

Bear River Charter School Family Handbook



**BEAR
RIVER
CHARTER
SCHOOL**

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Bear River Charter School Parent Handbook

I. Introduction

The Bear River Charter School (BRCS) Family Handbook has been prepared as a guideline and information resource for students and parents/guardians regarding aspects of school policy as it pertains specifically to students and parents. These policies are presented as a matter of information only and cannot be an all-comprehensive resource covering all circumstances and situations in which the parents or students may find themselves, nor can it serve as an all-encompassing resource covering all policies and procedures which may pertain to the school. If at any time a parent or student has questions or concerns about these policies or any other aspect of his/her engagement with the school, the student or parent is responsible to seek clarification from the school administration. These policies supersede all and any prior school policies, oral or written, concerning conditions of parent and student involvement. The school reserves the right to alter, withdraw, or add to any or all sections of the Parent Handbook without prior notice. The following policies are not a contract and do not legally bind BRCS in any way.

Expectations to Ensure Student Success

Students, parents, and teachers each have a major role in achieving student success.

STUDENTS

- Attend school each day, be on time, and bring required materials to class.
- Know class expectations; complete assignments, homework and outside school projects and turn them in on time. Stay after school and get extra help when needed.
- Communicate with parents concerning what is required in each class and the progress being made.

PARENTS

- Make education a priority and take an active interest in what is happening at school.
- Provide a quiet area and a consistent time for the completion of homework assignments and projects.
- Monitor completion of homework assignments.
- Contact a teacher whenever a concern arises.
- Require school attendance in accordance with Utah's Compulsory Attendance Law.
- Attend Parent-Teacher Conferences.

FACULTY AND STAFF

- Make our number one priority the substantial improvement of students' achievement in school.
- Ensure that teachers and administrators make time available for parent conferences.
- Ensure that parents are treated with respect and courtesy when visiting or calling the school for information.
- Make all expectations, whether academic or behavioral, clear to the student and parent.
- Notify parents, as needed, regarding academic performance and unacceptable behavior.
- Facilitate sense of teamwork between parent, student and teacher.

II. Student Citizenship

Introduction

The primary purpose of school is learning. To achieve this purpose certain rules, regulations, policies, and procedures are needed. These are designed not only to achieve the purpose of the school, but to protect students and others as well.

BRCS is based on the idea of recognizing each individual's dignity and treating each individual with respect at all times. This includes students, teachers, and all other personnel and visitors. Rudeness, "talking back," and smart remarks do not have a place in school. Courtesy, respect for the rights of others, and respect for the welfare of all people at BRCS are the heart of the school. A friendly, relaxed, respectful atmosphere will exist if students remember this and obey the requests of all faculty members.

Students, teachers, parents and the director will work together to provide for the development of self-directed, responsible school citizens. The success of an individual is based not only on knowledge, but on responsible behavior; this includes self-discipline, goal setting, common sense, positive attitudes and values, and a respect for the rights and properties of others.

Since an orderly atmosphere is essential for learning to take place, students must obey guidelines for the personal welfare of all students as well as the common good of the entire school.

Civil Rights

The Bear River Charter School complies with the civil rights laws passed by Congress. The following non-discrimination provisions protect your right to equal opportunity in school.

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin or sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the Bear River Charter School.

No otherwise qualified disabled individual shall solely by reason of disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the Bear River Charter School.

If persons believe they are being treated unfairly because of race, national origin, sex, religion, or disability, they may register a complaint with the Director

Problem Solving

Students can minimize problems in the school setting if they communicate. Teachers, administrators, parents, and staff members are available to listen and help students solve problems.

If you have a problem, talk to your parents. They can support you in getting it solved.

If you have a problem with a teacher, talk to the teacher involved. Arrange an appointment or drop by after school when the teacher isn't working on other projects.

The faculty and staff at BRCS want to work with parents, students, and community members to create the best learning environment for each child. If parents need to contact a staff member they may leave a message in the office or stop by after school.

Preparedness

In order to optimize the learning environment, students are expected to come prepared to each class with the proper materials. In most cases this involves a textbook, paper, writing instrument, and assigned work.

School Property

Students are responsible for taking care of school property. This involves using the trash containers for garbage and recycling containers for appropriate materials. Care should be taken not to damage classroom or school equipment, and students are encouraged to treat the building and equipment with respect. Students who destroy school property will be subject to consequences as outlined in the BRCS Conduct and Discipline Policy.

Textbooks

Teachers issue textbooks at the beginning of the school year. It is the student's responsibility to

take care of their textbooks. Students will need to pay for lost books or those damaged beyond normal wear.

Library Return Policy

Students are expected to be responsible for books borrowed from our library. When a student has an overdue book they must return it before they will be allowed to check out any more books. If the book is lost, the student will need to replace it or pay for it.

Cell Phone, Computer, Internet, and other Electronics Policy

Phones and other Electronic Devices

Students may bring cell phones and other electronic devices to school if they abide by the following rules: Student's devices must be turned off by 8:00am and may be turned on again at 3:00pm. They may not be turned on at lunchtime.

Students who violate this policy will have their electronics confiscated. A parent will need to come to school to pick up the electronics. The second time the policy is violated; the electronics will be confiscated and turned into the office. A parent will need to come to school to pick up the electronics. After the second violation, the student will not be allowed to bring electronics to school for the remainder of the school year.

If a student does not want to abide by this policy, we ask that they not bring their electronics to school. A phone is available in the main office, and may only be used in emergencies or for school business with a teacher's permission.

Computer, Internet and Network Use

Students will sign the Acceptable Use Policy for Internet and Network Access form and, in doing so, will agree to abide by all BRCS rules that govern use of school computers, the school network, or internet activity while on BRCS grounds.

Dress Code

Students should come to school dressed in a way that prepares them for the classroom and experiential learning that is at the core of Bear River Charter School's mission. Apparel that inhibits student learning will be referred to the Executive Director. Examples of inappropriate clothing include that which does not promote student health and safety, or which displays language contrary to BRCS' core values of kindness and respect.

Assemblies and Guest Speakers

Assemblies are planned for educational value and entertainment. It is expected that students will be orderly in entering the assembly and taking seats. Proper applause will let those participating know we appreciate their efforts. Stomping, yelling, booing, whistling and other disrespectful behavior are not in good taste and are not permitted.

Field Trips

All rules of conduct for BRCS also apply to any school sanctioned field trip. In addition to consequences outlined by the BRCS Conduct and Discipline Policy, parents may be asked to retrieve offending students so that the field trip can continue for the rest of the class.

Lunch

Daily hot lunch can be purchased or students may bring their own lunch. Food must be eaten in designated areas, and after eating students are required to clean up after themselves. Menus are distributed to all students and extra copies are available in the office.

Gum, Candy, and Snacks

School policy prohibits candy, beverages, or food items of any kind in the classrooms during class except on days designated by individual teachers.

Bicycles, Scooters, Skateboards, and Rollerblades

We allow students to ride bicycles to and from school. Upon arrival at school, the bicycles should be placed in the bike rack, securely locked to the rack, and left there until after school. Scooters, skateboards and rollerblades can be brought to school. They cannot be ridden on school grounds before, during or after the school day.

Illness and Injury

If a student becomes ill while at school and feels he or she cannot stay in the classroom, the student will notify parents and have the option of lying down for one hour or going home.

If a student is injured while participating in any school activity, the teacher should be notified immediately. First aid necessary to meet the immediate emergency will be administered. After that, parents will be contacted in regard to further treatment.

Personal Property

Students are responsible for their own property and it is recommended that students not bring expensive items to school. Never leave money or other valuables lying around the school.

Red Air Days

On red air days, the students will have indoor recess and will not go outdoors to play.

Safe School Policy

Safe schools refers to the belief that all students have an opportunity to learn in a safe environment that is conducive to the learning process, and free from unnecessary disruption. The Utah Legislature passed a law that requires schools to develop a conduct and discipline policy for all students. The following provisions govern the conduct of school age individuals at the Bear River Charter School:

Students shall be given notice of applicable rules of conduct, comply with applicable rules of conduct, and show respect for other people and obey persons in authority.

Students may not:

1. possess weapons or any replica or facsimile of weapons, or other material dangerous to persons or property, regardless of intent and whether functional or non-functional,
2. cause damage to personal or real property or cause harm to others through: (a) arson; (b) burglary; (c) stealing; (d) criminal mischief; (e) battery; (f) assault; (g) harassment; (h) vandalism; (i) hazing; (j) participation in any activity which violates an applicable school rule or federal, state or local law or ordinance, or disrupts normal school proceedings or through threats of participation in any plan or conspiracy to the foregoing; (k) participation in conduct which threatens harm or does harm to the school, school property, person associated with the school or property associated with such persons.
3. commit an offense against an educator.

We use a variety of prevention and intervention strategies for improving student behavior and limiting the suspension or expulsion of students from school.

Nuisance Items

Any item brought to school that becomes a distraction will be confiscated and will not be returned to the student, but will be returned to a parent.

Fighting and Other Disturbances

The possibility of injury to persons or damage to property exists when a fight occurs. The throwing of snowballs, rocks, or other objects also involves the possibility of injury to other persons or damage to property. For your protection and the safety of others, such behavior is not permitted in school or on the way to or from school.

Smoking

State laws and school policies prohibit carrying, and / or smoking tobacco products or vaping on school property or at school sponsored events.

Illegal Drugs

State laws and school policies prohibit the use, evidence of use, or possession and/or transfer of narcotics, depressants, or stimulants of any type on school property or at school sponsored activities. Possession of drug-related paraphernalia is prohibited.

Weapons, Explosives, and Flammable Materials

State laws and school policies prohibit the possession of weapons, explosives, or flammable material on school property or at school sponsored activities.

BRCS Conduct and Discipline Policy

Every student in school should have the opportunity to learn in an environment which is safe, conducive to the learning process, and free from unnecessary disruption.

Therefore, every student is expected to follow accepted rules of conduct and show respect for other people and to obey persons in authority at the school. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, which may include student conferences, notification of parents, conferences with parents, or suspension.

Emergency Preparedness

The following instructions have been developed by the school administration in preparing for emergencies, maintaining student and staff safety, and minimizing confusion and chaos.

In an emergency the school will; respond as designated by the Emergency Plan, provide information through local radio stations, care for students until it is safe for them to go home and work with local agencies.

In an emergency the parents should; tune in to local radio stations KVNU (610 AM), Q92 (92.0 FM) and UPR (89.5 FM), stay away from the school unless instructed otherwise by the administration over the radio, and leave the phone lines open by not calling the school so that the school can manage the emergency.

In an emergency the students will stay with teachers and follow their instructions. Students will go home at the regular time and manner, if possible. Please don't go to the school unless instructed over the radio to do so.

The length of students' stay at school will depend on each emergency. Students will be cared for in the safest possible manner. In the event that it is unsafe for students to reoccupy the building, students will be escorted to Logan High School. They will remain in the auditorium at Logan High School until they are picked up by their parent, guardian or an adult designated by their parent.

The administration will work with other city agencies for training, planning and implementation of emergency procedures. The administration will work with all appropriate city agencies during an emergency.

Fire Drills

Monthly fire drills will take place. All individuals in the school building are expected to immediately evacuate the building whenever the alarm sounds. Teachers will instruct students as to proper evacuation procedures for their classroom. Every alarm is to be treated as an actual fire. Returning to the building will be directed by the teacher in charge of the fire drill.

In the event of a fire, students will not return to the building. Students will be escorted to Logan High School. They will remain in the auditorium at Logan High School until they are picked up by their parent, guardian or an adult designated by their parent.

II. Parent / Guardian Citizenship

Introduction

The section on Student Citizenship outlines expectations, rules, and policies that relate to student conduct that are chiefly the responsibility of students. Parents and guardians are encouraged to review the section on Student Citizenship. Parents and guardians also have their own citizenship role at the school, and the section below outlines expectations with respect to parental or guardian responsibilities. These expectations, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures are designed not only to achieve the purpose of the school, but to protect students and parents as well as to facilitate communication and problem solving.

Arrival and Departure

The outside doors will be unlocked at 7:50 a.m. Students should not arrive before the opening of the building. Once they enter the building, students should go directly to their classroom. Please remember there is no adult supervision on school grounds before and after school.

Students are dismissed at 3:00. If they have made arrangements to work with a teacher, they should go directly to that teacher's classroom at 3:00. Students who are staying for After School Club should go to the gym at 3:00. All doors, with the exception of the west entrance, are locked at 3:30.

Drop off, Pick up, and Parking

Parents dropping students off and picking students up should drive in via the south entrance and exit via the north entrance. Please use extreme caution while entering and leaving. To preserve clean air for our students, please do not idle your vehicle's engine while waiting.

Late Arrival / Early Departure

When parents/guardians request that students leave the school campus during the school day, or if students arrive to school late, a note or phone call (753-8811) from parents will be required. Failure to comply will be considered truancy and will be handled accordingly.

Parents/guardians are asked to arrange medical and dental appointments at times other than during the school day.

Entrances

For the safety of our children, we have restricted access to our building. Students, staff, and parents may enter through the west or east doors. All other entrances will be locked during the

school day. Parents and visitors should check in at the office. Students may enter the school at 7:50. Parents who need to go to the office should park on the west side of the building (south of the dumpster) and enter through the west door.

Attendance

The Utah Compulsory Attendance Law requires children to attend school. Regular and prompt attendance is the responsibility of the student and the parent or guardian. BRCS recognizes family trips, illness, injury, family emergency, and death in the family as legitimate reasons for absences. When a student is absent, the student and parents are responsible to make arrangements with the school regarding missed work. When students are absent, parents should call the office (753-8811).

Tardy Policy

It is the responsibility of parents to see that students are at school when school begins. Students who are tardy are expected to make up missed work. In accordance with our school behavior policy, interventions will be made for students who are chronically tardy.

Closed Campus

BRCS is a closed campus. This means students may not leave the school grounds during the school day, including lunch, without permission from a parent or guardian and obtaining off-campus permission from the director.

Unscheduled School Closures

The school will be closed and/or evacuated in cases of emergency at the discretion of the administration. Parents will be notified through School Reach. In addition, parents should listen to the following local radio stations; KVNU (610 AM), Q92 (92.9 FM) and UPR (89.5 FM) for information on closures. Please follow the instructions given in the radio announcement regarding procedures for picking up your child. If local districts close due to weather conditions, BRCS will also close.

Visitors

All visitors must check in at the main office. Parents are welcome to observe classes and programs at any time; however, prior arrangements must be made by contacting the school office.

Grades, Progress Repots, and Conferences

Grading procedures are consistent throughout grades 6-8. Elementary grading procedures are set by individual teachers. Parent notification of the grading system is usually brought home by the student during the first week of classes and discussed at Back to School Night.

Report cards for students in grades 6-8 are mailed at the end of each trimester and Parent-Teacher Conferences are held three times each year. Parents should check the school calendar for conference dates.

Confidential Information Policy

In accordance with the Privacy Act, the confidentiality of student records is closely guarded. Parents and students may contact the administration to gain access to their records.

The school requires all employees to treat as confidential any records or information pertaining to, but not limited to, the performance, behavior, background, preferences, and identification of students, parents, and other employees of the school. Employees may not use such information either directly or indirectly other than for school purposes. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

BRCS Student Placement Protocol

Within the first few weeks of each new school year, students are given a placement test in language arts and math. In some cases, student work samples may be collected. SAGE data from the previous springs, the student's behavior, social and emotional maturity, and work habits are also considered.

Based on data, the teacher makes a decision about each student's appropriate placement. Student progress will be monitored and placements will be fluid within the classroom.

Placement test results will be shared with parents at the October parent/teacher conference. If a parent has questions about their child's placement, they should confer with the teacher. If a concern cannot be resolved with the teacher, then a team composed of the teacher, the previous grade teacher, and the director will reevaluate the placement and communicate their decision to the parent.

A Note About Acceleration. The key questions to determine if a student will benefit from acceleration are:

1. Is the child able to master material at a rapid pace relative to age-mates?
2. Does the child understand concepts at a deeper level than classmates?

3. Does the child demonstrate the emotional maturity and social skills to handle the demands of an advanced grade?
4. Are the parent, child, and teachers in agreement with an advanced grade placement?

A positive response to these questions suggest that the child could be accelerated.

Problem Solving for Parents

Parents are encouraged to contact the school when concerns or problems arise. By calling the school office, arrangements can be made for parents/guardians to meet with staff members or to make use of any of the services the school provides. Resolution of problems will come about more quickly when the home and school work together.

In terms of organizational and communicational flow, it is typically best to begin by bringing an issue or a concern to the relevant teacher(s). When there is an issue or a concern, it is best to begin by bringing the concern to the relevant teacher(s). If the teacher does not adequately address the concern or when raising the issue with the teacher would be inappropriate, parents should bring their concern to the Executive Director. If the Director does not adequately address the concern or when raising the issue with the Director would be inappropriate, parents should file a formal grievance with the BRCS Governing Board (formal grievance process is outlined below).

Cell Phone, Computer, Internet, and other Electronics Policy

Students agree to abide by the cell phone, computer, internet, and electronics policy outlines in the Student Citizenship section of this handbook. If there are repetitive violations of this policy, parents will need to come get the confiscated device. Parents will also sign the Annual Acceptance Policy, in which they promise to have read and understood the various rules we expect students to follow.

Yearbook

Students may order a yearbook at the end of the year, which will be distributed on the last day of school.

Medication at School

Prescription medication taken at school needs to be documented by a physician. Dispensing of medication is supervised by a designated faculty member. Non prescription medications (ibuprofen, acetaminophen) may be administered with parental permission.

Extended Leave Policy

Families may request an extended leave of 10 consecutive or more days of school. The Executive Director, in consultation with the family and teachers, will assess whether the extended absence will adversely impact the student's education and whether those adverse impacts could be mitigated. In addition, the Executive Director, in consultation with relevant financial officers, will also assess whether a replacement student could be added and if there would be any possible negative impact on the school's budget. Finally, the Executive Director, in consultation with teachers, will also assess whether adding a replacement student would negatively impact the quality of education in the classroom for that school year or future school years.

A recommendation which takes all of these issues into account will be made to the Governing Board, which will decide if the extended absence request will be granted. If it is not, the extended absence will result in loss of automatic re-enrollment privileges. If it is granted, the student remains entitled to their automatic re-enrollment privilege when they student returns. If the spot is filled, both the returning student and the replacement student remain entitled to automatic re-enrollment privileges.

School Withdrawal

If you wish to withdraw your child, please notify the school in writing.

Formal Grievance Process - Parents and Guardians

Bear River Charter School is committed to being as responsive as possible to any parental concern about anything occurring at BRCS. When a concern arises, it is useful for parents to know the chain of command: teacher, director, board. It is best to begin by bringing the concern to the relevant teacher(s). If the teacher does not adequately address the concern or when raising the issue with the teacher would be inappropriate, parents should bring their concern to the Executive Director. If the Director does not adequately address the concern or when raising the issue with the Director would be inappropriate, parents should file a formal grievance with the BRCS Governing Board.

Parents who file a formal grievance will be assured that the filing of the formal grievance will have no impact on their child's status at the school. When appropriate, the Board will try to support keeping the grievance and related proceedings confidential, though in such cases this may limit remedies. In either case, retaliation for filing a grievance - from a teacher or an administrator - is strictly prohibited and such actions will be subject to a full range of disciplinary action.

The purpose of the formal grievance process is to resolve issues and disputes. Any aggrieved party should submit their formal grievance in writing to the BRCS Governing Board President.

The parent will then be invited to discuss the grievance with the Board. The Board will investigate the grievance and work toward a resolution.

Volunteer Service Policy and Code of Conduct

Philosophy and Expectation

Bear River Charter School believes that parent involvement is key to a successful school and optimal student achievement. Parents who enroll their children in BRCS should do so with the understanding that their involvement is crucial to the success of their child's education.

The School Community Association (SCA) serves as the conduit for organizing committees and coordinating parental involvement throughout the school. Volunteer opportunities are diverse in nature to accommodate individual circumstances. Parents will be expected to put forth their best efforts in contributing volunteer hours at BRCS.

Responsibilities and Expectations

A "volunteer" at BRCS is any person who donates service to the school without pay or other compensation, except for expenses actually and reasonably incurred as approved by school administration or through the SCA. Volunteers will perform volunteer services under the supervision or direction of an assigned school employee, SCA executive member and shall have the approval of school administration and faculty to perform such volunteer services. Volunteers are expected to follow the direction of those to whom they have been assigned and to conform to all applicable laws, rules, and policies. Failure to do so may give rise to terminating the volunteer from service.

If at any point during volunteer service the assigned school employee, SCA executive member, or Governing Board member believes that there is a conflict of interest with the volunteer they are authorized to remove the volunteer from service for the day. The facts leading to temporary removal of a volunteer from service will be reviewed by the Executive Director. After review of relevant information, the Executive Director will determine if the person will be authorized to continue providing volunteer service. Once a determination has been made the volunteer will be contacted by the school administrator to discuss the results.

While volunteering at BRCS, volunteers may handle confidential information. It is the expectation of the school that volunteers shall keep said information in the strictest confidence. By signing this document the volunteer agrees to maintain strict confidentiality, and to ask the supervisor for clarification if the volunteer is not clear as to the confidential nature of documents or information.

In accordance with state law, an individual volunteer must never be left unattended with any individual student. Therefore, BRCS will not allow a volunteer to have unsupervised access to a student in connection with their volunteer assignment.

Serving as a volunteer in the educational setting is not an entitlement and schools are not required to utilize volunteer services. The opportunity to volunteer may be denied or terminated by school personnel where a review of the facts leading to the termination decision demonstrates that the termination is in the best interests of the institution.

Immunity from Liability

Volunteers performing volunteer services under the general supervision of a school employee shall be immune from liability with respect to any decisions or actions, other than in connection with the operation of a motor vehicle, taken during the course of those services unless it is established that such decisions or actions were grossly negligent, not made in good faith, or were made maliciously.

Code of Conduct

UNDERSTAND that your role is a supportive one. The teacher and principal are completely in charge.

REMEMBER volunteers are only permitted to work with students on school grounds and under the supervision of a teacher.

MAINTAIN student confidentiality at all times. Do not discuss students with anyone other than the teacher.

USE good judgment and avoid any compromising situations. Never be left alone with a student. Always keep the door open.

MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR Ask the teacher for assistance if problematic student behavior occurs.

RESPECT the dignity of all students

TAKE PRIDE in being professional.

MAINTAIN a constructive attitude. Do not make negative comments about the school, students or teachers to anyone.

BE PROMPT and consistent in your attendance. Teachers depend on volunteers and plan their lessons accordingly. Students also depend on volunteers.

NOTIFY the school as soon as possible if you will be late or absent.

KEEP an accurate record of your attendance by signing in and out each day you volunteer.

ESTABLISH and maintain good and frequent communication with the classroom teacher.

NEVER be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Do not smoke on school grounds.

DO NOT use the internet inappropriately by going to sites that are not conducive to a professional or educational environment.

ALERT the school staff immediately if a child has an accident while working with you.

The undersigned understand and agree to abide by the BRCS Volunteer Service Policy and Code of Conduct.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Motor Vehicle Driving Policy

School employees or volunteers who drive for school related must:

- Provide proof of in force insurance which must include liability coverage.
- Use a vehicle that is in good working order, titled, licensed, and inspected in accordance with Utah state regulations.
- Confirm by signing below that they have not had a major traffic violation (including but not limited to DUI, reckless or negligent driving) in the last 7 years.
- Promise to obey all traffic laws, maintain legal and appropriate speed, and refrain from using any electronic device while the vehicle is in gear.
- Not place any child under the age of 13 in the front seat of a vehicle fitted with passenger side air bags.
- Have signed the Volunteer Service Policy and Code of Conduct.

The undersigned have satisfied and agree to all conditions in the Motor Vehicle Driving Policy.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____