the year. In order to equip scholars to complete nightly homework, families should provide a quiet place to study with a hard, flat surface, and have appropriate supplies at home (i.e. pencils, paper, etc.).

In addition, Blackstone Valley Prep welcomes donations of the following classroom supplies:

- Clorox/Lysol Wipes
- Tissue Boxes
- Paper Towel Rolls
- Gallon and Sandwich-Sized Baggies
- Dry-Erase Markers and Erasers
- Hand Sanitizer
- Glue Sticks
- Children's Books!

Families wishing to donate more significant items may visit our website and click on "giving."

Scholars may be asked to replace any supplies that become worn down or depleted throughout the year. Scholars must also maintain their binders, folders, and other organizational supplies with high standards of neatness and cleanliness. Blackstone Valley Prep expects its scholars to show respect for their belongings, whether they were purchased by the family or the school.

Scholars must be prepared each day with the required supplies, including homework, handouts and independent reading books. Failure to be prepared with materials will result in appropriate consequences.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

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In compliance with Rhode Island General Law, Blackstone Valley Prep conducts fire, evacuation, and lockdown drills. The following is required each school year for compliance with Rhode Island statute:

- Not less than one (1) emergency drill every month that the facility is in session with all occupants of the building participating in said drill.
- One (1) additional emergency outdoor drill within the first thirty days (30) of the start of each school year.
- At least one (1) out of every four (4) emergency egress drills shall be obstructed by means of which at least one (1) or more exits and stairways in the school building are blocked off or not used.
- In addition to the aforementioned, there will be two (2) evacuation drills and two (2) lockdown drills.
- The total number of drills between September and June must be at least fifteen (15).

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### OVERVIEW

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At Blackstone Valley Prep, we are committed to providing our scholars with a rigorous curriculum designed to prepare them for success in college and the world beyond. Therefore, we seek to design a stimulating K-12 curriculum that aligns standards, instruction, and assessment to create a rich learning experience for all scholars.

BVP believes fundamentally in rigorous mathematics, reading, writing, and science instruction for all scholars, regardless of their background. Preparing scholars for college and career requires:

- Rigorous mathematics instruction culminating with Advanced Placement Calculus and/or Statistics
- Intensive, explicit, and embedded composition instruction resulting in fluent, compelling writers
- Broad canon of texts, composed of multicultural literature, informational text, and primary source documents
- Inquiry-driven scientific exploration
- Social studies instruction rooted in the principles of world and American history
- Smart use of technology within and outside of classroom walls
- Engagement in a joyful and classical study of the liberal arts

For this reason, we support the higher-level thinking skills emphasized by the Common Core State Standards in concert with Next Generation Science Standards, Rhode Island's Grade Span Expectations for Social Studies, and standards promulgated by the national associations for technology, physical education, the arts, and foreign language. These standards serve as the roadmap and destinations for learning--they tell us what to teach. BVP's Academic Vision serves as the equipment for that journey--it defines how to teach.

Guided by our belief that understanding the unifying theories of mathematics, reading smart, thinking critically, and writing clearly are skills that all young people must possess, we have developed a curriculum and instructional approach that efficiently helps scholars reach those levels as prescribed by the demands of college and career.

We believe that standards alone are not enough. Strategic, practice-based professional development spirals through our approaches to curriculum and instruction, and this must be held sacred.

We also believe that rigor is not a matter of more work but better work, and we know that true rigor in both academic and non-academic domains comes from going deep within and across subjects. This involves sophisticated materials, topics, and language in applications that mirror real-world settings. True rigor necessitates differentiation and personalization.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

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Homework plays a vital role in strengthening and extending scholar skills, as well as creating independent study habits that will be essential to success in college and the world beyond. To this end all scholars should receive nightly homework that allows them to:

- perfectly practice knowledge and skills that have already been mastered, or
- prepare for future instruction by reviewing text or other media, generating questions, or engaging in research activities

Nightly Homework Guidelines	Grades	Nightly Reading	Math Fluency	Content
40-60 mins	K-4	30 minutes	10 minutes	Typically additional content is not provided, however, scholars in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Trimester of 4 <sup>th</sup> grade should anticipate ~20 minutes of additional content to prepare for the Upper Elementary School transition.
1 hour	5-6	30 minutes	10 minutes	20 minutes (spread across content area)
1.5 hours	7-8	30 minutes	10 minutes	50 minutes (spread across content area)
2 hours	9-12	30 minutes	10 minutes	80 minutes (spread across contents)

In addition to nightly homework, BVP believes in maximizing out-of-school time to ensure that learning loss is minimized. Specifically, skill- and/or project-based break packets are recommended for all grade levels. K-8 break packets will be approved by the network and utilized across schools for the following breaks:

- Thanksgiving Break
- Holiday (December) Break
- FUNbruary Break
- April Break
- Summer Break

*Please reach out to your scholar's school with any questions related to homework and for specific consequences related to incomplete homework.*

## **SCHEDULING MODELS**

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At each level of instruction- elementary, middle, and high- a strong focus on math and literacy is evidenced by our scheduling models. Though individual school schedules vary depending on staffing and facilities, every BVP school models its schedule after common scheduling parameters set by the Blackstone Valley Prep Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Team. Scholar schedules will be shared no later than the end of the first week of school.

## **ASSESSMENT PROGRAMMING**

Teachers utilize a number of assessments of and for learning. On a daily basis, teachers use a number of formative assessments in their classroom to monitor learning –some as simple as a thumbs up or down for understanding. In addition, teachers use “exit tickets” at the conclusion of virtually every lesson in order to measure individual and whole class mastery of the daily objective.

Unit tests and trimester exams are used as summative measures of scholar mastery of specific content knowledge and skill application.

As a network, we utilize a number of standardized assessments in order to measure individual scholar progress as well as to determine our effectiveness in teaching the required standards.

What	Type	Grade Level	Why/Purpose	When
STAR	Commercial	Grades 1-8	Reading and Math Universal RTI Screener (informs instruction; network accountability measure)	4 Screening Windows 6-week cycles for RTI
EL Benchmark Assessments	Commercial	Grades K-2	Foundational Reading Diagnostic (informs instruction)	BOY and then at the end of each trimester
Comprehensive Trimester Assessments/ Midterms and Finals	Internal (created or reviewed at network level)	3-12 ELA 1-12 Math 5-12 history 3-12 science	Assesses scholars' mastery of course-specific standards (summative assessments used for grading)	Once per Trimester or Semester
Next Generation Science Assessment	Commercial	Grades 5, 8, 11	Assess scholars' mastery of science standards (state accountability measure)	May
RICAS	Commercial	Grades 3-8	Assess scholars' mastery of CCSS (state accountability measure)	April/May
PSAT/NMSQT & SAT	Commercial	Grades 10-12	College Entrance Assessment (state accountability measure)	April
ACCESS	Commercial	Grades K-12	Assesses English language proficiency in domains of speaking, listening, reading and writing for English Learners	January/ February

Formative Assessments (quizzes, exit tickets, etc.)	Internal (teacher-created)	Grades K-12	Formative assessments used to check for understanding, guide instruction, provide feedback to scholars on progress toward mastery	Daily
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**ACADEMIC SUPPORT & ENRICHMENT**

Blackstone Valley Prep is committed to seeing substantial growth and achievement in every scholar. Therefore, Blackstone Valley Prep schools provide many opportunities for academic support and enrichment. These opportunities may include:

*Academic Interventions*

To improve scholars’ academic performance and to help close knowledge and skill gaps, teachers may provide additional targeted instruction in literacy and math to meet scholars’ needs. The scholars’ teachers will notify the family if their scholar is receiving additional academic interventions.

*Opportunity Days*

To improve their academic performance, any scholar may be required to attend tutoring or study sessions on Opportunity Days (non-school days including Saturdays and holidays) at the discretion of the Head of School and the classroom teachers. Opportunity Day sessions may be mandatory. Opportunity Day Sessions are provided by the Classroom Teacher and allow for individualized, targeted instruction. All absences require prior notification and documentation. Failure to provide documentation will result in an appropriate consequence.

*Commitment to Serving 100% of Scholars*

Blackstone Valley Prep believes that great schools serve all scholars. As such, we serve scholars with a range of special needs including, but not limited to, Multilingual Learners, scholars who receive special education services (with Individualized Education Plans), and those with health needs (with 504 plans).

BVP provides special education services and EL services for scholars in accordance with state and federal special education laws, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the regulations implementing those laws. Additionally, staff members in each building are trained and certified in de-escalation strategies and techniques, including nonviolent physical crisis interventions.

**PRIDE BEHAVIOR SYSTEM**

**PRIDE VALUES**

Blackstone Valley Prep establishes and maintains a scholar and teacher community that is efficient and orderly, warm and productive. Recognizing the importance of strong school culture on academic success and socio-emotional wellbeing, BVP has created strong systems and routines that promote a culture of achievement, rooted in our PRIDE values.

The PRIDE behavior system is adapted appropriately based on the emotional and intellectual development of the child. The expectation is that our scholars participate appropriately in our community and contribute to our efficient, orderly, warm, and productive environment.

The PRIDE behavior system is introduced starting in kindergarten; each year thereafter, the concept of PRIDE as a measure of behavioral success adapts to the grade-level abilities and needs of our scholars. For example, as scholars develop the ability to manage their own engagement in a classroom setting, scholars are held accountable for remaining engaged in a lesson through eye-contact and asking/answering questions. As scholars grow older, expectations for engagement may change. What remains constant is our expectation that scholars show the PRIDE values; what changes is the specific indicator of that value. Below, see a list of the specific behaviors that may be expected from Blackstone Valley Prep scholars, depending on their grade level.

<b>PRIDE Value</b>	<b>Expectations</b>
<b>Perseverance</b>	<i>Never give up. Ever.</i>
	<i>Complete all assignments, even when they are challenging.</i>
<b>Respect</b>	<i>Be respectful in your body language and attitude.</i>
	<i>Be verbally polite to those around you even when you are given a direction you do not like.</i>
<b>Integrity</b>	<i>Apologize and take responsibility for mistakes that you might make.</i>
	<i>When no one is looking, behave as if all of your teachers and family were in the room watching and listening to you.</i>
<b>Discipline</b>	<i>Follow specific directions.</i>
	<i>Remain silent when silence is asked for and during instructional and independent work time.</i>
	<i>Adhere to a consistent study schedule at home.</i>
<b>Enthusiasm</b>	<i>Move quickly from place to place and from task to task.</i>
	<i>Demonstrate joy for learning and excitement for content.</i>

Scholars who show PRIDE values every day will earn the opportunity to attend amazing celebrations, trips, college visits and other fun experiences.

Privileges may include:

- Participation in Town Hall or Community Circle
- Dress down days
- Lunch privileges
- PRIDE events
- Field Trips to places including:
  - Local Colleges and Universities
  - Farms/Nature Reserves
  - Parks/Zoos

We believe these opportunities work as positive motivators for our scholars to continue working hard, both on their academics and behavior. Scholars who regularly live the PRIDE values will earn these great opportunities. More importantly, scholars who regularly show PRIDE values are learning and practicing the behaviors that will lead to success in college and the world beyond.

### *Whole School Community Circles*

Blackstone Valley Prep scholars who have demonstrated positive behaviors as related to our PRIDE values will regularly come together as a team to celebrate their accomplishments.

The purpose of Whole School Community Circles is to:

- celebrate scholars' academic achievement
- recognize individual scholar accomplishment
- build community through performances, skits, songs and chants
- bring families, and members of the Blackstone Valley Prep community together to see what our scholars are learning and mastering
- build school identity and cohesiveness

*Families are often welcome to attend. Invitations and open dates will be provided to families by their scholar's campus.*

### **PRIDE VALUE VIOLATIONS**

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As stated in the general code of conduct (see next section), misbehaviors at Blackstone Valley Prep result in consequences. If negative behaviors persist, or scholars have not adequately served the given consequence, more serious consequences may be implemented. These consequences vary based on the grade level of the scholar, severity of the action, and frequency of the incident, but may include:

- Scholar reflection (may be written, private or public)
- Removal of school privileges (including school trips, dances, proms, promotion ceremonies, graduations, athletics, clubs, etc.)
- Lunch or after-school detention
- School/community service
- In-school suspension
- Short-term out-of-school suspension
- Long-term out-of-school suspension
- Temporary removal from the school community

Note that disciplinary actions that result in an in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension are often coupled with a 30 day removal of school privileges as noted above. If any disciplinary incident is not resolved or occurs again, further disciplinary action is taken. A parent or guardian may be required to meet with an administrator regarding infractions prior to a scholar's return to school.

## **SCHOOL SUSPENSION POLICY**

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### *In-School Suspension*

If a scholar commits an offense that calls for an in-school suspension, they are subject to the following:

- If necessary, the scholar is immediately removed from class and/or school.
- The scholar is entitled to respond to the charges against him or her.
- The Head of School, or his/her designees addresses the conduct and assigns the appropriate consequence.
- Written notice shall be provided in the form of a letter sent home with the child. Such notice shall include a description of the incident or incidents resulting in the in-school suspension.
- For all suspensions there must be a reinstatement meeting with the family and scholar. A parent or guardian will be required to meet with an administrator regarding the infractions prior to a scholar's return to school.
- Scholars who have received an in-school suspension are expected to attend school, however, will not be permitted to remain in their classroom during in-school suspension. An alternative setting will be provided for them to complete schoolwork.

### *Short-Term Out of School Suspension*

If a scholar commits an offense that calls for a short-term suspension (10 days or less), s/he is subject to the following:

- If necessary, the scholar is immediately removed from class and/or school.
- The scholar is entitled to respond to the charges against him or her.
- The Head of School, or his/her designees addresses the conduct and assigns the appropriate consequence.
- The parent/guardian is notified by the school and will need to pick the scholar up from school immediately.
- Written notice shall be provided in the form of a letter sent home with the child. Such notice shall include a description of the incident or incidents resulting in the suspension.
- For all suspensions there must be a reinstatement meeting with the family and scholar. A parent or guardian will be required to meet with an administrator regarding the infractions prior to a scholar's return to school.
- During suspension, scholars are only permitted on campus when escorted by a parent/guardian.

### *Long-Term Out of School Suspension*

If a scholar commits an offense that calls for a long-term suspension (more than 10 days), the following steps are taken:

- If necessary, the scholar is immediately removed from class and/or school.
- The parent/guardian is immediately notified by the school.

- The school sets a hearing date. The scholar and/or their parent/guardian are notified in writing.

*Please note that Blackstone Valley Prep is required to report all suspension data to the Department of Education. Additionally, alleged criminal behavior may result in a referral to the local police department and/or appropriate authorities.*

#### *Supplementary Instruction*

Scholars who are suspended will be provided with alternative instructional materials that must be completed satisfactorily to return to school. Arrangements will be made between the school and each individual family for the delivery of services, pick up/delivery of work, and the making-up of any missed assignments and classroom instructional support. All IDEA mandates will be followed for scholars with disabilities.

#### *Due Process Procedures*

Scholars with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as other scholars, and may be disciplined for the same behavioral offenses listed above. If a scholar with disabilities has an IEP that includes disciplinary guidelines, then that scholar will be disciplined according to those guidelines as required by IDEA. Scholars for whom an IEP does not include specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with the standard school policy listed above.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Blackstone Valley Prep is committed to providing a safe and orderly school culture in which scholars can improve their academic achievement. Without a firm and consistent discipline policy, none of what we imagine for our scholars can happen. Scholars and families have a right to attend a safe and orderly school. Scholars whose behavior does not meet the school community's clearly defined standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt the education of others. Therefore, for every misbehavior there will be a consequence. This is the basis of our scholar code of conduct. Consequences may vary based on the age and grade level of the scholar, the severity of the incident, and the frequency with which the incident takes place.

### **DISRUPTING THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

*Arriving late to school or class:* Scholar tardiness disrupts class, inconveniences others, and often results in academic difficulties. Scholars may not be late to school or class.

*Choosing NOT to attend required school, functions, or support:* Scholars are required to attend all academic and enrichment classes, assigned consequences, and assigned support opportunities. Scholars are not permitted to leave the building without permission.

*Misbehaving in the Community in and around the School:* Scholars may not misbehave while traveling to or from school. Misbehavior includes, but is not limited to, using inappropriate language, making excessive noise, touching other scholars, and being disrespectful to others. Scholars who misbehave on the way to or from school may have to be escorted by a parent or guardian, in addition to other consequences.

*Access to the Building:* Scholars are not permitted to block access to any room or part of the school building. Scholars may not leave the building through any exits except those officially marked.

*Violating the Dress Code:* Parents/guardians may be required to pick up scholars who are not properly dressed for school or bring the missing dress code item to the school. Scholars may not be permitted to attend class when not in proper uniform.

*Food and Beverages:* Scholars may not eat or drink at unauthorized times or places at Blackstone Valley Prep.

*Hallway Behavior:* Scholars may not disrupt the instructional environment while in the hallway.

*Disrupting Class and Preventing Teaching:* Blackstone Valley Prep can fulfill its mission only if classrooms are safe and teaching is uninterrupted. Scholars may not disrupt class.

*Arriving to Class Unprepared:* When class begins, scholars must be prepared and have all necessary materials (books, pencils, portfolio, paper etc.).

*Failing to Complete Homework:* Completing homework is essential to the success of individual scholars and the classroom community. Scholars are expected to complete all of their homework assignments with quality and on time.

*Cheating, Plagiarism, and Copying Others' Work:* Cheating or copying the work of others (or allowing other scholars to copy work) is unacceptable. This includes any and all talking during exams whether or not in reference to the exam.

*Failing to Submit a Required Signature:* Scholars are required to secure the signature of a parent/guardian on homework, class assignments and forms when requested by any school staff member.

*Forgery:* Scholars may not forge a signature.

*Lying to a Staff Member:* Honesty is an essential element of personal character. Scholars are not permitted to lie or attempt to conceal the truth.

*Being Disrespectful to a Staff Member:* A school cannot function properly if scholars are permitted to be disrespectful towards adults. For that reason, scholars may not be disrespectful towards a staff member or any other adult associated with the school.

*Being Disrespectful to a Scholar:* If scholars do not feel physically and emotionally safe in school, teaching and learning are made more difficult. Therefore, scholars may not be disrespectful towards other scholars.

*Possession of Inappropriate Property:* Scholars cannot possess any electronic music or game devices in school, without explicit permission of the Head of School or classroom teacher. Scholars may not possess any printed text or lyrics that are vulgar, profane, or sexually explicit, or any other items inappropriate for school.

## **ASSAULT, BATTERY, BODILY HARM, INAPPROPRIATE TOUCHING, AND/OR THREATS**

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*Causing Bodily Harm:* Scholars may not cause physical injury to a scholar, school employee, or another person. Scholars are not permitted to harm or attempt to harm a scholar, school employee, or another person with a weapon or dangerous object.

*Committing Assault and/or Battery:* Scholars may not commit assault, including sexual assault, or battery on a scholar, school employee, or another person. Assault is an attempt to physically harm

another person and does not require physical contact. Battery is any unlawful touching of another person.

*Fighting or Unwanted Physical Contact:* Scholars may not fight with other scholars from Blackstone Valley Prep or from any other school. Harassing, pushing, touching, or any form of unwanted physical contact is not tolerated regardless of the cause of the disturbance.

*Play-fighting and Threatening:* Play-fighting and/or the use of threats harm the safety of the community. Scholars may not play-fight and/or threaten others.

*Setting off False Alarms or Making a Threat:* Scholars may not intentionally set off a false alarm or make a destructive threat, including, but not limited to, pulling false fire alarms.

*Engaging in Sexual Activity or Inappropriate Touching:* A scholar may not engage in sexual activity of any kind or touch himself/herself or others inappropriately.

## **POSSESSION OR USE OF FIREARMS, WEAPONS, AND DANGEROUS OBJECTS**

*Possession or Use of a Firearm:* Scholars may not possess or use a firearm.

*Possession or Use of a Mock Firearm:* Scholars may not possess or use mock firearms.

*Using or Possessing a Weapon or Dangerous Object:* Scholars are not allowed to bring a weapon of any sort to school, use any object in a dangerous or threatening manner, or have a weapon on him/her or his/her property.

*Arson:* Scholars may not set a fire and/or light or possess any form of fire-making substance including lighters, matches, etc.

## **POSSESSION, USE, OR DISTRIBUTION OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, ALCOHOL, VAPE PRODUCTS, CBD PRODUCTS OR TOBACCO**

*Using or Possessing Drugs or Alcohol:* Scholars may not use or possess any non-prescribed controlled substance, narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, including CBD products. Prescribed and over-the-counter drugs must be delivered to the Nurse or Office Manager by a parent or guardian with a doctor-signed School Medication Form. Scholars may not be in possession of prescribed or over-the-counter drugs.

*Selling, Possessing, or Transferring Drugs or Alcohol:* Scholars may not sell, distribute, or possess (with or without intent to sell or distribute) prescribed or non-prescribed controlled substances.

*Selling, Possessing, or Transferring Tobacco Products:* Scholars may not sell, distribute, or possess (with or without intent to sell or distribute) cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vape products, chewing tobacco, or other tobacco/tobacco-related products.

*Selling or Possessing Mock Controlled Substances, Alcohol or Tobacco:* Scholars may not sell, distribute, or possess (with or without intent to sell or distribute) mock controlled substances, alcohol, or tobacco.

## **HARASSMENT AND VIOLATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS**

*Violating the Civil Rights of Others:* Scholars may not violate the Civil Rights of others.

*Harassment:* Scholars may not make unwanted sexual advances towards, or commit sexual harassment of, any member of the school community. Harassment or intimidation of any members of the school community on the basis of their racial or ethnic background, gender, age, sexual orientation, or disability is not permitted.

*Abusive or Profane Language or Treatment:* Scholars may not use abusive, threatening, vulgar, coarse, or degrading language (including racial slurs or sexist or homophobic remarks).

## **THEFT & VANDALISM**

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*Theft, Loss or Destruction of Personal or School Property:* Scholars may not steal or damage someone else's or school property.

*Mistreatment or Inappropriate Use of Technology or School Property:* Scholars must treat computers, printers, and other technology with care. Blackstone Valley Prep does not tolerate inappropriate uses of technology or the Internet, including attempts to access the school's files. Scholars do not have the right to use school computers to access chat rooms or emails (excluding BVP-issued scholar email accounts), or to access web sites or files that contain profanity, sexually explicit language or pictures, excessively violent themes, and/or other non-school related materials. Scholars are prohibited from using school telephones. In the event of an emergency, scholars may be allowed to use the school telephones, but only at the discretion of school staff members. Scholars must not mistreat other school property including, but not limited to, text and reading books. Writing or marking on any desks or other school property is strictly prohibited.

## **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH SCHOOL-IMPOSED CONSEQUENCES**

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In order for the school to maintain high expectations and a safe and respectful school environment, both vital parts of our school culture, scholars must comply with all consequences assigned.

Repeated violations of this code of conduct may result in consequences of greater severity or length at the discretion of the school's leader. Repeated inability to adhere to the school's rules may result in the scholar's removal from the Blackstone Valley Prep community.

## **SAFE SCHOOL ACT AND BULLYING POLICY**

Blackstone Valley Prep is committed to a safe, caring, friendly environment free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying/cyber bullying. Consequently, BVP has adopted the Rhode Island Statewide Bullying Policy, also known as the Safe School Act. Bullying of another scholar creates a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the bullied scholar's health and negatively affect learning. Bullying undermines the safe learning environment that scholars need to achieve their full potential.

*Bullying* means the use by one or more scholars of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof directed at another scholar that:

- a. Causes physical or emotional harm to the scholar or damage to the scholar's property;
- b. Places the scholar in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- c. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment for the scholar;
- d. Infringes on the rights of the scholar to participate in school activities; or
- e. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The expression, physical act, or gesture may include, but is not limited to, an incident or incidents

that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as the following: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual ability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Bullying most often occurs as repeated behavior and often is not a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s).

In most circumstances, bullying does not include a mutual fight between two scholars of roughly equal strength who are angry with each other. Such fights are subject to discipline as a violation of school rules prohibiting fighting.

*Cyber-bullying* means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, texting, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic, or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

*Forms of cyber-bullying may include, but are not limited to:*

- a. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- b. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages; or
- c. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person, or the posting of materials on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the creation, impersonation, or distribution results in any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e) of the definition of bullying.

At school means:

- a. on school premises,
- b. at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises,
- c. on a school-transportation vehicle,
- d. at an official school bus stop,
- e. using property or equipment provided by the school, or
- f. acts which create a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

## **SCHOOL CLIMATE**

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Bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation against any person associated with a report of bullying, or the investigation thereof, is prohibited at Blackstone Valley Prep. School staff will take all reasonable measures to prevent bullying at school. Such measures may include professional development and prevention activities for staff members, family workshops, and scholar assemblies. Heads of School, teachers, and staff of Blackstone Valley Prep will model courteous behavior to each other, scholars, and school visitors at all times. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor will not be accepted. Additionally, scholars and their families are expected to exhibit courteous behavior to all members of the BVP community in school and at school sponsored events.

## **POLICY OVERSIGHT & RESPONSIBILITY**

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The Head of School will be responsible for the implementation and oversight of BVP's bullying policy.

The Head of School will provide the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Board of Directors with a summary report of incidents, responses, and any other bullying-related issues at least twice annually.

The prevention of bullying is part of the Blackstone Valley Prep strategic plan and school safety plan.

### *Information Dissemination*

The Head of School will ensure that scholars, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians are provided information regarding this policy. This information will include methods of discouraging and preventing this type of behavior, the procedure to file a complaint, and the disciplinary action that may be taken against those who commit acts in violation of this policy.

This policy will be:

- a. Distributed annually to scholars, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians
- b. Included in scholar codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, and scholar handbooks
- c. Prominently posted in a link on the home page of the school/network website

### *Reporting*

The Head of School will establish, and prominently publicize to scholars, staff, volunteers, and families how a report of bullying may be filed and how this report will be acted upon.

The victim of bullying, anyone who witnesses an incidence of bullying, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying has taken place, may file a report of bullying.

Any scholar or staff member who believes they are being bullied should immediately report such circumstances to an appropriate staff member, teacher, or administrator.

*Reports of bullying or cyberbullying can be made directly through the Blackstone Valley Prep “Report an Incident” link located at the bottom of each page of the BVP website, or accessed directly at <https://blackstonevalleyprep.org/bullying/>.*

Parents/Guardians of the victim of bullying and parents/guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident report. When there is a reasonable suspicion that a child is either a bully or a victim of bullying, the parents/guardians of the child will be notified immediately by the Head of School.

*Responsibility of Staff:* BVP staff who observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place, must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. In this context, staff includes volunteers working at the school.

*Responsibility of Scholars:* Scholars who observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place, must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. The victim of bullying, however, shall not be subject to discipline for failing to report the bullying. *Scholar reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously. No disciplinary action shall be taken against an accused scholar on the basis of an anonymous report.*

*Prohibition against Retaliation:* Retaliation or threats of retaliation in any form designed to intimidate the victim of bullying, those who are witnesses to bullying, or those investigating an incident of bullying, shall not be tolerated. Retaliation or threats of retaliation will result in the imposition of discipline in accordance with the school behavior code.

*False Reporting/Accusations:* A BVP employee, school volunteer, or scholar who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be disciplined in accordance with the school behavior code, including short or long-term suspension from school.

*Reports in Good Faith:* A BVP employee, school volunteer, scholar, or family member who promptly reports, in good faith, an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in the school's policy shall be immune from a cause of action for damages arising from the report of bullying.

## **INVESTIGATION & RESPONSE**

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The Head of School, or his/her designee, shall promptly investigate all allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. If the allegation is found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary actions, subject to applicable due process requirements, will be imposed. Additional BVP staff may be utilized to mediate bullying situations. The investigation will include an assessment of what effect the bullying has had on the victim.

*Police Notification:* When the bullying/cyber-bullying involves conduct that violates criminal law, the police shall be notified.

Protection: If a scholar is the victim of serious or persistent bullying:

- a. The Head of School will intervene immediately to provide the scholar with a safe educational environment.
- b. Interventions will be developed by BVP staff (with input from the scholar, his or her family when possible).
- c. The family of a victim shall be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

### *Scholar Safety Plan*

If a scholar is the victim of serious or persistent bullying/cyber bullying, the Head of School will prepare a written school safety plan outlining what steps will be taken to provide the scholar with a safe educational environment. This plan will be developed, if possible, with input from the parents/guardians of the scholar and staff members who are to implement the plan.

### *Mediation Board*

The Head of School may establish a board to resolve complaints of bullying/cyber bullying in circumstances where mediation may provide an appropriate remedy. The Mediation Board may, when appropriate, include scholars.

No scholar who is the victim of bullying/cyber bullying shall be required to participate in mediation or to accept any apology tendered by the bullying scholar. The decision of a victim of bullying not to participate in a mediation program shall not diminish the obligation of the school to impose discipline against the scholar who has committed an act of bullying.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

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The disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall be determined by the Head of School and, if necessary, the Chief Executive Officer of Blackstone Valley Prep. Disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The severity of the disciplinary action shall be aligned to the severity of the bullying behavior.

The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation include, but are not be limited to:

- a. Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities.
- b. Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities.
- c. Loss of the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises.
- d. Loss of school bus transportation.
- e. Transfer to another school.
- f. Assignment of additional homework or community service.

- g. In-school suspension.
- h. Short term school suspension (10 or fewer days of suspension) or long term school suspension (suspension for more than 10 days).
- i. Admonishments, warnings, and/or counseling.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES & COUNSELING**

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Referrals to appropriate counseling and/or social services currently being offered by schools or communities will be provided for bullying victims, perpetrators, and appropriate family members of said scholars. The school health program and counseling services will include appropriate social skills training to help scholars avoid isolation and to help them interact in a healthy manner.

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING**

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Scholars shall be prohibited from accessing social networking sites in school, except for educational or instructional purposes, and with prior approval from school administration.

## **PREVENTION**

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### *Bullying/Cyber Bullying Prevention Task Force*

The Chief Executive Officer of Blackstone Valley Prep shall establish a Bullying/Cyber Bullying Prevention Task Force. This Task Force may include family members, school staff, law enforcement officers, community members, and if age allows, scholars. The purpose of this Task Force will be to develop policies and programs to educate scholars and staff about the harm caused by bullying/cyber bullying.

The Task Force may also create programs to prevent or diminish bullying. The program recommendations of the Task Force shall be subject to review by the School Board before the programs are implemented. The duties of the Bullying/Cyber Bullying Prevention Task Force may be assigned to the school's scholar intervention team.

## **SCHOLAR EXPECTATIONS AND RIGHTS**

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

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Blackstone Valley Prep offers a rigorous instructional setting. Therefore, personal belongings that distract from the safe, respectful, and fast-paced instructional environment are not permitted.

Examples of items not allowed in Blackstone Valley Prep schools include:

- candy of any kind
- real, toy, or model weapons, including pocket knives, X-Acto knives, & water guns
- excessive amounts of cash
- illegal substances
- stuffed animals or dolls
- materials that contain inappropriate or offensive language, images or suggestions (e.g. songs, papers, lyrics, art, or notes).
- cell phones, radios, iPods, and portable gaming systems (see note below)

If a scholar is seen with any of the items in the list above, the item may be confiscated and not returned until the scholar's parent/guardian meets with a member of the school's leadership.

*Note:* Cell phones, radios, iPods, portable gaming systems, or other non-instructional electronic devices must be put away before entering the school property, unless explicit permission has been given by the Head of School. Any electronic equipment used without permission may be confiscated.

Scholars may bring cellphones to school for safety reasons, but they may never use cell phones in the school building without permission and supervision from a staff member. Failure to comply with this expectation may result in confiscation or another consequence.

#### *Scholar Contact During the Day*

Scholars will not be delivered messages during the school day unless it is an emergency. Scholars will only be given permission to use the school phone in cases of emergency or at the Office Manager's discretion.

#### *Search of Scholar Belongings*

Blackstone Valley Prep must maintain a safe and orderly environment for all our scholars and staff. In order to do so the school reserves the right to search any and all persons or belongings on school property for illicit material. Such searches can be either random or with reasonable suspicion and include scholar backpacks, person, pockets, lockers, etc.

#### *Book Borrowing at Blackstone Valley Prep*

Blackstone Valley Prep is extremely proud of how much our scholars love books. We are also proud of our book collections. In order for the collections to be maintained, they must be respected. Scholars must be accountable for any books they have borrowed and return them in a timely manner, in the near-same condition as when borrowed. Damage to materials may result in loss of book borrowing privileges, financial responsibility for the book, or community service.

### **SCHOLAR RECORDS**

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Federal and state laws provide parents/guardians and eligible scholars (those who are age 14 or older) with rights of confidentiality, access, and amendment relating to scholar records. Copies of the regulations detailing these rights are available from the school's Office Manager. The following is a general overview:

#### *Access and Amendment*

A parent/guardian or eligible scholar has the right to access scholar records, and to seek amendment, if the parent/guardian or eligible scholar believes them to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the scholar's privacy rights.

#### *Confidentiality*

Release of scholar records generally requires consent of the parent/guardian or eligible scholar. However, the regulations provide certain exceptions. Staff members and employees of the district have access to records as needed to perform their duties. Complete scholar records will only be sent to other schools with the consent of the parent/guardian. *Please note that at Blackstone Valley Prep scholar work and results are prominently displayed in classrooms and in the community.*

## DEFINITIONS

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- *Technology resources:* Any piece of hardware, software, accessory, or network infrastructure that is utilized by Blackstone Valley Prep in the implementation of a technology solution, and to support the use of the Internet, network access, or other computer use for scholars and staff
- *Inappropriate material:* Texts, graphics, pictures, or auditory content that is contradictory with the educational mission of Blackstone Valley Prep as set forth in this handbook. Examples of inappropriate material include, but are not limited to, content regarding illegal activities, discriminatory or defamatory content, or sexually provocative content
- *Hacking:* To gain access to a document, file, computer, or network infrastructure illegally or without permission
- *Cyberbullying:* Any bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which may include, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sound, data, texting or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic, or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, email, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications
- *Authorized user:* Any BVP staff member, scholar, or other individual authorized to use BVP computer systems and networks, and who has read, agreed to, and signed the Responsible Use Policy as set forth in this document
- *Social media:* Any website or application used to communicate informally with others, through texts, graphics, pictures, or other means

## INTERNET USAGE

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Access to the BVP network, including use of the Internet, is essential for scholar learning and teacher effectiveness. In order to promote Internet safety and maintain focus on educational excellence, BVP filters its web content and monitors usage. Filtering inappropriate content ensures that scholars remain safe while meeting the demands of 21st century work and learning.

It is the policy of BVP to fully comply with CIPA, the Children Information Protection Act. In accordance with this law, the Internet will be filtered to limit access to only educationally appropriate sites and block material deemed to be obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors in any way. BVP also blocks websites we believe to be counterproductive to learning goals.

In order to ensure that filtering is relevant, appropriate, and tailored to scholars and staff, BVP is committed to continuous evaluation of this policy. The field of 21st century learning is constantly evolving. In providing scholars with the best tools and learning opportunities, we will strive to exercise judgment and flexibility in the filtering policy. Family, teacher, and scholar input is integral to making sound adjustments to what is blocked. The Chief Executive Officer will be given discretion in order to make timely changes for educational purposes. Ultimately, this policy is determined by our Board of Directors.

To filter Internet web sites and content, BVP uses technology managed by the Operations team. During the school day, Internet access is filtered and scholar usage is monitored by teachers and staff. However, BVP cannot guarantee that this will prevent scholars from incidentally or purposefully accessing content that is not educationally appropriate. Scholars who find inappropriate material should immediately report their access to a teacher or administrator.

BVP regularly monitors scholar internet usage as part of our filtering system. Scholars found to be accessing content that raises concerns about their health and safety, or the health and safety of other members of the BVP community, may be referred to a medical professional by the school leadership team.

We envision a network of schools where all our scholars utilize safe and responsible Internet habits when browsing, researching, collaborating, or publishing on the Internet. Teachers actively supervise and guide scholars to support the scholars in becoming savvy and responsible users. Ultimately, however, scholar use of the Internet and school networks is a privilege, and scholars are expected to demonstrate PRIDE values and responsible habits when accessing the Internet, both at-school and at-home.

### *Inappropriate Use*

In situations where scholars fail to uphold our values and beliefs for responsible Internet use, scholars will face consequences for their actions. Violations and consequences for inappropriate scholar behavior are outlined in more detail in the 'Violations & Consequences' section of this document.

It is ultimately at the discretion of the leadership team at every school to determine whether a scholar's action or use of the Internet is considered inappropriate. Below are examples of inappropriate use of the Internet by scholars:

- Sending, receiving, displaying, or accessing language/images/links that are, by nature, defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually-oriented, racist, discriminatory, threatening, disruptive, harassing, or illegal
- Promoting drug or alcohol use
- Attempting to destroy/modify any data accessed on BVP's servers (including both scholar and staff data)
- Attempting to harm the network in any way (virus-spreading, hacking, disabling firewalls, etc.)
- Selling or promoting anything commercially
- Using a proxy or other software to bypass the web filtering system for the network
- Uploading, downloading, or redistributing copyrighted content without permission
- Sharing your own or any other scholar's personal information (including address, phone number, social security number, financial information, etc.)
- Logging into another scholar or staff account
- Leaving an account open and unattended
- Violating any law
- Hacking or gaining unauthorized access to any account
- Participating in any acts of cyberbullying
- Altering computer equipment or hardware

- Copying or replicating licensed software, published content, or other copyrighted work (plagiarism)

## **CYBERBULLYING**

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Blackstone Valley Prep takes matters of bullying, including cyberbullying, very seriously. Cyberbullying includes sending (or re-sending), posting (or re-posting), liking, or otherwise participating in the communication of information over the Internet that is offensive, harassing, threatening, crude, or otherwise inappropriate. Even when information is seemingly harmless, or done in a joking manner, it may be considered an act of cyberbullying. Scholars who participate in cyberbullying, either at-school or at-home, using school networks or public networks, will be subject to consequences outlined in this handbook, as well as additional consequences specifically detailed in the ‘Violations & Consequences’ section of this document.

## **SCHOOL-ISSUED EMAIL**

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Blackstone Valley Prep believes scholar access to email is an important aspect of technology literacy. Email access provides scholars with additional resources, including user-level access to programs and software online, as well as communication to- and from- teachers, peers, and community members. Scholars must be able to communicate effectively across the Internet, and, when used responsibly, email provides a safe and secure environment to do so.

Scholars who receive school-issued email accounts are responsible for the content sent and received using the email domain. Blackstone Valley Prep reserves the right to monitor all scholar emails and content without warrant or notice. Scholars may not use school-issued email servers to distribute any inappropriate material or participate in any forms of cyberbullying, as defined above. Scholars are expected to use their school-issued email at the direction of their teacher and school leadership team.

Scholars who participate in any inappropriate use of email are subject to consequences as outlined in this handbook, as well as the ‘Violations & Consequences’ section of this document. Consequences may include temporary or permanent loss of access to the BVP email domain.

Scholars have variable access to different features of school email, including ability to send/receive emails within and outside of the BVP domain, as well as different apps in the Google Apps for Education suite. This access will depend on a scholar’s grade level, as well as a scholar’s demonstration of responsible use. Scholars are not permitted to engage in chat-features, such as GChat, at any time while using BVP-issued email.

Scholars do not have access to most email provider websites through our web filtering system, but do have access to any Google email server. Scholars are not permitted to access personal email and/or apps while on school campuses, unless explicit permission is provided by a teacher or the school leadership team. When scholars are given permission to access personal email, all use of email will be supervised by school staff.

## **DEVICE CARE & USE**

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Scholars will have access to multiple types of devices and platforms throughout their time at BVP and are expected to demonstrate responsibility when handling and using technology resources. Teachers will work with scholars to ensure that they understand proper care and use of different technology devices, such that expectations for the care of devices are clear. Proper care of devices includes safe handling when transporting devices, ensuring a clear workspace when using devices, and returning devices to their proper location.

Scholars who willingly and intentionally damage or destroy technology resources that are provided to them by BVP will be subject to consequences as outlined in this handbook, and in more detail in our ‘Violations & Consequences’ section of this document.

## **BRING-YOUR-OWN-DEVICE POLICY**

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Blackstone Valley Prep envisions a technology environment that can leverage both BVP-owned resources, as well as scholar-owned resources. As such, scholars are permitted to bring personal devices to school at the discretion of a school’s leadership team and with written acknowledgement of their parent/guardian.

Scholars will only be permitted to use their device in class with explicit permission of a classroom teacher during that class time. Scholars may be able to use the device during free time, or before and after school while on school property, if permission is explicitly given by the leadership team at the school. School and network staff reserves the right to revoke this privilege to any scholar, or to the entire school, at any time, and for any reason.

Scholars are expected to adhere to the Responsible Use Policy when using any technology resource or device while at school, whether school-owned or scholar-owned. BVP assumes no responsibility for reimbursing or replacing any scholar-owned device that is lost, stolen, or damaged on school property, and will not provide any IT or related support to the use and care of the device.

## **TAKE HOME POLICY**

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BVP provides a 1:1 environment for our scholars, such that scholars have unlimited access to a laptop computer while at school, during after-school hours and during computer lab time as necessary. To provide a truly unrestricted technology environment, scholars may be able to take home devices for use while away from school for special projects, long weekends, vacations, or by teacher request. When a device is borrowed for a scholar’s use outside of the school, all aspects of the Responsible Use Policy apply, including responsible Internet and School Email use.

Proper return of the device means that upon return, the device is in working condition, and is returned along with any device accessories (chargers, headphones, etc). BVP retains the right to revoke a scholar’s ability to take home devices at any time.

## **VIOLATIONS & CONSEQUENCES**

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Scholars are expected to adhere to all policies in the Responsible Use Policy while using technology resources on BVP campuses, while connected to the BVP network, participating in any BVP-sponsored activities, in transit either to or from BVP on provided transportation, or while using BVP-owned devices outside of school.

Any violations to this policy are subject to disciplinary actions and consequences as they align to our this handbook, and are at the discretion of the school leadership team or network leadership team, including the Chief Executive Officer,

The range of disciplinary actions which may be taken against a violator of the Responsible Use Policy include, but are not limited to:

- Admonishments, warnings, and/or counseling

- Written reflection on the incident
- Community service
- Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities.
- Loss of Internet privileges
- Loss of the use of technology resources while at school
- After-school, lunch, or Saturday detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Referral to law enforcement authorities

Scholars who observe inappropriate uses of technology, or have reasonable grounds to believe that a scholar has acted inappropriately while utilizing technology, have a responsibility to report the violation to school authorities. Scholar reports of violations of the Responsible Use Policy may be made anonymously. Retaliations against a scholar for reporting a violation of the Responsible Use Policy are treated as an act of bullying and subject to the consequences expressed in the bullying section of this handbook.

*Damage or Loss of Technology Resources*

If a scholar damages, destroys, or loses any technology resource issued by Blackstone Valley Prep, the scholar and his/her family may be responsible for covering the cost to repair or replace the device or resource. The scholar may also be subject to additional consequences, including loss of Internet or technology privileges, or other disciplinary action as determined by the school.

If a scholar is involved in multiple instances of damage, destruction, or loss of technology, the school leadership team has the discretion to issue short-term or long-term suspensions of technology for the scholar, as well as in-school or out-of-school suspension. Consequences are dependent on the circumstances of the incident and the severity of the damage(s).

A device is considered stolen if the scholar/family has filed a police report summarizing the incident and all parties involved. It is up to the school leadership team to determine, given the description of the incident, if a scholar is deemed at-fault for the stolen device. Any report of a stolen device that is not confirmed with a police report is considered a ‘lost’ device.

If scholars and their family are responsible for replacement costs and are unable to pay for a replacement device, scholars may petition for a ‘work-off’ arrangement with a designated staff member at the approval of the Head of School or their designee. The scholar and staff member will agree to an appropriate work task and number of hours assigned to ‘work-off’ the replacement device. It is up to the discretion of the school leadership team if the scholar will have access to a replacement device in the interim.

## HEALTH POLICIES

### MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

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Medication may be administered to scholars during the school day only by a certified school nurse or their parents/guardians.

A School Medication Form must be completed for each prescribed medication to be administered during school hours. Morning medications must be administered by parent/guardian before the scholar comes to school. No medications will be administered without the completed forms.

Parents/guardians must deliver all medications (prescription and non-prescription) to the school nurse accompanied by the signed School Medication Form. In the absence of the school nurse, the medications may be delivered to an administrator who will put the medication in the locked medication cabinet or nurse's refrigerator and log it into the medication log.

All medications will be locked in the nurse's office medication cabinet unless it needs to be refrigerated. In this case, the medication will be stored in the refrigerator in the nurse's office.

A record of the administration of the medication will be kept in the nurse's office, including the name of the medication, date and time of administration, and person administering the medication.

Self-Administration of bronchial inhalers may be done with written physician authorization and permission of a parent/guardian. Inhalers will be stored in the health room with the other medications. The scholar will be supervised during self-administration of inhalers.

In the event that a scholar requires emergency administration of medication, the certified school nurse may administer medication as ordered by the physician. In the absence of the school nurse, a trained administrator or designated faculty member may give the emergency medication.

Administration of medications during off school activities (field trips) must be done by the scholar's parent/guardian unless the school nurse teacher accompanies the scholar. The only exception to this rule is bronchial inhalers which may be self-administered with written permission and supervision by a faculty member. The inhalers will be carried by a faculty member.

School Medication Forms are only accepted for one school year. The form must be completed each school year. Medications must be picked up at the end of the school year or they will be discarded.

### IMMUNIZATION

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Rhode Island State law requires that all children entering school provide proof of immunization against DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis), IPV/OPV, MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella), Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Varicella (chicken pox). These requirements can be waived only if a properly signed health or religious exemption form is filed with the school. Every scholar must have on file the required immunizations before they can be enrolled at a BVP school. Failure to comply with immunization requirements may result in school exclusion.

### SCREENINGS

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#### *Vision*

- A vision screening will be done upon entry to school, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, fifth grade, seventh grade and ninth grade. This does not replace complete visual screenings but any vision screening failures will be referred for full visual screening.

### *Hearing*

- Hearing screenings will be done in kindergarten, grade one, grade two, and grade three. Any scholars suspected of having hearing problems will be referred for hearing screening by their physician or the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

### *Dental*

- Dental screening will be offered (dependent upon funding) to all elementary scholars.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

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In the event that a scholar is in need of support for a mental health crisis, the scholar will be assessed by a licensed mental health provider (school social worker/counselor/psychologist), who may make referrals for services based on the needs of the scholar.

A licensed mental health professional is part of the multidisciplinary school-based team to help address the social/emotional needs of scholars.

## **DCYF MANDATED REPORTING**

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All persons in Rhode Island are required by law to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect.

Child abuse and neglect means the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child under the age of eighteen (18) by a person, including any employee of a residential facility or any staff person providing out-of-home care, who is responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances indicating harm or threatened harm to the child's health or welfare. The term encompasses both acts and omissions on the part of a responsible person.

A person responsible for a child's welfare includes the child's parent, guardian, foster parent, an employee of a public or private residential home or facility or other person legally responsible under State law for the child's welfare in a residential setting, or any staff person providing out of home care. Out of home care means child day care, i.e. family child care, group child care, and center-based child care.

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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The Rhode Island General Assembly passed legislation (RIPL Chapter 05-074/05-76, amending Section 16-2-9 of the General Laws 16-2 entitled "School Committees and Superintendents") in June 2005 to address the health of scholars and employees.

The law was developed in accordance with the 2004 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, Section 204 of Public Law 108-265.

- Whereas, children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive;
- Whereas, good health fosters scholar attendance and education;

- Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;
- Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity and obesity, often are established in childhood;
- Whereas, 33% of high school scholars do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school scholars do not attend daily physical education classes;
- Whereas, only 2% of children ages 2 to 19 eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;
- Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores and snack bars include low- nutrition food and beverages like soda, candy bars, chips and cookies;
- Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints;
- Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, Blackstone Valley Prep is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect scholars' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Blackstone Valley Prep that:

- The school network will engage scholars, families, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All scholars in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active, as well as educated as to the importance of eating healthy and being physically active.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Rhode Island Nutrition Requirements for RI School Food Service programs*.
- Child nutrition professionals will provide scholars with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of scholars; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the scholars in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings, as well as adequate time for scholars to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program with after-school snacks).
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical activity to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.

## **NUTRITION EDUCATION**

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Blackstone Valley Prep has a comprehensive curriculum for all scholars from grades kindergarten through Grade 12. All K-12 staff will integrate nutritional themes from the Rhode Island Department of Education *Health Education Framework* and/or the Rhode Island Family & Consumer Science Framework into daily lessons when appropriate. The health benefits of good nutrition should be emphasized. Nutritional themes include, but are not limited to:

- Knowledge of MyPlate
- Heart healthy choices
- Sources and varieties of foods
- Dietary guidelines for Americans
- Diet and disease prevention
- Understanding calories
- Healthy snacks
- Healthy breakfast
- Food labels
- Bone health and osteoporosis
- Major nutrients
- Multicultural influences
- Serving portion sizes
- Proper food safety/sanitization
- Promoting and identifying nutrient dense foods
- Reducing the risk of food borne illness

### *Family Nutrition Education*

- At least once a year, nutrition education will be available to parents/guardians at all grade levels.
- Nutrition education may be provided in the form of handouts, school newsletters, postings on the family portal, presentations, or any other appropriate means available to reach parents/guardians and families.

### *Staff Nutrition Education*

Nutrition and physical activity education opportunities will be offered to all school staff. These may include, but not be limited to, distribution of educational and informational materials, presentations and/or workshops that focus on nutrition and healthy lifestyles, health assessments, and fitness activities. The purpose of staff nutrition and physical activity education will be to:

- Encourage all school staff to improve their own personal health and wellness
- Improve staff morale
- Create positive role modeling
- Build the commitment of staff to promote the health of scholars
- Build the commitment of staff to help improve the school nutrition and physical activity environment

## **FOODS & DRINKS ON CAMPUS**

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### *Food*

- Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day, and throughout the instructional day, will meet RI Nutritional Guidelines for school vending and a la carte.
- When possible, products will consist of nutrient-dense foods such as whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and dairy products.

### *Beverages*

- Only milk, water, and beverages containing 100% fruit juices with *no added sweeteners\** may be served throughout the instructional day.

*\*Added sweetener is any additive, including natural or artificial additives, that enhance the sweetness of the beverage, including added sugar, but does not include the naturally occurring sugars that are contained in milk or fruit juice*

### *Cafeteria Environment*

- A cafeteria environment that provides scholars with a relaxed, enjoyable climate shall be maintained.
- The cafeteria environment is a place where scholars have:
  - Adequate space to eat with pleasant surroundings.
  - Adequate time to eat meals. (The School Nutrition Association recommends at least 20 minutes for lunch from the time the scholars are seated with their food.)
  - Convenient access to hand washing or hand sanitizing facilities before meals.

### *Fundraising*

- Non-food fundraisers are encouraged.
- Fundraisers that promote community-building physical activity are strongly encouraged.
- Any food fundraisers that do not meet the requirements of “healthy beverage” or “healthy snack” must be sold during after-school hours in accordance with Rhode Island statutes. Family fundraisers may be held, but with emphasis on community-building and in compliance with healthy food requirements.

### *Teacher-to-Scholar Rewards and Incentives*

- The use of foods or beverages as reward, acknowledgement, or incentive in the classroom or school environment is strongly discouraged.
- Food or beverage will not be withheld for punishment.

### *Classroom Snacks*

- Classroom snacks must comply with RI Nutrition Guidelines and must be nut-free. Exemptions to this policy need to be documented in an IEP or 504 plan. Suggested snacks and guidelines: [www.kidsfirstri.org](http://www.kidsfirstri.org)

### *Celebrations*

- The Blackstone Valley Prep community celebrates birthdays enthusiastically at school gatherings. Out of fairness to our scholars and our desire to ensure an academic environment free of distractions, we ask that families not send gifts, food for the class, or visit scholars on their birthdays.

- Teachers will distribute birthday invitations on behalf of scholars, though we request that families make their invitations as inclusive as possible.

#### *Exploring Cultural Diversity/Experiences*

- Recognizing the importance of studying other cultures, and that many cultural traditions and practices may include food items, any activities occurring during the school day will follow the Rhode Island Nutrition Guidelines for school vending and a la carte items as much as possible.
- These should be limited to a designated number of times per year and must be approved by the Head of School.

#### *Peanut/Nut Free Environment*

- There is a high incidence of peanut/nut allergy in scholars attending our schools. All Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy schools are Peanut/Nut Free.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

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- Physical Activity (PA) is defined as *any leisure or non-leisure movement of the body that expends energy, such as exercise, sports, dance, mobility therapy, brisk walking, or other body movements that result in an increased heart rate.*
- Physical Education (PE) is defined as *a program supported by a sequential, developmentally appropriate K-12 curriculum, in accordance with the Rhode Island Physical Education Framework, enabling scholars to develop the knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, attitudes and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physical activity throughout their lives.*
- Adapted Physical Education and Physical Activities are defined as *those activities designed for a scholar with special needs or other health conditions who require alternative safe and appropriate physical activities that meet his/her specific needs.*

#### *Physical Education*

- PE and/or adapted PE will be available for all scholars.
- Every scholar in grades K-12 should participate in regular PE and directed PA with the state mandated requirement as the minimum time allotment.
- Blackstone Valley Prep will maintain specific learning goals and objectives for Physical Education. A sequential and developmentally appropriate curriculum shall be designed, implemented, and evaluated to help scholars develop the knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, attitudes, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physical activity throughout their lives.
- Blackstone Valley Prep will implement recommended guidelines for school PE/PA established by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) enabling scholars to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness. These guidelines recommend we
  - Expose scholars to a wide variety of physical activities

- Teach physical skills to help maintain a lifetime of health and fitness
- Encourage self-monitoring in order to set and achieve fitness goals
- Individualize fitness/activity programs
- Help scholars to establish a personal fitness baseline and create individual fitness benchmarks to monitor progress
- Be active/positive role models

Blackstone Valley Prep will implement and design PE/PA guidelines for scholars based on NAPSE guidelines:

- Scholars should accumulate 30-60 minutes of age appropriate physical activity most days of the week.
- Scholars should engage in a variety of age appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health
- Extended periods of daytime inactivity are discouraged
- Implement health-related fitness assessments:
  - Introduce developmentally appropriate components of a health-related fitness assessment (e.g. FitnessGram, President’s Challenge) in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11
  - Scholars/families should receive confidential results to understand scholar level of fitness for creating fitness plans
  - Aggregate results will be used to measure and report the policy impact
- A restriction on physical activity for disciplinary purposes is discouraged.

## **ATHLETICS**

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Blackstone Valley Prep believes that athletics are an important part of the educational experience for many scholars. BVP fields soccer and basketball teams at the middle and high school level. BVP may field additional teams based on available resources/coaches and scholar interest.

In order to be able to participate in athletics at the high school level, a scholar must be passing 60 percent of their classes at the end of a quarter. If a scholar is not passing 60 percent of their classes at the end of a quarter, then they are ineligible to participate in athletic competitions until the following quarter, even in the case that the grades are improved prior to the end of the quarter.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

Children attending BVP must live in the approved catchment area for BVP which includes the town/city limits of Central Falls, Cumberland, Lincoln and Pawtucket. Enforcement of address verification is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer and all staff members are required to report any suspected address fraud to the Chief Executive Officer for review and investigation.

BVP holds an annual lottery in March to fill any available seats for the coming school year. All applicants are notified of their standing within 30 days. Failure to respond within two weeks of

initial notification is considered a decline of the offer to enroll. If an offer is declined, an offer will be extended to the next student on the waitlist.

Upon accepting a seat, families begin to complete the enrollment process. However, a newly enrolled scholar absent for the first five days of the school year without having communicated extenuating circumstances to the school will forfeit the seat and BVP will extend an offer to the next child on the waitlist.

Once a scholar is enrolled and consistently attending school, the scholar remains actively enrolled *until*:

- a. They enroll in another school, public or private; or
- b. They declare an intent to homeschool, in writing, with the district of residence; or
- c. They are absent for five days while visiting another school outside the BVP network. (during this time period, however, the scholar will be marked absent); or
- d. They are absent ten or more consecutive days

Any of the above actions will lead to the scholar being considered withdrawn and a seat will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

If a scholar moves out of the approved catchment area of BVP prior to January 31, the scholar may remain enrolled at BVP through January 31; if a scholar moves out the approved catchment area of BVP after January 31 but before the end of the school year, the scholar may stay enrolled through the end of that school year. If a family moves out of the approved catchment area of BVP over the summer break, they are disenrolled.

Only scholars who reside in the approved catchment area of BVP are eligible for out-of-district tuition support (e.g. special education placements). Effective as of the date of move, BVP is not obligated to pay tuition for an out-of-district placement.

Exceptions to the above may be granted by the Chief Executive Officer and allow for continued enrollment (e.g. unexpected death in the family, emergency move, illness).

Please note that nothing included within this enrollment policy intends to or does supersede any state or federal laws, including, but not limited to, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Blackstone Valley Prep does not offer a virtual learning option for students. All classes are conducted in-person in our school facilities. From time to time, virtual learning may be used by BVP teachers in the case of school closure due to emergencies such as an outbreak or inclement weather. This virtual learning will be conducted by BVP faculty and staff. Out-of-district placements for special education students remain the purview of the IEP team. Out-of-district placements for disciplinary reasons remain the purview of the Chief Executive Officer.

### **School Assignment Policy**

If a scholar is enrolled into a grade that exists at multiple BVP schools (i.e grades K-4 at BVP elementary schools), that scholar will be randomly assigned to one of the schools that serves that grade. Exceptions to the random assignment process may include:

- Program assignment based on specialized learning needs,
- Assignment to ensure that incoming scholars are placed in the same school that their verified sibling already attends, or attended in the past
- Assignment based on the preference for children of BVP staff members,
- Extreme hardships as approved by the Chief Executive Officer or designee.

Parents/guardians of scholars who meet the criteria for exceptions and desire/require a reassignment after the lottery has been run should submit a request in writing to the Chief Executive Officer and the BVP enrollment team (enrollment@blackstonevalleyprep.org) for review.

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

BVP is committed to providing families with important information as soon as it is available-- and in real-time when possible.

Below are just a few of the ways BVP provides ongoing communication to families:

- *ParentSquare*: BVP families have access to an online portal, inclusive of a school-wide calendar, links to important documents, and contact information for all BVP staff. A parent/guardian or family member must first activate his/her account. More information is available through each school's office.
- *Writing*: BVP regularly sends home important letters via mail or by giving information to scholars to bring home at the end of the day.
- *Social media*: BVP is proud to provide families with real-time information via social media. Be sure to follow us @BVPrep on Twitter. **The most accurate source for information, however, is your school, not social media.**
- *Website*: BVP regularly communicates important information via our website at blackstonevalleyprep.org. Be sure to visit the "For Families" tab on our website.

### PHONE CALLS

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Every member of the Blackstone Valley Prep staff publishes his or her cell phone number at the beginning of the year. Scholars and parents/guardians are encouraged to call teachers before 9PM. If a teacher does not return a message within one business day, the school's administration should be informed. Scholars and families should be respectful of staff work phones.

### HOME MEET & GREETINGS

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At Blackstone Valley Prep we greatly value strong family-school relationships. Therefore, teachers and members of the administration may conduct meet & greets throughout the academic year. The purpose of these visits may include opportunities for teachers and families to meet each other in a setting other than the school, for teachers to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of scholars and their families, and for families to gain familiarity and a deeper understanding of both their scholar's teacher(s) and the great BVP community as a whole.

### CONFERENCES

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All families are invited to schedule appointments or to stop by to connect with their child's teachers. Teachers may request mandatory family conferences with families of scholars who are in need of academic and behavioral support.

### FAMILY CONCERNS

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If a family member has a concern or disagreement about a classroom event, curricular decision, or other academic issue, they should first contact the teacher to attempt to resolve the disagreement through informal discussion. If the concern is not adequately resolved, the parent/guardian should

request an in-person meeting. The teacher will contact the Head of School and schedule the follow-up conversation.

We are committed to addressing the concerns of our families and seeking a resolution that first and foremost benefits the academic development of the scholar towards success in the college of their choice.

If the concerns are not met after holding a meeting with the Head of School, families should request the written form to communicate concerns with the Chief Executive Officer or the Board of Directors.

## **DONATING TO BLACKSTONE VALLEY PREP**

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As a public school, BVP receives per pupil allocation of funds from both the state and our sending communities. However, outside financial support is critical to our success. Your support is welcomed in order to help our schools grow to scale.

In the past, generous donations have allowed us to grow our music and enrichment programs, as well as hire in advance for new leadership positions so there is ample time to prepare for a new school to open. You can visit <https://blackstonevalleyprep.org/donate/> for more information about how to support BVP schools.

## **FAMILY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL & BVP VOLUNTEERS**

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Blackstone Valley Prep is a partnership made up of the school leadership, teachers, scholars, and families. Although the job of making decisions about school policies belongs to the Head of School and Chief Executive Officer, family involvement is not only welcome, but absolutely vital to the success of the school. The Family Leadership Council (FLC) is the family involvement organization at each Blackstone Valley Prep school. The mission of the Family Leadership Council is to promote family involvement, advocate politically for our community, and support the school, and our scholars and their families. The FLC organizes volunteer opportunities and creates ways to support our scholars in their achievements. There are regular meetings of the Family Leadership Council at each campus. All families are welcome and encouraged to get involved in the FLC.

Any volunteers, chaperones, or regular visitors to the school are required to submit a current background (BCI) check and sign a Visitor/Volunteer Agreement. BCI checks can be performed by a person's local police department or at the state BCI office in Providence. These checks cost \$5 and are valid for one year. If any incidents are reported on a BCI check, school administration will review the BCI to assess any possible concerns related to scholar safety and determine volunteer eligibility.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASSMENT**

### **NONDISCRIMINATION**

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Blackstone Valley Prep does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA).

In addition, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to Blackstone Valley Prep on the basis of race, color, creed, gender identity/expression, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. No person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges, or access to the courses of study offered by Blackstone Valley Prep on the basis of race, gender identity/expression, color, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation.

Finally, pregnant scholars are allowed to remain in regular education classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant scholars throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before giving birth (Title IX).

## **HARASSMENT**

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Blackstone Valley Prep is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, scholars, vendors, and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. Blackstone Valley Prep requires all employees and scholars to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, scholars, and all members of the school community.

## **INCLUSIVE POLICIES**

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### *Health Classes*

- All scholars will study sex and gender in their health classes, including sexual orientation and gender identity in accordance with National K-12 Sexuality Standards as promulgated by the Rhode Island Department of Education ([National Sexuality Standards](#)). Teachers should have an understanding of, or ask for assistance when addressing these topics. When health classes are segregated by sex for age appropriate information, scholars are allowed to participate in the class that aligns with their identified gender.
- Scholars will understand safe sex for any sexual encounter and will learn about the difference, and possible transition between, sex and gender.

### *Gay-Straight Alliance*

- Any school in BVP can create and actively run a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), a protective space for the LGBTQ+ community and its allies where they can share ideas to benefit their school and make it a safe environment for the community. GSAs will be offered the same opportunities and privileges as other extracurricular groups, and their endeavors are treated equally and held to the same procedural guidelines.

### *Dances*

- Scholars are not limited to their choice of date based on gender identity or expression. For example, male scholars can bring male scholars to a dance or prom. Any title given at dances (i.e. prom king/prom queen) can be a same sex couple who will be given the titles appropriate to their gender identity (i.e. Prom king and king / queen and queen).

## **POLICIES FOR GENDER NONCONFORMING SCHOLARS**

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### *Definitions*

- Queer - An umbrella term used to describe a sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression that does not conform to heteronormative society.
- Questioning - The questioning of one's gender, sexual identity, sexual orientation, or all three is a process of exploration by people who may be unsure, still exploring, and concerned about applying a social label to themselves for various reasons.
- Homosexual - a person who is sexually attracted to people of their own sex
- Lesbian - A homosexual woman
- Gay - A homosexual, especially a man
- Bisexual - A person who is sexually attracted to both men and women
- Sexual Orientation - a person's sexual identity in relation to the gender to which they are attracted
- Transgender - A person's gender differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Scholars may refer to themselves as trans, transgender, male-to-female (MTF), female-to-male (FTM), genderqueer, non-binary, gender-fluid, two-spirit, trans boy, trans girl, and a variety of other terms.
- Sex - What body parts a person was born with. Their sex organs.
- Gender Identity - A person's deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their own gender, which can include being female, male, another gender, or no gender. Gender identity is an innate and largely inflexible part of a person's identity. One's gender identity can be the same or different from the gender assigned at birth.
- Gender Expression - The manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.
- Gender Nonconforming - A term for people whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations, such as "feminine" boys, "masculine" girls, and those who are perceived as androgynous.
- Transition - The process in which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another.
- Gender - The state of being male, female, or other (typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones)

#### *Identification Documents, Names, and Pronouns*

- Blackstone Valley Prep will treat scholars consistent with their gender identity and/or expression even if their education records or identification documents indicate a different sex.

#### *Sex-Segregated Activities and Facilities*

- For all sex-segregated activities and facilities, transgender scholars will be allowed to participate in such activities and access such facilities consistent with their gender identity.
- Restrooms and Locker Rooms

Blackstone Valley Prep will provide separate facilities on the basis of sex, but must allow transgender scholars access to such facilities consistent with their gender identity.

- A school may not require transgender scholars to use facilities inconsistent with their gender identity or to use individual-user facilities when other scholars are not required to do so. A school may, however, make individual-user options available to all scholars who voluntarily seek additional privacy.

#### *Athletics Activities and Clubs*

- All scholars should have the opportunity to participate in athletic activities and clubs (including competitive sports) in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on a scholar's records.

#### *Privacy/Confidentiality*

- School staff shall not disclose any information that may reveal a scholar's transgender status to others, including parents or guardians and other school staff, unless legally required to do so or unless the scholar has authorized such disclosure. Transgender and gender nonconforming scholars have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share private information. The fact that a scholar chooses to use a different name, to transition at school, or to disclose their transgender status to staff or other scholars does not authorize school staff to disclose a scholar's personally identifiable or medical information. When contacting the parent or guardian of a transgender or gender nonconforming scholar, school staff should use the scholar's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the scholar's gender assigned at birth unless the scholar, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise.

#### *Dress Code*

- Scholars at BVP shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity and expression, including maintaining a gender neutral appearance within the constraints of the dress codes adopted by the school. School staff shall not enforce a school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender nonconforming scholars than other scholars.

#### *Scholar Transitions*

- The school shall accept the gender identity that each scholar asserts. There is no medical or mental health diagnosis or treatment threshold that scholars must meet in order to have their gender identity recognized and respected. The assertion may be evidenced by an expressed desire to be consistently recognized as the sex consistent with their gender identity. Scholars ready to socially transition may initiate a process to change their name, pronoun, attire, and access to preferred programs, activities, and facilities consistent with their gender identity. Each scholar has a unique process for transitioning. The school shall customize support to optimize each scholar's equal access to the network's educational programs and activities.
- *Amendment of Education Records:* A school may receive requests to correct a scholar's education records to make them consistent with the scholar's gender identity. Updating a transgender scholar's education records to reflect the scholar's gender identity and new name will help protect privacy and ensure personnel consistently use appropriate names and pronouns.

## VISITOR POLICY

We are proud of the work our scholars and staff do each day and welcome visitors to see our achievement and progress in action.

Blackstone Valley Prep always welcomes and encourages visitors, both from within and outside of our school community. However, in order to assure the safety and well-being of all scholars and staff, all visitors – including parents and guardians – are required to report to the office at the main entrance. Visitors may be required to sign a Visitor/Volunteer Agreement and have a visitor's pass once they have checked in with the Office Manager. Any visitor who does not report to the office, or is found in the building without authorization and a visitor's pass, will be asked to leave immediately and the authorities called if the request is not followed.

Blackstone Valley Prep maintains an open door policy with our parents/guardians and families, provided they are not a distraction to the learning environment. Family members who are over 18 are welcome to come and observe classes on an appointment basis.

Family members are also welcome to request meetings with any member of the staff. Meetings will be scheduled at the staff member's earliest possible convenience. If requests for a meeting are not met, family members should report the concern to the administration.

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the Office Manager either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians contact scholars in their classrooms, including Homework Club and detention, or attempt to withdraw scholars from the building without notifying and receiving permission from the Office Manager.

*Please note that while families may visit the school at any time, family visitations to their own child's classroom are generally not permitted during the first six weeks of school. This allows teachers to establish a strong classroom culture that is focused on academic learning and is distraction-free.*

### **DISRUPTIVE VISITORS & RESTRICTED ACCESS**

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Blackstone Valley Prep works hard to maintain a safe and orderly environment for teachers and scholars. To that end, the school reserves the right to restrict visitors (including family members of scholars and staff) who do not display the PRIDE values of the larger community. Examples of disruptive visitors include those who raise their voice, use profanity, threaten scholars or staff, or are physically or verbally aggressive in any way.

If a visitor's access must be restricted due to inappropriate behavior of any kind, they will receive a letter outlining the offenses that led to the restricted access and will be notified as to proper procedures for contact and communication with both staff and their scholar while on Blackstone Valley Prep property. If, after a visitor has received a restricted access letter, he/she continues to disrupt the BVP learning environment, greater steps may be taken including notification of the proper authorities.

## ADDENDUM - COVID 19 POLICIES FOR 2022-2023

These policies replace any previous BVP Covid policies and are subject to being updated as guidance and situations change.

### **Family Expectations:**

Complete annual online symptomatology attestation and testing consent at the beginning of the year.

Notify school regarding reasoning for scholar absence, medical or non medical.

Keep your scholar home if they have one major (coughing, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell) or two minor symptoms without a known cause (congestion/runny nose, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, headache)

Note: If the symptoms are allergy related, please contact the school nurse for next steps.

Notify the school immediately if your scholar or someone in the household tests positive for COVID.

Follow nurse guidance regarding isolation/quarantine, masking and action steps when there is high transmission.

### **Staff Expectations:**

All staff hired to BVP after October 18, 2021 are required to show evidence of having received their primary series of the COVID - 19 vaccination prior to their first day of employment.

Notify the nurse immediately if they or someone in their household tests positive for COVID.

Follow nurse guidance regarding isolation/quarantine, masking, and action steps when there is high transmission.

Communicate to the office manager or nurse any reasons for a scholar's absence, if known.

Contact nurse if a scholar is displaying symptoms qualifying them to be a probable case:

one major (coughing, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell) or two minor symptoms without a known cause (congestion/runny nose, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, headache)

### **School Nurse Expectations:**

#### [Track and follow up on attendance](#)

The School Nurse will gather data regarding absences and communicate with families in order to reduce the numbers of chronically absent scholars. Chronically absent scholars are those who have been absent for 10% or more of the school year OR two days in a month

When able, School Nurse will follow up with any scholar who is marked chronically absent on the first of the month with a notice recommending a physician note if absences are related to illness.

#### Conduct COVID testing and provide follow up guidance

Nurses will use clinical skills to identify probable cases, monitoring for two minor symptoms or one major symptom. If antigen tests are available in school and the family has consented, the school nurse can test the scholar.

Scholars and staff members who have symptoms but test negative will wear a well fitted mask for the remainder of the day OR go home to rest and return when symptoms resolve, based on the judgment of the school nurse.

For scholars and staff members who have been symptomatic but not tested positive to return to school, a physician's note or negative rapid/antigen test is required. At home tests are acceptable; BVP will trust the family's communication.

If symptoms worsen, requiring 3 days of absence, BVP recommends seeing a physician. A doctor's note is recommended if a scholar has 2-3 non consecutive absences in a month related to illness.

#### Provide guidance for Isolation/Quarantine

If a scholar or staff member tests positive, they are required to isolate for 5 days and wear a mask for 10. The "day 1" is counted from the onset of symptoms or the positive test, whichever was earlier.

If a scholar or staff member is a close contact of a member of their household, they may come to school. For the following 10 days, any household close contacts who BVP does not know are vaccinated will be subject to "Monitor to Stay" protocols: send home if they develop any one symptom (minor or major) and strongly recommend wearing a mask.

#### Implement High Transmission Action steps

In case of high transmission, as defined by the Rhode Island Department of Health, BVP will implement the following action steps:

- Create Stable Pods for grades K-6 wherever possible
- Track cases in grades 7-12 and follow RIDOH guidelines regarding outbreak response
- Increase cleaning of schools
- Notify the school community, including RIDOH recommendations
- Change and communicate event guidance to recommend testing prior to the event and masks at the event

#### Communicate with families and staff

If there are 1-2 cases simultaneously in a class, the Nurse will send the : [Classroom Notice](#).

If there is an outbreak, the Nurse will send the [Outbreak Notice](#)

An outbreak is defined as:

- 10% of a classroom (or 3 Cases) in grades K-8
- 10% of the school in HS
- 10% of a sports team

### **Recommendations to families, staff, and scholars**

BVP strongly recommends that all members of the BVP community get vaccinated against COVID-19 and keep their vaccinations up to date.

For events, sports, and club participation, BVP recommends that anyone who is immunocompromised or considered high risk wear a mask while participating. In addition, BVP recommends that anyone participating in these activities who is a known contact of a positive person wear a mask for 10 days and test on day 5.

Masks are recommended for all visitors to BVP.

## **Appendix A:**

## Scholar-Family-School Compact

### Scholar-Family-School Compact and Handbook Acknowledgement

This compact is established to unite the families and educators of Blackstone Valley Prep towards the common goal of preparing all scholars for success in college and the world beyond.

<b>FAMILY</b> <i>As a Blackstone Valley Prep family, we agree to:</i>	<b>SCHOLAR</b> <i>As a Blackstone Valley Prep scholar, I agree to:</i>	<b>STAFF</b> <i>As a Blackstone Valley Prep employee, I certify that the school agrees to:</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that my child arrives at school on-time and attends school regularly. I have read the attendance policy in the BVP Family Handbook and understand the school's policy regarding lateness, early dismissals, excused and unexcused absences.</li> <li>2. Ensure that my child wears the appropriate school uniform daily, as explained in the dress code section of the BVP Family Handbook and the School Supplement.</li> <li>3. Make the school a safe space by supporting and modeling the school's PRIDE values and behavioral expectations.</li> <li>4. Communicate regularly with my scholar's teachers regarding academic and behavioral performance. I will attend as many events as I can at the school including family conferences.</li> <li>5. Reach out to the school directly to provide feedback and discuss the growth of the school community.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Show <u>perseverance</u> by always working hard to achieve my personal best.</li> <li>2. Show <u>respect</u> for myself and others in our school community, and the learning environment by being part of a team and supporting my fellow classmates.</li> <li>3. Show <u>integrity</u> by being honest with myself and others, and always trying to do the right thing whether or not others are looking.</li> <li>4. Show <u>discipline</u> by making appropriate choices about my behavior and my work.</li> <li>5. Show <u>enthusiasm</u> by bringing a passion for learning and growing.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that valuable school time is utilized thoughtfully and efficiently so that the school can provide our scholars with an education that is both academically rigorous and culturally responsive.</li> <li>2. Make the school a safe and inviting environment by consistently reinforcing school values.</li> <li>3. Communicate regularly with families regarding their child's behavioral and academic performance through progress reports, report cards, family conferences, telephone contact, and by welcoming families to the school.</li> <li>4. Exemplify and model the value of respect for self, scholars, families, and others in our school community</li> <li>5. Constantly monitor the strengths, weaknesses, and progress of our scholars, both academically and emotionally. We will provide extra support to our scholars as needed.</li> </ol>
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> <i>Family Signature</i>	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> <i>Scholar's Signature</i>	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> <i>Teacher's Signature</i>
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> <i>Date</i>	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> <i>Date</i>	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> <i>Date</i>
		<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> <i>Teacher's Signature</i>
		<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> <i>Date</i>

**Appendix B:  
School Medication Form**



# Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy

**PERSEVERANCE. RESPECT. INTEGRITY. DISCIPLINE. ENTHUSIASM.**

## SCHOOL MEDICATION FORM OFFICE OF THE SCHOOL NURSE

Name of Scholar \_\_\_\_\_ Gr. \_\_\_\_\_

The above named scholar is a patient of mine and is currently under medical care. As the result of the medical condition listed below, medication needs to be given during the regular school day according to the following protocol:

Medication

Reason for the medication

Time medication is to be administered

Directions for administration

Scholar may self-administer medication with supervision:      YES              NO

The medication for this scholar will be properly labeled and carry my name as the prescribing physician.

Physician's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### PARENT AUTHORIZATION

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ enrolled at Blackstone Valley Prep hereby agree to allow designated school personnel to administer the prescribed medication to my scholar as ordered by the physician. Medication must be in its original container and properly labeled with the scholar's name, name of medication and dosage, strength and administration instructions.

**Appendix C:  
Visitor/Volunteer Agreement**



# Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy

**PERSEVERANCE. RESPECT. INTEGRITY. DISCIPLINE. ENTHUSIASM.**

## Visitor/Volunteer Agreements

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to the expectations and procedures listed below when visiting a BVP campus or serving as a designated volunteer, including acting as a chaperone on a BVP field trip. I also recognize that RI state law requires all school volunteers to complete a BCI check and to have it on file with the school office in advance of serving as a volunteer.

### Expectations & Procedures for Visitors and Volunteers:

- Model BVP's PRIDE values for our scholars and hold them accountable.
- Please do not bring anyone else with you into the building.
- Sign in upon arriving and sign out when leaving.
- Wear a BVP Visitor/Volunteer badge/sticker.
- See something, say something. It takes all adults feeling responsible for the care and well-being of our scholars. If you see a scholar make a choice that does not meet BVP's PRIDE core values, please make our school staff aware.
- Confidentiality is required. BVP must adhere to all Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines. Respecting the privacy of our scholars is both necessary and something we handle with care. Please do not disclose student names or information, regarding any interactions or observations.
- Do not take pictures of children and post them to social media. We have many families who do not wish to have their children's photos shared on social media.
- Field trip chaperones are incredibly helpful to have with us. Please keep in mind some additional expectations when serving as a chaperone.
  - Riding the bus is the default. Ask your point of contact in advance of the field trip if you are unsure whether you need to drive instead.
  - Before reaching your destination, know your assigned scholars' names and have a plan for what signal or call & response you can use to get everyone's attention when you need it.
  - Stay together—always.
  - Plan for a bathroom break when everyone goes. One-off trips to the restroom are discouraged.
  - Avoid being alone with one child and in turn, never leave a child unattended.
  - No special snacks for your group--no exceptions. Scholars have the option for home or school lunch and BVP provides a snack for longer field trips.
  - Please do not give permission to anyone else to take photos, video, or interview scholars.

- Bring your own lunch or have a plan for getting lunch. Remember we are a nut-free school, even on field trips.
- Adhere to the schedule that teachers provide.
- Keep all interactions positive.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

BVP Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix D:  
Individual School Supplement**

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# Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy

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**PERSEVERANCE. RESPECT. INTEGRITY. DISCIPLINE. ENTHUSIASM.**

**Individual School Supplement - <CAMPUS NAME>**

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