



Charter School

**PARENT STUDENT  
HANDBOOK**

Revised July 2024

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## General School Information

### Mission

Brookhaven Innovation Academy Charter School (BIA) will provide students with an education that maximizes the realization of their individual talents and prepares them for success in a technology and information driven 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

### Vision

Our vision at BIA is to become THE State charter school of choice in Georgia.

### Beliefs

At BIA, we believe the following:

- Every student in the school, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, special needs, or social, language or economic background, has a right to a high-quality education that challenges the student to achieve at high levels.
- The future of our nation and community depends on students possessing the skills and knowledge to be lifelong learners and effective, contributing members of society.
- A school culture of honor, respect, and caring are essential to the learning process.
- Technology enhances and deepens the learning process.
- Parents/guardians have a right and an obligation to participate in their student's schooling.
- Continuous school improvement is necessary to meet the needs of students in a changing economy and society.
- The diversity of the student population and staff enriches the learning experience for all students.
- A highly skilled, diverse, and dedicated staff has a direct and powerful influence on students' lives and learning.
- The community provides an essential resource to the BIA educational program.
- Effective communication with all stakeholders helps build support for the school.

### Goals

BIA is committed to continuous improvement based on the following school-wide goals upon which all decisions will be made:

1. During each year of the charter term, 100% of students will complete a project pursuant to the Project Based Learning framework.
2. During each year of the charter term, 100% of students will complete a coding program/course segment.
3. During each year of the charter term, BIA will decrease the percentage of students absent 5 or fewer days per year by 2% each year over its baseline rate.

### School Uniform Policy

While attending school, all students must be in uniform daily. Uniforms must be neat and clean. Belts must be worn to hold up pants and shorts at the waist, or pants and shorts must fit snugly around the waist to keep them from falling below the waistline. Students should also practice good hygiene. If a child is out of uniform, parents will be contacted and required to bring the necessary items before students are admitted to class. Repeated offenses will be addressed using the Code of Conduct.

School Uniform:

- Bottoms – Khaki or Navy pants, shorts, jumpers skorts or skirts. Shorts, jumpers, skorts, and skirts must be no more than three inches above the knee. The following bottoms are considered to be out of school uniform code compliance:
  1. Bottoms in any other color than those specified above.
  2. Leggings worn as bottoms. These can only be worn under a jumper, skirt or skorts.
  3. Pants with elastic at the ankle and/or with stripes down the sides.
  4. Sweat pants.
  5. Knit pants.
  6. Bottoms that do not stay up at the waistline.
  7. Cargo pants.
  8. Jean pants (unless otherwise stated)
- Tops – White, Navy, Kelly or Aqua Green collared polo or long-sleeved, button-down oxford with button collar. The following are considered to be out of school uniform code compliance:
  1. Shirts without a collar.
  2. Shirts with logos other than the BIA logo.
  3. Shirts in any other color than those specified above.
- Optional Layer – Navy, green, white or aqua cardigan sweater, button up sweater, crewneck sweatshirt, or sweater vest. The following optional layers are considered to be out of school uniform code compliance:
  1. Anything with a logo other than BIA.
  2. Sweatshirt with a hoodie.
  3. Optional layer in any other color than those specified above.
- Outerwear – Outerwear jackets for cold weather should be worn to and from school and at outdoor recess; however, while in the school outerwear must remain in the student cubbie or locker. An optional layer, as described above, is recommended as well as outerwear.
- Fridays – BIA spirit shirt with uniform pants
- BIA offers exemptions for religious attire. If your child needs such accommodations, please notify their teacher.

### Admission Policy

The application of any eligible student who agrees to, or whose parent/guardian agrees for the student to be bound by, the expectations and requirements of BIA will be accepted and admitted if there is space available. If the number of applications received for a grade level during the admissions period exceeds the available number of openings, then all of the applications for that grade level will be placed in a lottery.

In accordance with public law, any child who is qualified under the laws of the State for admission to a public school is qualified for admission to a charter school. Charter schools shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, or disability. Also, BIA shall not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, disability, race, creed, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

Parents/guardians of currently enrolled students will be required to fill out an Intent to Continue Enrollment Form to indicate that they would like their child to continue at BIA for the following school year. Grade level openings will be determined after the Intent to Continue Enrollment Forms are received from parents of currently enrolled students.

#### Admission Process:

All school-aged residents of the State of Georgia are eligible to enroll in BIA. BIA serves students in Kindergarten through Eighth Grades. Students already enrolled at BIA do not need to participate in the admission process. Because students entering Pre-K shall be potty trained, all enrolled students shall be potty trained, unless a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) states otherwise.

BIA will open its admission process for a minimum of thirty (30) days in mid-January of each year. All parents/guardians who wish to enroll their child(ren) at BIA must visit [www.lotterease.com](http://www.lotterease.com) and complete an online application for each child they wish to attend. Parents/guardians must then enter each child in the appropriate grade level lottery for the upcoming school year. For example, if your child is currently in first grade at his/her current school, enter your child in the second grade lottery. If the number of applicants exceeds the capacity at any grade level by the initial application deadline, BIA will ensure that applicants have an equal chance of being admitted through a random-selection lottery via [www.lotterease.com](http://www.lotterease.com).

To participate in the lottery, a student's application and entrance into the appropriate grade level lottery must be completed through [www.lotterease.com](http://www.lotterease.com) prior to the initial application deadline. All individuals who have submitted an application via [www.lotterease.com](http://www.lotterease.com) will be notified by email from [www.lotterease.com](http://www.lotterease.com) that their application was received.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring the information provided to [www.lotterease.com](http://www.lotterease.com) is accurate. If inaccurate information is provided regarding grade or sibling status, it is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to correct it PRIOR to the close of the initial admissions period in order for the student and/or sibling(s) to be included in the admissions lottery.

The lottery will be advertised on the BIA website prior to it being held in late February or early March of each year, and it will be open to the public.

All applications received by [www.lotterease.com](http://www.lotterease.com) after the initial enrollment deadline will be assigned to a class on a first-come, first-served basis, provided seats are available, or added to the end of any wait list in the order it is received.

BIA will give enrollment priority to the following categories of applicants:

1. A sibling of a student enrolled at BIA
2. A student whose parent/guardian is a full-time teacher, professional or other employee at BIA
3. A student whose parent/guardian is a member of the Board of Directors

Sibling by definition is a:

1. Biological (including half sibling)/adoptive sibling within the State of Georgia
2. Step sibling residing in the same household
3. Foster children residing in the same household

#### Admission Procedure:

Upon closing of the initial admissions period, all qualified students will be directly admitted into BIA, unless the number of qualified applicants exceeds the available seats in a certain grade.

If the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number of available seats for any or all grade levels, a random selection lottery, via [www.lotterease.com](http://www.lotterease.com), will be conducted in a public forum. All qualified applicants will be

contacted with the date, time and place of the lottery via e-mail from [www.lottterease.com](http://www.lottterease.com) and web posting.

Per BIA's enrollment preferences, prior to the lottery, siblings of students currently enrolled in the school, children of Governing Board members and children of full-time staff members will be placed in available seats in their respective grades.

For the grades that do not exceed the number of available seats, all qualified applicants will be directly enrolled on the school roster. Then, any siblings of these directly enrolled students will be placed into the available seats in their respective grades.

When a student is awarded a seat to attend BIA, parents/guardians will receive a notification from [www.lottterease.com](http://www.lottterease.com). Parents/guardians will have 48 hours to confirm their child's seat, or it will be forfeited to the next applicant. Once parents/guardians confirm their child's seat, a completed Registration Packet and ALL supporting documents must be returned to BIA by the date indicated in the email notification, or the seat will be forfeited, and the student's name will move to the end of the appropriate grade-level waiting list. A student will not be considered to be enrolled until ALL required documents are returned to BIA by the indicated deadline. Registration Packets are available online at [www.biaschool.org](http://www.biaschool.org) and in the school's front office.

School attendance is vital to a student's success. If a student has been awarded a seat, he/she must be present within the first two days of school. Otherwise, that student will be reported as a no-show and that award is forfeited. As a result, the vacated seat will be offered to the next student on the waitlist.

#### Admissions Lottery:

It is not necessary for an applicant's parent/guardian to be present at the lottery in order for an applicant to participate in the lottery.

#### Withdrawal

If it becomes necessary for a student to withdraw from BIA, the parent must complete a withdrawal form made available in the front office and found on the BIA website at [www.biaschool.org](http://www.biaschool.org). All withdrawals will be processed no later than 48 hours of the request. Records will not be forwarded to another school until the parent completes the withdrawal paperwork. Student materials must be returned, and any fees owed must be paid prior to the release of student records.

## ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL & ATTENDANCE

### Arrival Time/Dismissal Time

Student instruction and learning activities will begin promptly at 7:45 pm, so it is important for students to be in their homeroom class prior to that time.

- Parents may enter the building prior to 7:45 pm if attending a pre-scheduled meeting or conference. Please check in with the front office and wait in the lobby until directed to your meeting place.
- All students must be picked up by 3:30 pm. Parents/guardians who are habitually late in picking up their student(s) will be asked to enter their student(s) in the after school program at the drop-in rate.
- Morning drop-off will be between 7:15 am – 7:45 am. Afternoon pick up will begin at 3:00 pm and will end at 3:30 pm.
- While we understand that situations may arise that cause parents to be late for student pickup, habitual late pickups will result in referral to social services and/or police authorities.

## Carpool Arrival/Dismissal

It is very important to remember the following:

- As you enter the property, please follow the signs directing you to your designated drop-off/pick-up spot.
- The speed limit while on campus is five miles per hour.
- For safety purposes, please be alert to other cars and/or students and refrain from activities that distract your attention such as talking on cell phones, texting, reading, etc.
- Parents/guardians should remain in their vehicle while waiting for their student to be released.
- Pik-My-Kid is the program BIA uses for all students picked up by a parent/guardian in a carpool during dismissal. Its use during carpool is mandatory. Please contact the front office for more information on how to register with Pik-My-Kid.
- During arrival/dismissal, please do not pass vehicles in the carpool line. This will help ensure the safety of the children.
- If you are picking up your child from an After School Program/Club, you will receive instructions on a pick-up location and time.
- Please remember that as adults, it is our responsibility to model civil and courteous behavior when on campus.
- Please remember that BIA is a Smoke Free Campus.

## After School Program

The BIA After School Program is contracted through Right At School, a fee-based service, which is not affiliated with BIA.

- Contact information:  
<https://rightatschool-brookhaven-innovation-academy.jumbula.com/#/2020-21-after-school> (copy and paste the link into your browser)
- Program hours are from 3:00pm – 6:00 pm.
- To attend, students must be enrolled in the after-school program.
  - Students in the after-school program must adhere to the rules/policies outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Enrollment in the after-school program is a privilege not a right. Repeated misconduct will result in permanent or temporary dismissal from the program.
- Fee schedules and enrollment information will be sent to parents prior to the opening of school in August.
- Parents who pick up students from the after-school program are required to park and enter through the gym doors so that they can sign out their child(ren).
- Right At School does offer a drop-in service for parents/guardians who may be late in picking their student(s) up in the afternoon. Parents will need to enroll their student(s) in this program.

## Attendance

Your child(ren) must be in school every day according to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A) code section 20-2-690.1, titled “Compulsory School Attendance Law.” Teachers, the school counselor and/or administrators will make contact with parents/guardians regarding excessive absences, but it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that their child(ren) attend(s) school each day.

A very important part of our Charter Contract is the Performance-Based Goals and Measurable Objectives section as it relates to attendance. When we report our student attendance to the Georgia Department of Education each year, we must have less than 10% of our students missing 10 days or more throughout the school in order to keep our Charter. More importantly, when students are not at school, they are missing the information they need in order to learn.



## Tardy and Early Checkout

When a student is late to school/class or is dismissed early from school/class, it creates an interruption in instruction and is disruptive to the entire class. We understand that students do have issues that will require them to be late periodically. Our tardy policy is as follows:

- Students arriving after 7:45 am will be counted tardy. They must be escorted into the building by a parent/guardian and signed in at the kiosk in the lobby.
- Students arriving after 9:00 am will be considered absent for half of the school day.
- Excused tardies are given for documented doctor's appointments, which must be presented upon arrival.
- Five unexcused tardies equals one unexcused absence.
- Students signing out before 12:00 pm will be considered absent for half of the school day.
- Students arriving late or leaving early for reasons other than those listed as excused absences will be considered as having an unexcused tardy. Please see above information regarding excused/unexcused absences. Documentation should be given to the office staff upon checking into school.
- Repeated tardiness will be addressed with the parent/guardian. If it is determined that student behavior is causing the tardies, the student will be required to participate in an attendance support conference with the Head of School or designee.
- In the event a parent /guardian needs to take their child out of school before the end of the school day, the parent/guardian should sign him/her out at the kiosk in the front lobby. The child will be called to the office at that time. For the safety of our students, parents are not allowed to go directly to a classroom to pick up their child.
- Students will not be checked out of school sixty minutes or less prior to the end of the school day. If your child has medical/dental or other appointments late in the afternoon, please sign him/her out at least thirty minutes before school ends. Students will NOT be sent to the office for dismissal until the parent/guardian is present for checkout. Please do not email teachers requesting that they release students prior to your arrival at the school's front office.
- Please remember that early dismissals are documented just as absences or tardies. We ask that these be kept to a minimum.

## Absence from School

Absences are categorized as either EXCUSED or UNEXCUSED. BIA's Governing Board recognizes EXCUSED absences for the following reasons:

- Documented illness or hospitalization;
- Documented illness or death in the immediate family, which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;
- Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith
- Court orders or mandates by order of governmental agencies;
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety;
- Other circumstances where the parent/guardian obtains permission from an administrator at least two weeks in advance;
- Utilizing the Georgia Military Family Act

Documentation for excused absences must be written and submitted to the front office to be included in our records. Email and/or phone communications will not be accepted.

UNEXCUSED absences are those outside of the above-listed excused absences or those approved by

administration. After three unexcused absences, a letter will be sent home to the student's parent/guardian requiring the parent/guardian to contact the school's designee regarding unexcused absences. In the event of five unexcused absences, the school counselor will schedule a conference with the parent/guardian, student, and an administrator to develop an attendance intervention support plan.

According to S.B.O.E. 160-5-1-.10, a child is truant and subject to compulsory attendance who, during the school calendar year, has more than five days of unexcused absences. Should 10 absences or more occur, the student and parent/guardian will be subject to referral(s) to Juvenile Court, Magistrate Court and/or the Department of Family and Children's Services for truancy and/or educational neglect.

Detailed information pertaining to the student, BIA, and school interventions will be necessary when filing a complaint with the above-listed agencies. 10 consecutive unexcused absences will result in the student being withdrawn from BIA. After 15 or more unexcused absences, grade-level retention will be considered.

Students must make up all work from excused and unexcused absences upon their return to school. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent/guardian to contact the teacher for make-up work, projects, and/or assessments. Students will be granted the same number of days to make up their work that is equal to the number of absences.

- The student must return to school with documentation as to why the student was absent. Documentation includes:
  - A signed note from a parent/guardian is required to excuse a student from school due to an illness that results in an absence of less than three days.
  - An absence of 3 days or more requires a doctor's note for re-entry into school.
  - Documentation from the medical office is required for medical appointments. Please make every effort to schedule routine appointments during after school hours.
- Family vacations are not excused absences.

### Student Illness

The main reasons for keeping your student home from school are because he/she is too sick to participate comfortably at school or might spread a contagious illness to other students. If your student has been diagnosed with a contagious illness, please contact the office so other students' parents/guardians and school staff may be alerted of the symptoms.

Reasons your child will be sent home or should stay home from school:

- Fever – If a student has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child.
  - The student should stay home until there is NO FEVER for 24 hours WITHOUT MEDICATION. o Call your doctor if the fever is with pain, rash, weakness, vomiting or diarrhea. (\*Based on CDC Recommendations)
- Vomiting or Diarrhea
  - The student should stay home with ONE event of vomiting or diarrhea. Call your doctor if vomiting or diarrhea continues or with fever, rash, or weakness.
- Drainage from a wound, rash or eyes
  - The student should stay home with drainage from a wound, rash, or eyes. Call your doctor for treatment.
- Head Lice or Scabies
  - The student should stay home until after treatment is complete and there is no sign of lice or nits. Contact the health department or your doctor for treatment. Students will be rechecked by staff upon return to

school.

Students should stay home with an unexplained rash. Call your doctor for treatment.

## STUDENT & SCHOOL SAFETY

### Student Injuries

ALL injuries must be reported to the main office and an Injury Report completed as soon as possible after the injury has been treated or stabilized. If a student is injured, the following will occur:

- Teacher classrooms will be equipped with first aid supplies to assist students with minor injuries. Examples: lost tooth, skinned knee, insect sting (unless student requires an EpiPen).
- If the injury is more severe, the teacher will call the office and ask that an administrator come to wherever the injured student is located. The main office will attempt to contact a parent/guardian and advise them of the situation. In the event a parent /guardian cannot be reached, the administrator will determine the appropriate action. (It is very important that the parent/guardian list any and all numbers that can be called in the event of an emergency in Infinite Campus.)
- If the student's condition requires it, an ambulance will be called and an administrator or other faculty member will accompany the student to the hospital.

### School Medication Administration

- The parent/guardian must complete and sign the School Medication Authorization for ALL medications given at school. For prescription, homeopathic, or supplement medications, a duly licensed, Georgia physician must also complete and sign the School Medication Authorization or Health Care Plan available on the website.
- A parent/guardian or other designated adult must bring all medication, accompanied by the School Medication Authorization.
- All over-the-counter, prescription, homeopathic, and supplement medications must be in their original containers with unexpired dates and labeled in English. Prescription medications must be clearly labeled with the physician's name, medication's name, strength, dosage, date, time for administration, and dispensing pharmacy. The parent/guardian must provide over-the-counter medications to the office.
- If your student has a life-threatening condition (i.e. asthma, diabetes, or severe allergy), permission may be granted to carry the medication (such as inhaler, glucose tablet, epinephrine injector, or internal Insulin pump) on his or her person from the student's physician and parent/guardian on the School Medication Authorization or Health Care Plan.
- Saline eye drops, antibiotic ointment, lotion to control itching (i.e. Calamine lotion, Hydrocortisone Cream), alcohol, peroxide, petroleum jelly (i.e. Vaseline), oral Benzocaine (i.e. Anbesol), topical wound dressing (i.e. QR or Styptic Pencil), un-medicated throat lozenges/cough drops, aloe vera gel and lotion are routinely used in the school unless instructed differently by the parent/guardian.
- Parents /guardians must pick up and drop off medicine in the main office. The staff will be responsible for administering the medication.
- If medication expires, it is the parents' /guardians' responsibility to replace it. Parents/guardians will be notified the last week of school to come and pick up their student's medication and sign for it. Staff will dispose of any medication not picked up by the last day of school.

### Immunizations

BIA complies in full with the provisions of G.S. 130A-152 that requires all students attending school to provide a certificate of immunization indicating that the child has received immunizations required by G.S. 130A-152.

Complete and up-to-date records of the student's immunizations must be provided by the parent/guardian to the

school office within 30 days of enrollment. If proper documentation is not provided, BIA will follow the process outlined in the law for obtaining the certificate or not permitting the student to enroll and/or continue enrollment. (Also see Health & Safety, pg. 31)

The immunization requirements apply to children who attend a school or childcare facility daily, part time or once in a while. Children attending both a school and childcare facility (including after-school programs) must have valid documentation at each location. In the event that there are two locations where documentation is needed, copies of these forms are acceptable.

Students must present the following documents at the time of school enrollment:

- Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) or Affidavit affirming that immunization requirements conflict with parents' religious beliefs
- Children entering grades K-12 for the first time must show proof of vaccination or immunity to varicella
- Children entering the 6th grade are required to show proof of vaccination or immunity to varicella and proof of a second dose of the vaccine that includes measles (usually in the form of MMR)
- Hepatitis B vaccine is now required for all students enrolling in school at any age
- Eye, Ear, and Dental Certificate Requirements – All new students must have a completed certificate of ear, eye and dental examination (Form 3300) at the time of enrollment.
- A 30-day waiver may be granted for new students from out-of-state to obtain this information. A “new entrant” is any child entering any school or childcare facility in Georgia for the first time or after having been absent for more than 12 months or one school year.
- When a new entrant enrolls, the responsible official of any school or childcare facility may grant a 30-calendar-day waiver of the certification requirement for a justified reason. Upon expiration of the waiver, the child shall not be admitted to or be permitted to attend the school or childcare facility unless a certificate of immunization is provided.
- If the child withdraws and then returns, the parent is not allowed another 30 days to provide a certificate or affidavit.

### Immunization Exemptions Under GA Law

Georgia law allows for two types of exemptions from the immunization requirements: medical and religious. Each child must have one of two items on file—either a valid Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231) or a signed, notarized statement, which is called an affidavit of religious exemption.

- Medical exemption: Medical exemptions are used only when a child has a medical condition that keeps him from being able to receive a specific vaccine(s), not all vaccines.
  - A medical exemption must be marked on the Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231). A letter from a physician, Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) or physician assistant (PA) attached to the certificate will not be accepted as a medical exemption. It must be marked on the certificate.
  - A physician, APRN or PA must re-evaluate the need for a medical exemption at least once each year and issue a new certificate of immunization at that time. The date of expiration on the section of the certificate marked “medical exemption” should be one year from the date of issue and never be longer than one year.
- Religious exemption
  - There is no standard form for the affidavit of religious exemption. The parent or guardian must give the school or childcare facility a signed and dated notarized affidavit stating that immunizations are against the family's religious beliefs.
  - This affidavit of religious exemption should be filed instead of the Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231). The affidavit does not expire.
- In the event of a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak, children with medical or religious exemptions will be excluded from attending the school.

## School Safety

- Disruption of Public Schools (O.C.G.A. 20-2-1181)
  - It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop as designated by local school boards of education. Any person violating this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.
- Emergency Preparedness Plan/Emergency Drills
  - The Georgia Emergency Management Agency reviews and approves the school system's comprehensive School Safety Plan and each school's Emergency Preparedness Plan. These plans are coordinated with county, state, and federal emergency plans. Fire Drills, Severe Weather Drills, and Lockdown Drills will be conducted according to the schedule required by the Georgia Department of Education. Parents/guardians should remind their children that during emergency drills, students must respond quietly and quickly and must follow the directions given by their teachers and administrators.
- Loitering on School Property (O.C.G.A. 20-2-1180)
  - It is unlawful for any person to remain within the school safety zone when that person does not have a legitimate cause or need to be present thereon. Students are not allowed to enter the premises of a school other than his/her school unless prior permission is received from an administrator of the school to be visited or unless the school is hosting a school-related function, such as an academic or athletic activity. A student may not enter or remain in any school building on weekends or after school hours without authorization or permission.
- Student Emergency Safety Information
  - It is critical for the school to be able to contact parents/guardians at any time students are at school. The school must have the parents'/guardians' current address and home, cellular, and business telephone numbers. Emergency contact persons/guardians and their telephone numbers are needed in case a parent/guardian cannot be reached. This information is required at the time of registration and whenever a change occurs with the parents'/guardians' address, telephone or emergency contact information.
  - In the event of an emergency, the school will utilize its emergency text, call and email systems to contact all parents/guardians with any pertinent information. It is very important for parents/guardians to check their voicemail, text messages, and email messages before calling the school. During an emergency, our focus is on ensuring the safety of our students, so our answering phone calls will interfere with safety protocol.
  - Under no circumstances will parents /guardians be allowed to pick up their child at school during a fire, extreme weather or lockdown drill or event. Parents /guardians will be informed in advance of when drills will take place. During an actual emergency, parents/guardians will be informed through our emergency calling and text system. We understand that as parents/guardians your first inclination is to get to your child in the event of an emergency. We ask that you please wait patiently for a phone call or text message from the school informing you of the location and procedure for picking up your child. Please remember that children will be released to a parent/guardian only and that parent/guardian must have a picture ID in order to retrieve the child.
- Sexual Misconduct
  - In the case of Sexual Misconduct by an adult at BIA please refer to [BIA Child and Sexual Abuse Prevention Manual section VI B.](#)

## Visitors Sign-In Upon Entering Schools – (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1180)

- Georgia law requires that visitors, with the exception of students, school system employees, law enforcement officers or other public safety officials in the performance of an emergency call, shall sign in at the designated location, as stated on posted signs of any school building, between the official starting and dismissal times and

provide a reason for their presence at the school.

- The school administrator or designee shall have the authority to ask any visitor to explain his or her presence in the school at any time when the school is in official session. Any person, who does not have legitimate need or cause to be on the premises or on school property and/or who fails to sign-in at the designated location, may be in violation of Georgia law and upon investigation, may face criminal prosecution of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.
- Visitors, INCLUDING PARENTS/GUARDIANS, are not permitted to go to their child's classroom unannounced during school hours as this disrupts normal routine and instruction.
- For the safety and protection of all students, visitors (including parent/guardian) must present a valid Georgia Drivers' License to be scanned at the check-in kiosk in the front lobby to obtain a Visitor's Pass.
- Our visitor check-in system includes a sexual offender alert system, by automatically checking all visitors against the National Database for Sexual Offenders. Visitors must sign in and out; state with whom they are visiting, and the purpose of the visit, before obtaining a pass. Once a Visitor's Pass is issued, all visitors must be granted entrance into the main building from front office personnel.

### Tobacco-Free Schools

School policy prohibits the use of all tobacco products everywhere, by everyone, 24 hours per day, seven days per week on any school property.

### Severe Weather Information

In the event of severe weather, we will alert parents/guardians of school closures or early dismissals using our emergency text, call and email systems. Notices and updates will be posted on our website.

### Money and Other Valuables

Students should not bring money or other valuables to school. If money is required for any reason, students and parents /guardians will be notified. The school will not assume the responsibility for any lost or stolen items.

### Water Safety

Drowning is the leading cause of death for children between the ages of 1-4. Each year 3,400 people die from drowning accidents. Many of these tragedies could be avoided by simply teaching children to swim. Parents should be mindful of the role water safety education courses and swimming lessons play in saving the lives of children. BIA encourages parents to seek out an opportunity in your area, and enroll your child in a swimming and water safety course.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### Philosophy

At BIA, we believe that every child has gifts and talents that must be discovered and nurtured. We are relentless in ensuring that all children reach their highest potential. A BIA education is one that supports strong intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth.

### Classroom Management

Each classroom has a clearly articulated code of conduct that connects to school-wide expectations. Classroom procedures are chosen with thought, taught carefully, and reinforced so that they become routine.

### Morning Routine

Each teacher will establish a morning routine that includes recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and the BIA



Honor Code Pledge.

## Grading

BIA uses traditional numeric grading for Grades K-8 in order to provide prospective high schools with numeric Grade Point Averages (GPAs) used for student academic placement, acceptance into extracurricular activities and to acclimate our students to this grading process which is used in the high school setting. Mastery of the standards and related skills is expected at the time the content is taught. Numeric grades have a correlating letter grade equivalent as follows:

90 - 100 = A

80 - 89 = B

70 - 79 = C

Below 70 = F

Progress Reports will also be sent home at the end of each quarter and will indicate your student's level of mastery of specific standards/skills learned. At the end of the academic school year, a final report card will be provided to all parents/guardians.

## BIA Grading Principles

Principle #1: Grades and reports are based on clearly specified learning goals and performance standards as outlined in the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

Principle #2: Evidence used for grading is valid, and students are assessed on what they are taught. There are no trick questions and no surprises.

Principle #3: Grading is based on established criteria, not on arbitrary norms.

Principle #4: Not everything should be included in grades. Students are not graded as they are learning the information, but after the learning has occurred. Students need to have enough "practice" in order to be successful in the "game." Practice is learning time (not graded). The game is to show what you know (graded).

Principle #5: In Grades K-8, numeric grading is used to indicate student mastery of content with mastery expected at the time the standards/skills are taught.

Principle #6: Focus on achievement and report other factors separately. For example, students' math grades will reflect their math achievement. However, their work habits and responsibilities during math will be reported separately.

## Promotion/Placement/Retention Policy

In accordance with Georgia Promotion, Placement, and Retention law (O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-282 through 20-2-285) and State Board of Education Rule (160-4-2-.11), BIA Charter School (BIA) will use the following criteria to determine promotion/placement /retention for each student.

## Promotion

Grades K-8 students meeting BIA's promotion criteria will advance to the next grade. Those criteria are as follows: Mandatory:

- Minimum 70% mastery of ELA standards
- Minimum 70% mastery of Math standards
- 8th Grade – must score at level 2 or higher on GA Milestones Reading and Mathematics Assessments
- Teacher recommendation

Additional Considerations:

- Student's age, grade, current placement
- Attendance
- MAP and classroom assessment data in ELA and Math

## Placement/Retention

Students who fail to meet the promotion criteria listed above will be retained. If a student's parent/guardian disagrees with BIA's decision to retain the student, a committee will be formed to determine if the student should be placed in the next grade level or indeed be retained. The committee shall consist of the following individuals:

- Parent or Guardian of Student
- Teacher(s) of ELA and/or Math in which the student failed to perform at grade level on or failed to score a 2 or higher on GA Milestones
- ESOL teacher, if the student is an English Language Learner
- Head of School or Head of School's designee

The Head of School or designee shall notify via telephone and/or e-mail the parent or guardian and teacher(s) of the time and place for convening the placement committee. A decision by the committee to place a student should be unanimous and based on the student's overall academic achievement in light of the student's performance on GA Milestones assessments, data analysis of the student's academic performance and teacher recommendation. A unanimous decision to place a student to the next grade should be based on the committee's consideration that the student is likely to master the next grade level standards by the end of the following year if given appropriate interventions, including the implementation of a plan for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction. The committee shall present a plan for continuous assessment of the student's progress toward grade level mastery. Absent a unanimous committee decision, the student will be retained.

BIA reserves the right to not offer retest administration of any or all GA Milestones Assessments. The decision to offer retests shall be up to the discretion of the Head of School. If retests are offered, the protocol below will be followed:

- Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the GA Milestones assessment individual student scores, the Head of School or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student regarding the following:
  - (i) The student's below-grade-level performance on the GA Milestones assessment(s);
  - (ii) The specific retest(s) to be given the student and testing date(s);
  - (iii) The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student's performance on the state-adopted assessment; and
  - (iv) The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.
- The student shall be retested with appropriate section(s) of the GA Milestones assessment(s)

## Promotion/Retention of Students in Special Education

Determination for promotion/retention of students in Special Education will be based on whether or not the students have met the goals as outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).



## Field Trips

There may be times during the school year that teachers plan field trips to deepen students' learning of content. Parents/guardians may be asked to serve as chaperones on these trips. Parents/guardians who serve as chaperones may not have other children or adults accompany them.

- Prior to a field trip, information will be sent home to parents/guardians, which will include a form(s) for the parent/guardian to complete and return to the teacher within a specific period of time. Please remember that a student's participation in a field trip is a privilege and participation in field trips is dependent upon students' daily behavior at school. Students on field trips serve as representatives of the school and as such must exhibit excellent behavior and conduct during the trip just as they do at school.
- Students must wear their school uniform on all field trips unless otherwise specified.
- There are often fees associated with these trips, so parents/guardians are urged to understand this when giving approval for their child to participate in the trip. No student will be denied the opportunity to attend a field trip due to financial hardship.
- Written information and permission paperwork will be sent home to a student's parents/guardians prior to the trip. Money required for the trip as well as the permission forms should be returned to a designated teacher (not the main office) by the established deadline.
- In the event that the field trip is canceled, money will be returned to the parent/guardian. If a student cannot attend the field trip after having paid a fee, the fee will not be returned.

## Textbooks, Laptops, Tablets and Supplies

All textbooks, laptops, tablets and supplies are loaned to students for their use during the school year. Students are responsible for exercising care in the use of these materials. Students are required to return books and supplies to teachers at the conclusion of the course/school year. Students will be charged for damaged or lost textbooks, laptops, tablets and supplies before replacements are issued. Please see the technology use agreement for more information.

## School Supplies

Students are required to buy their own school supplies as determined by their teachers. These supplies include, but are not limited to: pens, pencils, notebook paper, spiral notebook, 3-ring binders, and folders. Students must bring their supplies to class every day. Please refer to your child's grade level supply list for specific school supplies needed. Supply lists can be provided by your child's teacher and found on our website at [www.biaschool.org](http://www.biaschool.org).

## Homework

Homework is an extension of classwork rather than an introduction to new material. Homework should be completed and brought back to class according to the teacher's directions. Electronic submissions require prior approval by the teacher. Homework is the student's responsibility to complete and may or may not be assigned to any grade level based on the teacher's professional judgment of the needs of the student. Parents/guardians are asked to support the efforts of the teacher and the student in homework in the following ways:

- Show an interest in the work your child is doing both in class as well as outside of class.
- Establish a place and time for your child to do his/her homework that is quiet and free of distractions.
- Review your child's work and encourage neatness and completeness in the work.
- If you have concerns about the quantity or quality of your child's homework, discuss them with the teacher rather than with your child.
- Remember that homework is for the child to complete, as it provides the teacher with valuable information to inform instruction.

## Academic Support

Teachers in all grade levels will provide support for students who are in need of academic assistance. Teachers will use assessment and observational data to inform instruction and provide differentiation based on students' needs. Full student participation along with teacher and parental/guardian support are required for student success. This includes, but is not limited to, student's completion of and participation in all classwork activities and discussions as well as completion of all homework assignments and parent involvement in the student's academic learning. Students are expected to keep up with both classwork and homework throughout the year. If a student is experiencing difficulty at any time, he or she should first speak to their teacher who will then develop a plan of support.

## Computer, Electronic Mail, And Internet Usage Policy

At BIA, we use technology as one way of enhancing our mission to teach the skills, knowledge, and behaviors students will need to succeed in the global community. With new opportunities come new responsibilities. We expect students to embrace the following principles so they may become responsible, digital citizens. These technologies may include, but are not limited to, school- provided equipment as well as personal devices.

1. BIA technology is intended for educational purposes only.
2. All activity over the network or while using BIA technologies may be monitored and/or retained.
3. Access to online content via the BIA network will be filtered in accordance with our policies and federal regulations.
4. Users are expected to follow the school honor code and class norms online as well as offline.
5. Misuse of school resources will result in disciplinary action.
6. BIA makes every effort to ensure users' safety and security online but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
7. Users of the school network or other technologies are expected to immediately alert teachers or administrators of any concerns for safety or security.

## Acceptable Use Policy

In accepting this agreement, students acknowledge and agree to adhere to the following rules and conditions:

### Internet Access

School Provided Access - BIA provides its users with access to the Internet, including websites, resources, content, and online tools while at school. That access will be restricted in compliance with state and federal regulations and school policies. Internet activity may be monitored, and records may be retained indefinitely.

- I understand that the internet filter is a mandatory and vital safety precaution, and I will conduct my studies within the parameters of BIA's filter. I will follow the school protocol to alert my teacher or submit a site for review if a site is blocked and I believe it should not be. I will also follow school protocol to report sites that are not blocked, but I feel should be blocked.
- I understand that I represent BIA in all my online activities. Additionally, I understand that what I do on social networking websites should not reflect negatively on fellow students, teachers, or on the school.
- I will regularly back up my files.

Recognizing the benefits collaboration brings to education, BIA may provide users with access to websites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, and sharing. Availability and use may be restricted based on school or district policies.

- I understand that school-provided email accounts are used for school-related purposes only. Student email, files, photographs, app usage, etc. will be monitored and archived to meet legal obligations.
- I will use email and other means of communications (e.g. blogs, wikis, podcasting, chat, instant messaging,

discussion boards, virtual learning environments, etc.) responsibly.

- I will keep all personally identifying information confidential when online, such as name, address, photo and extra-curricular activities . If I am unsure about information to share, I will consult a teacher before providing that information to anyone. Sharing inappropriate personal information or content is strictly prohibited.
- I will keep my username and password confidential and not share it with anyone.
- I will be cautious when opening files or following links from unknown or untrusted origin.
- I will communicate with appropriate, safe, mindful, and courteous conduct.

### Personally-Owned Devices Policy

Student -owned devices must be kept turned off and in backpacks or lockers unless directed otherwise by a teacher for a specific classroom or instructional activity. Students are not to have cell phones or communication devices – i.e. Smart Watch- on or in use at school. If a student needs to contact a parent, the student will go to the front office to use the phone. If a student is found to be in use of a cell phone or other personal device without the permission and supervision of a faculty/staff member, the device will be confiscated and turned in to the front office. The student's parent/guardian will be contacted to come to school to retrieve the device.

When using personal electronic devices under the direction of a teacher, users are expected to take all reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats (viruses, worms, spyware, etc.) over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin.

If a device is believed to be infected with a virus, please alert school personnel immediately. The user should not attempt to remove the virus or download any programs to help remove the virus.

- I understand that all school equipment, the school network, and my school account are property of BIA and can be monitored.
- I understand that changing the configuration of, installing on, or removing software or hardware from BIA devices is prohibited.
- I will leave all identification tags on BIA owned and issued laptops and keep them free of stickers, marking pens, etc.
- I will take pictures or video of others for academic purposes only or when I am specifically directed to do so by school staff.

### Downloads

Users may be able to download file types, such as images or videos; however, for the security of the school's network, such downloads should only be from reputable websites, and only for educational purposes and with a staff member's prior approval. Streaming non-school related video and audio is strictly prohibited while using the BIA network unless directed otherwise by school personnel. Students may be selected at random to provide their device for monitoring and inspection.

### Digital Citizenship and Personal Safety

Communicating over the Internet brings the risks associated with the lack of face-to-face contact. Users should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others.

- I will always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.
- I recognize that among the valuable content online, there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content.
- I will use technology resources productively and appropriately for school-related purposes. I will avoid using any technology resource in such a way that would disrupt the activities of other users.
- I understand it is prohibited to use or attempt to use another student's assigned hardware, subscriptions,

logins, files, or personal information.

- I will keep personal information confidential, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without permission.
- I understand to never agree to meet someone that I met online in person in real life other than through school approved and supervised academic purposes.
- I understand that if I see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes me concerned for my personal safety or the safety of another student, I will bring it to the attention of school personnel immediately.
- I understand that I can only use my BIA-assigned technology device to record (audio/visual) and/or take photos of others with their permission.
- If permission is granted by staff to take pictures or video, it will not be posted on-line unless directed to do so by staff.

### Plagiarism

I understand that all students are prohibited from plagiarizing (use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet.

- I will give credit to the author or creator for content I use in my academics that did not create myself.
- I understand that research conducted via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.
- I understand that I am prohibited from accessing sites that promote plagiarism. These sites should be reported to school personnel.

### Limitation of Liability

BIA will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware. While BIA employs state and federal compliant filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness. BIA will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

- I understand that I am responsible for monitoring all technology resources while they are in my possession. I am financially responsible for any damage to, or theft of technology equipment taken off the campus of BIA.
- I understand that I am only allowed to use my BIA-assigned technology device while on campus at BIA, and I am not allowed to take the device home or off campus except for Digital Learning Days or situations that call for virtual learning to take place.
- I will report loss/theft of the BIA-assigned technology device to parents, school and proper authorities (police) within 24 hours.

### Appropriate use

- I understand that the use of BIA resources for political advertising, lobbying, or campaigning is prohibited.
- I understand that the use of BIA resources for the promotion of commercial goods or services for personal gain is prohibited.

I will use technology in accordance with the laws of the United States and the State of Georgia., which include the following:

- Criminal acts – These include, but are not limited to, “hacking” or attempting to access computer systems without authorization, harassing email, cyberbullying, cyberstalking, child pornography, vandalism, and/or unauthorized tampering with computer systems. Libel laws – Publicly defaming people through the published material on the Internet, email, etc.
- Copyright violations – Copying, selling or distributing copyrighted material without the express written permission of the author or publisher (users should assume that all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright), engaging in plagiarism.

### Violations of this Responsible Use Agreement

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

1. Restrictions placed on devices
2. Notification of parents
3. Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities
4. Loss of technology privileges
5. Legal action and/or prosecution
6. Financial Consequences

I understand that school administrators deem what conduct is inappropriate use if such conduct is not specified in this agreement.

### Examples of Responsible/Irresponsible Technology Use

Responsible:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online as offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion when using communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert school personnel of threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.
- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of everybody.
- Help to protect the security of school resources by reporting misuse or illegal activities.

Irresponsible Use:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- Attempt to find or create inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyber-bullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Downloading apps that are rated 12+ or higher, or explicit material.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarize content found online.
- Post personally identifying information, about others or myself.
- Agree to meet someone you met online in real life.
- Use of chat rooms, sites selling term papers, book reports and other forms of student work.
- Illegal installation or transmission of copyrighted materials.
- Use language online that would be irresponsible in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that is inappropriate.
- Gaining access to other student's accounts, files, and or data.
- Listening or viewing media or books labeled "Explicit."

\*This is not intended to be a complete list.

### Handling and Care of Laptops

Students are responsible for the care and safety of the laptop assigned to them, and any damage will be the responsibility of the student to whom the device is assigned. Parents/guardians will be invoiced for damage to or

loss of the laptop. Fees will be assessed for purposeful and/or reckless damage to or loss of devices.

#### General

- All devices must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not applied by the BIA technology team.
- Use the laptop or device on a flat, stable surface.
- Keep books off of BIA issued technology devices.
- Keep food and/or drinks away from BIA technology devices.
- Wipe surfaces with a clean, dry soft cloth.
- Avoid touching the screen with pens or pencils.
- Avoid leaving pens/pencils on the keyboard and closing the laptop.
- Keep BIA technology devices away from direct sunlight or near any heat or moisture sources for extended periods of time.

#### Transport, Monitoring, and Supervision

- Students must keep the laptops in a book bag or protective sleeve when in transition between classes.
- Users should walk while transporting technology devices.
- BIA devices are for use by the student to which they were issued and are not to be shared with a classmate, friend, or family member.
- Students are responsible for the safety / security of all technology devices issued to them and any activity on the device at all times.

#### Anti-bullying Policy

BIA is committed to creating a safe, caring, respectful learning environment for all students. The bullying of students at BIA is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. For the purposes of our anti-bullying policy, "school" includes school buildings, school grounds, any school-sponsored event, and field trips. Reported incidents of bullying will be investigated promptly and thoroughly by school administration.

#### Definition of Bullying:

BIA has adopted the \*State of Georgia's definition of a bullying act, which is an act that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person;
2. Any intentional display of force which would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - A. causes another person substantial physical harm or visible bodily injury;
  - B. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - C. is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening education environment; or
  - D. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying behaviors include but are not limited to:

Direct bullying which occurs in the presence of a student, such as:

- Physical attacks
- Emotional or social attacks (verbal)
- Damage to property

Indirect bullying, which is not directly communicated to a student, such as:

- Spreading rumors
- Efforts to harm the reputation or relationships of others
- Damage to property

## Cyber-bullying

BIA also has a no-tolerance policy for cyber-bullying. BIA has adopted the National Crime Prevention Council's definition of cyber-bullying, which is as follows: "When the Internet, cell phones or other devices are used to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person." This includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:

- Online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar language.
- Repeatedly sending nasty, mean, and insulting messages.
- Sending or posting gossip or rumors about a person.
- Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information and then sharing it online.
- Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone.
- Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

Moreover, BIA students are prohibited from sending, displaying, posting, using, or otherwise transmitting electronic images, videos, texts, or other electronic media in any form or any other BIA student, faculty or staff member, or other member of the BIA community, without that person's explicit consent.

## Bullying Outside of School

BIA also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting, regardless of whether the action originated on school property or with school equipment, if such bullying

- i. creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed,
- ii. infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or
- iii. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

Discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying is likewise prohibited.

Parents and faculty/school staff have a role to play in preventing bullying.

1. Student Instruction/Awareness: All staff will work with students to make sure that they understand what bullying is and how to stand up to it. BIA staff will emphasize to students that bullying is unacceptable and will teach students how to get help when they need it.
2. Staff Awareness/Action: BIA staff will model kindness and respect with other staff members and students. They will make sure to check in with students often and listen with attention when students have complained about issues with others. They will keep lines of communication open with students and parents so all members of the BIA community feel safe talking with staff members about issues that may arise.
3. Student Action: Students will participate in discussions and will follow the BIA bullying policy. They will report bullying to staff, do their best to be assertive, and do what they can to stand up to bullying.
4. Parent Awareness/Action: Parents will review the BIA bullying policy and will discuss it with their children. They check in with their children and will keep in contact with staff members and let them know if there are any issues that arise with their children.

## Reporting Bullying

Students, staff, and parents are directed to report all incidents of bullying to the BIA teachers and/or administration. The school will investigate all reports of bullying, and all reports will be kept confidential and private. School staff and students are to report violations without fear of retaliation.

Staff members who witness bullying will complete a BIA Incident Report. This report will be given to administration for review.

Administration will take reports of bullying from staff and students seriously and will investigate when necessary. They will make decisions regarding appropriate interventions and/or consequences for students who are participating in bullying at BIA. In addition, the administration will maintain a record of all bullying reports in a way that can show emerging problems and patterns over time.



## Intervention/Consequences

If bullying is observed, teachers and staff will:

- Intervene immediately
- Separate the students involved
- Make sure everyone is safe
- Meet any immediate medical needs
- Stay calm and reassure the students involved, including bystanders
- Model respectful behavior when intervening in the situation

Staff will summon police or medical attention immediately if:

- A weapon is involved
- There are threats of serious physical injury
- There are threats of hate-motivated violence, such as racism or homophobia
- There is serious bodily harm
- There is sexual abuse
- Anyone is accused of an illegal act, such as robbery or extortion—using force to get money, property, or services

BIA will respond to bullying by taking the following actions:

- Providing counseling to students regarding communication, behavior, school discipline, and BIA's Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Teaching students appropriate strategies for dealing with bullying issues;
- Notifying parents of both the victim and student who committed the offense of bullying of all incidents. When necessary, parents will be asked to participate in meetings with the BIA administration, faculty, and/or law enforcement;
- Disciplining the student who committed the offense of bullying in accordance with the BIA Honor Code, which may include suspension or expulsion.
- Upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal of school officials that a student in grades 6 through 8 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, such student shall be assigned to an alternative setting that fulfills the requirements of an alternative program under state law. Details of BIA's policy can be found in the Anti-Bullying Policy for BIA.

### BULLYING BEHAVIOR CHART & CONSEQUENCES\*

PHYSICAL—physical harm		EMOTIONAL—harm to self-esteem		SOCIAL—harm to group acceptance		CONSEQUENCES
VERBAL**	NON-VERBAL	VERBAL**	NON-VERBAL	VERBAL**	NON-VERBAL	
Taunting; expressing physical superiority	Making threatening gestures; defacing property; taking small items; staring or mugging; pushing and/or shoving	Insulting remarks; name calling; teasing about possessions and/or clothes	Dirty looks; holding nose or other insulting gestures; saying someone has germs or is unclean	Gossiping; spreading rumors; teasing publicly about clothes belongings, etc.; verbal interference with friendships	Passively not including in the group; playing mean tricks; interference with friendships in any way	<p><b><u>Level I</u></b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Verbal reprimand</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Verbal reprimand and parents contacted</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: appropriate Level 2 consequence will be imposed and in-school suspension (ISS)</p>



Threatening physical harm	Damaging and/or stealing property; initiating fights; scratching, tripping or causing to fall	Insulting family members, harassment by insulting intelligence, athleticism, looks, etc.	Defacing schoolwork and/or personal property; harassment by any means	Insulting race and/or gender, escalating gossip and/or rumors; undermining friend/group relationships	Making look foolish; excluding from friend/group	<p><b><u>Level 2</u></b></p> <p>Minimum: ISS and parents contacted</p> <p>Possible additional: Loss of privileges, referral to school administrator, removal from the classroom, letter of apology, isolated lunch time, removal from extra-curricular activities, payment for any school and/or personal property damages, out of school suspension (OSS)</p>
Repeated and/or graphic physical threats; extortion; physical threats to ensure silence: "If you tell, I will..."	Destruction of property; physical cruelty; biting; assault with a weapon; making "hit" lists	Frightening with use of threats; intimidation in public; harassment while breaking the law	Ostracizing; destruction of personal property and/or clothing; harassment by any means in violation of the law	Threatening total group exclusion; threat of hazing	Arranging an/or carrying out public humiliation, total group rejection; ostracizing; hazing	<p><b><u>Level 3</u></b></p> <p>Minimum: OSS, referral to law enforcement when necessary; sessions with school counselor</p> <p>Possible additional: Same as for Level 2 and completion of BIA's Bully Prevention Program (includes up to 6 counseling sessions and completion of a reflective paper to be signed by parent/guardian)</p>
<p>This chart is intended for illustrative purposes only to show typical actions that are likely to lead to certain consequences. However, as noted above, under the Honor Code and School Discipline Policy, the BIA administration has the right to take certain disciplinary actions, including the right to expel a student, depending on the severity of the offense.</p> <p>*GaDOE Policy for Prohibiting Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation</p> <p>**All verbal examples include instances of cyberbullying.</p>						

## HONOR CODE AND SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

### Honor Code

At BIA, we believe that we are responsible for both the academic and emotional growth of all students. Each of us, including our students, sometimes makes mistakes or errors in judgment. We believe that these mistakes provide an opportunity to teach productive behavior and, in turn, to cause emotional growth.

All students and staff at BIA will abide by an honor code, which is intended to set the parameters for healthy, safe and productive behaviors. The BIA Honor Code is based upon the premise that a person's honor is his or her most cherished attribute. In a community devoted to learning, an atmosphere of honor must exist if that community is to thrive with respect and harmony. An Honor Code is an ideal tool to assist us with understanding our responsibilities as members of a school family. With it, students and staff are afforded a freedom that otherwise may not be available. With this freedom comes each individual's responsibility to conduct him or herself in such a way that our spirit of mutual trust and respect is maintained.

## Our Honor Code Pledge

"As a member of the Brookhaven Innovation Academy family, I pledge on my honor to be truthful, commit to academic honesty, respect the property of BIA and of others, and show respect for all through my academic and personal behavior. I understand that these actions are in keeping with our Honor Code and uphold our community of trust and caring. On all my work, my name affirms my honor."

### Violations of the BIA Honor Code and consequences include:

Level 1 Violations – Relatively less serious in nature and can be addressed by any faculty member

- disruptive classroom behavior
- disrespect of others
- defacing property (can be easily restored to its original)
- littering
- uniform violations
- simple horseplay
- running in the hallways
- horseplay
- encouraging others to violate the Honor Code

Primary Consequence: Loss of privileges, parent call/meeting, silent lunch

Minimum Consequence: Loss of privileges

Level 2 Violations – More serious than Level 1

- talking back to a faculty member
- defacing property (cannot be easily restored to its original)
- harassment of others
- using inappropriate language
- making harmful threats
- causing injury to others
- lying
- repeated Level 1 violations

Primary Consequence: parent meeting, automatic suspension consideration

Minimum Consequence: parent meeting, loss of privileges, detention

Level 3 Violations – Serious and require immediate address

- cheating
- possession of alcohol, drugs, or dangerous weapon
- fighting, assault, battery
- threats, aggressive contact
- severe disrespect toward staff members
- stealing
- possessing or accessing pornographic material
- leaving school premises without permission
- plagiarism
- extreme disrespect of adults
- bullying/harassment

Primary Consequence: parent meeting, disciplinary hearing, automatic expulsion consideration

Minimum Consequence: suspension

During the first days of school, students and teachers will spend time discussing the Honor Code and defining violations and

examples to ensure understanding. All students will commit to the Honor Code.

Violations of the Honor Code may be reported to the classroom teacher or to school administration. For all matters that do not involve imminent harm to self or others, school discipline will be based on a system of restorative justice.

Restorative justice focuses on these questions:

1. Who was harmed?
2. What are the needs and responsibilities of all affected?
3. How do all affected parties together address needs and repair harm?

In all instances, the BIA administration reserves the right to work with students to create and implement behavior plans and to work with students to develop plans to repair harm caused by behavior

### Suspension and Expulsion as Disciplinary Actions

BIA will regard suspension and expulsion as a last resort. Criteria for suspension and expulsion of students will be consistent with all applicable federal and state statutes and constitutional provisions. Students will be afforded due process, including a hearing and right of appeal. A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom there is a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Act ("IDEA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students except when federal law require additional or different procedures.

**Mandatory Suspension:** a student shall be suspended for a period of 10 days with a mandatory recommendation for expulsion where he/she is found to have possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object. Expulsion will depend on the outcome of a disciplinary hearing as described in the Disciplinary Hearings section of this handbook.

**Discretionary Suspension** - a student may be suspended for a period of up to 10 days for commission of any of the following offenses:

- offering, arranging and/or negotiating to sell or provide a knife, imitation firearm, other weapon, or item that could be construed and/or used as a weapon.
- possession, use, being under the influence of, offering, arranging and/or negotiating to sell tobacco, alcohol, drugs, other controlled substances, or intoxicants of any kind, including, but not limited to over-the-counter medication and/or prescription drugs.
- theft of property including, but not limited to attempting to steal and/or receive stolen property and/or aiding or abetting in the same.
- physical assault including, but not limited to aiding or abetting in the same.
- damage to school or private property including, but not limited to attempted or caused damage.
- sexual harassment.
- threatening, harassing, bullying, and/or attempting to intimidate other members of the community including, but not limited to acts of "cyber-bullying."
- obscenity/Profanity/Vulgarity, including the commission of an obscene act and/or engagement in habitual profanity/vulgarity
- disruption and/or defiance, including, but not limited to disruption of school activities and/or willful defiance of the authority of school personnel.
- violations of BIA Information Technology policies, including, but not limited to transmitting computer viruses, using or attempting to use other's accounts, trespassing in another's folders or files, concealing or misrepresenting one's identity while using the IT system.

**Mandatory Expulsion:** a student shall be expelled, when it is determined through a Disciplinary Hearing, that the student

possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object.

Discretionary Expulsion - a student may be expelled, when it is determined through a Disciplinary Hearing, that the student has previously been suspended for commission of any of the following offenses:

- offering, arranging and/or negotiating to sell or provide a knife, imitation firearm, other weapon, or item that could be construed and/or used as a weapon.
- possession of, use of, being under the influence of, offering, or arranging and/or negotiating to sell tobacco, alcohol, drugs, other controlled substances, or intoxicants of any kind, including, but not limited to over-the-counter medication and/or prescription drugs.
- theft of property including, but not limited to, attempting to steal and/or receive stolen property and/or aiding or abetting in the same.
- physical assault including, but not limited to aiding or abetting in the same.
- damage to school or private property including, but not limited to attempted or caused damage.
- sexual harassment.
- threatening, harassing, bullying, and/or attempting to intimidate other members of the community including, but not limited to acts of “cyber-bullying.”
- obscenity/Profanity/Vulgarity, including the commission of an obscene act and/or engagement in habitual profanity/vulgarity.
- violations of BIA Information Technology policies, including, but not limited to transmitting computer viruses, using or attempting to use other’s accounts, trespassing in another’s folders or files, concealing or misrepresenting one’s identity while using the IT system.

A student may receive consequences for those acts listed above as committed at any time, including, but not limited to, (a) while on school grounds; (b) while going to or from school; (c) during lunch period, (d) during, or while going to or from, a school sponsored activity; and, (e) during non-school time and while off campus if the school determines that there is a nexus between the action taken and the school community sufficient to warrant action by the school.

### Authority to Impose Discipline

The Head of School (or his/her designee) may conduct an investigation of the facts and circumstances presented in case of a disciplinary offense or infraction. The investigation may include search(es), a review of evidence, consulting the student and interviewing affected parties, and potential witnesses as well as the involvement authorities.

The Head of School (or his/her designee) may consider the various disciplinary options available in any given set of circumstances, including whether alternatives to suspension or expulsion may be appropriate. The Head of School (or his/her designee) has the authority to determine whether or not to impose a suspension under this policy.

Suspensions may be imposed:

1. Pending an investigation to determine whether further discipline, including the possibility of an expulsion hearing is warranted; or,
2. Companion to setting an expulsion hearing. The Head of School (or their designees) have the discretion to determine which form of suspension may be imposed.

If a student matter proceeds to an expulsion hearing, the Head of School (or his/her designee) shall have the authority to hear the matter and to determine whether or not to impose an expulsion. The decision of whether or not to expel a student remains at the sole discretion of the Head of School (or his/her designee).

### Violence Against Teachers or Other School Officials

BIA will have zero tolerance for any kind of intentional violence inflicted on a BIA school official or a BIA employee. Students shall not inflict violence on BIA teachers or other school officials or employees. Physical violence shall include:

- Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person
- Intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contact or physical harm was in defense of him or herself

In the event a student is charged with violence against a school employee the student will be disciplined by expulsion and criminal charges filed.

### Disciplinary Hearings

A student may be referred for a Disciplinary Hearing for determination as to whether a long-term suspension or expulsion is appropriate as defined in the discipline policy. A long-term suspension means denial to a student of the right to attend school and take part in any school function for any period of ten (10) school days or more. Expulsion shall mean removal of the student from enrollment at the School for the remainder of the school year or longer.

A long-term suspension or expulsion will normally follow a short-term suspension. There are exceptions, however, that could prompt the school administrator to move forward with the immediate dismissal of a student. Please see the Level 3 violations for examples..

A disciplinary hearing officer or member of a disciplinary hearing panel must either be:

- 1) in good standing with the State Bar of Georgia;
- 2) have experience as a teacher, counselor, or administrator in a public school system; or
- 3) is actively serving as a hearing officer under an existing contract/agreement with a Georgia school system and has completed an approved Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) tribunal training course."

A decision to impose a long-term suspension will be the result of a Disciplinary Hearing before an independent hearing officer(s). The purpose of the Disciplinary Hearing is to receive and evaluate testimony and other evidence concerning the disciplinary violation. The Head of School or his/her designee will present the case for suspension or expulsion to the Hearing Officer(s). In order for a long-term suspension or expulsion to take place, the following steps must be taken:

1. The school administrator recommending the long-term suspension or expulsion will furnish to the Hearing Officer(s) a written statement of charges against the student, accompanied by any supporting statements or other relevant evidence.
2. The administrator shall notify the student and his/her parent or guardian of the recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion; and
3. The Hearing Officer(s) shall notify the student and his/her parent or guardian with the following information:

Written Notice of Hearing: The notification shall include the following:

- a. A brief statement of the act(s) the student is alleged to have committed, along with the portion of the Code of Conduct allegedly violated.
- b. The maximum penalty which may be administered for the alleged misconduct, and a recommendation for discipline.
- c. A copy of this document.
- d. The date, time and place of the hearing.
- e. The names of witnesses expected to be called at the hearing and a short summary of evidence that may be presented.
- f. A statement that a hearing is required unless the parent/guardian/student 18 years old or older waives the hearing.
- g. A statement that at the hearing the student is entitled to be represented by an advocate (spokesperson) of his/her choice, including an attorney if so desired; and that the student may subpoena witnesses and utilize other compulsory processes upon request.
- h. A statement that all parties are afforded an opportunity to present and respond to evidence and to examine and cross-examine witnesses.

Delivery of Notification: The notice of hearing shall be delivered to the student and his/her parent/guardian either in person, by first class mail, certified mail return receipt requested, and/or delivery confirmation, to the last known address of the parent or guardian. If notice is delivered in person, a written confirmation of delivery should be obtained by the person delivering the notice to the parent/guardian. Service shall be deemed to be perfected when the notice is deposited in the United States mail with sufficient postage addressed to the last known address of the parent/guardian.

Disciplinary Hearing: Within ten school days after the beginning of the suspension, unless the parties mutually agree to an extension\*, the Hearing Officer(s) will meet at the appointed time and place to review the case. At this time, the school administrator will present the facts of the case against the student as well as the reason for the recommendation. The student, parent or guardian, or other appointed representative present for the hearing will be able to ask questions and present arguments against the recommendation.

\* If parents and school agree to extend the 10-day timeline for disciplinary tribunal/hearing, the new date must be no later than 15 school days after suspension began. If the hearing is conducted more than 15 days after suspension began a written request must be made by parents and signed by a school official. BIA shall provide appropriate grade-level instructional materials to any student awaiting the completion of a tribunal hearing.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Hearing Officer(s) will determine if the accused student has violated the School's Disciplinary Policy. The Hearing Officer's decision will be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. If the Hearing Officer determines that a student has committed a disciplinary violation, he/she may impose a range of sanctions that include reinstatement into school to permanent expulsion, as long as the sanction complies with the school's established policies.

The Disciplinary Hearing is a closed and confidential proceeding. Friends or relatives of the students or other members of the public who are not witnesses will not be allowed in the hearing room. Any representative(s) of the family other than the student and parent or guardian must be approved by the Head of School in advance. If a family wishes to bring a lawyer, they must notify the Head of School in advance so that the school can ensure its legal counsel is present.

Appeal: Once the Hearing Officer has informed the school administration of the decision, the school administration will immediately inform the family and mail a letter of decision to the family. Once a decision has been rendered, the student may appeal directly to the School's Board of Directors. To do so, he/she must inform the school administration of the intent to appeal within ten working days of the date of the Hearing Officer's decision. The school administrator will supply all records from the previous hearing including, if available, written statements, minutes and audio recordings of the Disciplinary Hearing. The Board of Directors will evaluate all information and will make a decision solely on the facts presented in the record from the hearing. The student and the school administrator may provide a written statement identifying any reasons why they believe the Hearing Officer's decision was valid or invalid based on the evidence presented at the Disciplinary Hearing. There will not be an opportunity for additional testimony or argument. The Board will render its decision within 20 working days of receiving the appeal. Once the Board renders a decision on the appeal, the school administration will immediately mail a letter of decision to the family.

## Sexual Harassment

BIA will have zero tolerance for any kind of harassment including sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any BIA student to sexually harass another student or school employee, or for any school employee to sexually harass a BIA student.

### Examples of Sexual Harassment

- Unwelcome leering, sexual flirtations or propositions.
- Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, verbal abuse, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions.
- Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body or overly personal conversation.
- Sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures.
- Spreading sexual rumors.
- Teasing or sexual remarks about students, regardless of whether the class is a predominantly single-sex class.
- Touching or grabbing an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way.

### State Mandated Process for Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct

- Any student who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a BIA student, teacher, administrator, or other school system employee or BIA student is urged to make an oral report of the act to the counselor or administrator at his/her school. Parents or friends of victimized students who have knowledge of sexual abuse or



sexual misconduct by a BIA student, teacher, administrator, or other school system employee, are also urged to make an oral report of the act to the counselor or administrator his/her school. The individual reporting the event must provide their contact information to the individual to whom they are reporting the incident.

- Any teacher, counselor, or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately to the Head of School or Head of School's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the Head of School or Head of School's designee within 24 hours. If the Head of School is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the Chairman of the Governing Board or the Chairman's designee.
- The Head of School or designee who receives a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 197-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority.
- Pursuant to BIA procedures, upon receipt of a report under this policy, the Head of School shall immediately contact the Chairman of the Governing Board, which will initiate an investigation into the allegations.
- Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the Head of School or Head of School's designee shall make an immediate written report to the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.
- When it is determined that reports should be made to various outside agencies, the Head of School will notify the Chairman of the Governing Board and the Head of School will contact appropriate police authorities, and will coordinate with the appropriate authorities to make a report to the appropriate child welfare agencies, and will coordinate with the Chairman of the Governing Board to make a report to the Professional Standards Commission.

## Suicide Awareness

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people between the ages of 10-24, and alarmingly common in youth today. Therefore, it is critically important to have a policy in place to assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to youth suicidal behavior.

BIA will ensure the maintenance of a positive and safe school climate by:

- Fostering a feeling of connectedness between the students and the school
- Providing opportunities for students to become involved in school activities
- Ensuring an overall safe environment for all students
- Taking bullying of any nature seriously
- Setting high expectations on all staff and students to behave respectfully and kindly to one another

## Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention

- BIA will appoint a suicide prevention coordinator to plan and coordinate the implementation of the school's suicide prevention policy with help from the school-level Crisis Response Team.
- All staff members shall report students they believe to be at risk for suicide to the school suicide prevention coordinator or a staff member the school suicide prevention coordinator has designated to act in his or her absence.

## Training

- All certificated school personnel shall receive annual training on youth suicide prevention using evidence-based suicide prevention programs as recognized by the Suicide Prevention Resource Center's Best Practices Registry and/or the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP).
- BIA will use a multifaceted approach in which the following components are implemented in a particular sequence:
- Staff education training (prevention);
- Parent education (prevention);
- Student education (prevention);
- Screening (identification);

- Protocols for helping students at possible risk of suicide (intervention); and
- Protocols for responding to a suicide death (postvention).

### Suicide Screening, Assessment and Referral

It is the responsibility of all BIA staff to ensure the safety of our scholars. When a student is identified by a staff person as potentially suicidal, (i.e., verbalizes about suicide, presents overt risk factors, student self-refers, etc.) the student should immediately be seen by a mental health professional to assess risk and facilitate referral. If there is no mental health professional available at the school, the school suicide prevention coordinator, a school nurse, school counselor, school social worker or a school administrator should fill this role until a mental health professional can be brought in.

For students with warning signs for suicide:

1. School staff should continuously supervise the student to ensure his or her safety until the parents/guardians and/or mental health professional arrive. Under no circumstances should the student be left alone, sent back to class, or sent home on the bus without constant adult supervision.
2. The School Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Head of School or his/her designee, school counselor, mental health professional, the Crisis Response Team, and the main office (e.g., Head of School or his/her designee) should be informed immediately.
3. If possible, screen the student using a screener such as the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating BIAle. The additional information obtained from the screener will be helpful in your conversations with family members and referral agencies.
4. The Head of School or mental health professional should contact the student's parent or guardian and should assist the family with urgent referral for professional assessment. When appropriate, this may include calling emergency services or bringing the student to the local emergency room, but in most cases will involve contacting the Georgia Crisis and Access Line (below) or setting up an outpatient behavioral health appointment and communicating the reason for referral to the healthcare provider. If the student is under the age of 18 and the parent or guardian refuses to seek appropriate assistance, the school shall have the option to contact and file a neglect report with the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS). The school may also involve the appropriate law enforcement agency, if necessary.
5. It would be wise for a designated school staff member to ask the student's parent or guardian for written permission to discuss the student's health with outside care, if appropriate. This may be needed for follow-up with the student during and after behavioral health care has been obtained.

The Georgia Crisis & Access Line (1-800-715-4225) is a toll-free, confidential hotline available 24 hours a day 7 days a week from anywhere in Georgia.

### In-School Suicide Attempts

In the case of an in-school suicide attempt, the health and safety of the student is paramount. In these situations:

1. Call 911.
2. Contact Head of School (or his/her designee).
3. Contact Crisis Response Team.
4. Secure the area as soon as possible and keep all students away.
5. Send notes and runners to staff members informing them that a medical emergency has occurred.
6. Include any additional instructions (e.g., "The bell schedule will be changed and will be manually sounded at an appropriate time.")
7. Render first aid until professional medical treatment arrives.
8. Provide constant adult supervision to the student to ensure student safety.
9. Request a mental health screening for the student.
10. Notify the Head of School and the school suicide prevention coordinator regarding in-school suicide
11. attempts.
12. Contact the student's parent or guardian.



13. Crisis Response Team will meet to assess whether additional steps should be taken to ensure student
14. safety and well-being.
15. Prepare a written statement to be distributed to parents and guardians either through email or by letter.

### Out-of-School Suicide Attempts

If a staff member becomes aware of a suicide attempt by a student that is in progress in an off-campus location, the staff member will:

1. Call 911.
2. Contact the student's parent or guardian.
3. Contact the Head of School or his/her designee and the suicide prevention coordinator.

### Parental Notification and Involvement

Parents or guardians should be contacted as soon as possible after a student has been identified as being at risk for suicide. If parent or guardian notification is delayed, the reasons for the delay shall be documented. If the Head of School, designee or mental health profession suspects child abuse or neglect, the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) shall be notified immediately. If the student is under the age of 18 and the parent/guardian refuses to contact a mental health provider, the school will have the option to contact and file a neglect report with DFCS.

### Steps for Parental/Guardian Notification:

1. Notify the parents/guardians about the situation and ask that they come to the school immediately.
2. When the parents/guardians arrive at the school, explain why you think their child is at risk for suicide. 3. Explain the importance of removing from the home (or locking up) firearms and other dangerous items, including over-the-counter and prescription medications and alcohol.
4. If the student is at a low or moderate suicide risk and does not need to be hospitalized, discuss available options for individual and/or family therapy. Provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) with the contact information of mental health service providers in the community. If possible, call and make an appointment while the parent(s)/guardian(s) are with you.
5. Provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) with resources to explain the risk of suicide and the role of parent(s)/guardian(s) in getting and maintaining help for their child.
6. Ask the parent(s)/guardian(s) to sign the Parent/Guardian Contact Acknowledgement Form confirming that they were notified of their child's risk and received referrals for assessment.
7. Tell the parents that you will follow up with them in a few days. If this follow-up conversation reveals that the parent has not contacted a mental health provider:
  - Stress the importance of getting the child the needed help.
  - Discuss why they have not contacted a provider and offer to assist with the process.
8. If the student does not need to be hospitalized, release the student to the parents.
9. Document all contacts with the parent(s)/guardian(s).

### Postvention

A suicide death in a school community requires implementing a coordinated crisis response to assist staff, students, and families who are impacted by the death and to restore an environment focused on education. NOTE: The coroner's or medical examiner's office must first confirm that the death was a suicide before any school official may state this as the cause of death. The school must adhere to the wishes of the family in this regard and respect their right to privacy and confidentiality.

- Head of School will verify death.
- Head of School/designee will ensure all staff know how to respond to inquiries and manage the campus for safety.
- Head of School will notify the School Board and convene the CMT to implement crisis response plan that will take the

appropriate actions:

- Notify schools attended by family members of the deceased.
- Contact and coordinate counseling sessions with external mental health professionals.
- Reach out to and work with the family of the deceased by providing resources and supportive measures.
- Notify all faculty and staff.
- Promptly collect and safeguard the student's belongings from his/her desk or other storage areas, any student work or photo or staff belongings from his/her desk (in event of staff death).
- Consult with family of deceased to determine a mutually agreeable time in private, to return the personal belongings.
- Coordinate notifying students about the death(s).
- Notify families of students about the death and the school's response.
- Provide staff with guidance in talking to students.
- Provide support to staff.
- Identify, monitor, and support students who may be at risk.
- Implement steps to help students with emotional regulation.
- Participate in and/or advise on appropriate memorialization in immediate aftermath.
- Monitor and work with press/media.

BIA Staff will not:

- announce the death of anyone over the public address system.
- hold an assembly program or bring large groups of students together in one place to discuss suicide.
- cancel school, classes or pre-planned activities unless absolutely necessary; students find comfort in following their normal routine when they are under stress, within reason.

Memorials: It is recognized that grieving individuals need a variety of opportunities to personally express their emotions and reactions to this type of death. Recommendations and ideas for a memorial should be taken into consideration and discussed with the school's Administration Staff and the crisis response team prior to being implemented. Memorials must be carefully and tastefully planned, considering a broad range of responses. A variety of activities may in fact occur to celebrate positive remembrances and these expressions often vary.

## Additional Student/Family Matters

### Cafeteria and Student Nutrition

Students will have the opportunity to purchase a school lunch from our school approved food provider. Information regarding this program is posted on the BIA website.

Students may bring their lunch to school. Students may bring water bottles to classes.

In order to keep students with allergies safe and free from an atmosphere of distractions, **BIA is a nut free school.**

### Communication

Our goal is to provide parents with clear and concise information. Email, our website, official BIA social media outlets, mass text messaging and student agendas, will be used for providing school-wide information. Please make sure you have a viable email address and that you check it frequently (remember to check the spam/junk folder).

- Each of our teachers has a school email address. Parents are asked to use email to communicate with teachers rather than calling the school. Keep in mind, however, that teachers will NOT be checking email continually throughout the day. If it is an emergency, call the main number of the school and speak with front office personnel.
- Make sure the school has current contact information on file for your child: address, home phone number, cell phone number, work number, and email addresses for both parents.
- We use a school messenger system that allows us to make phone calls and send mass emails to all of our

parents/guardians in case of emergencies.

- In the event of an emergency, you will receive a phone call and/or text message. If you receive a phone call and do not answer the call, please check your text messages before calling the school. Our focus during an emergency will be on ensuring that our students are safe.
- Parents will have access to their child's attendance and grades at all times through the parent portal in Infinite Campus. Parents may also send email directly to their child's teacher.
- Students will receive progress reports at the end of the 1st and 3rd quarters and report cards every semester. Parent teacher conferences will be held two times per year.
- We encourage constant communication between BIA and our parents and will do whatever we can to make this possible. If you would like to schedule a meeting with your child's teacher, please email the teacher directly with your request. We ask that parents not engage teachers in discussions about their child while in the presence of other parents or children.
- The Head of School newsletter includes important information and notifications for all families and is delivered via email. Please make sure that it does not go to your spam folder. BIA does not send home hard copies of newsletters.

## Social Media

BIA will use its official social media outlets to share information about the organization. Our BIA social media accounts will not be used as an opportunity to criticize our school, our students, or our teachers, as we reserve the right to delete or block individuals who post negative or hurtful comments. At BIA, we want to model respectful behavior and civility at all times, and this is as true with our behavior on social media as it is with personal communication.

Georgia law prohibits the use of social media platforms owned, operated, located in, or organized by a foreign adversary on state owned equipment, defined as any equipment purchased, owned and provided by the school to employees and scholars. As a result, no employee or scholar is allowed to download, view or participate in TikTok in any way in or on school property and/or equipment.

## Volunteers

Volunteers are welcomed at BIA. All volunteers must complete an application, a background check, agree to the Volunteer Code of Conduct, and Confidentiality Agreement before beginning their volunteer service. The Head of School or designee will contact all volunteers upon clearance. Cleared volunteers will check in and out at the front desk upon entering and exiting the building on each visit to the school. Click [here](#) for the necessary forms.

## Parent Council and Educators

BIA has an extremely active parent organization. For full information about this organization, please visit their website. A link to their site is on the front page of the BIA website.

## Returned Checks and Debts

- Checks returned to BIA are charged a \$25 returned check fee.
- Payment for the returned check must be made in cash or money order.
- All debts must be paid before the last day of the school year including After-School fees.

## Student Records

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that student records be maintained confidentially and provides parents and students various rights with respect to student records. In addition, FERPA allows certain types of personally identifiable information, known as "Directory Information," to be released by BIA without the consent of a parent or student. Parents may request that BIA not release any directory information regarding his or her student by notifying the Head of School, in writing, no later than August 15 of each school year.

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA")

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age or an

emancipated minor under State Law (“eligible students”) certain rights with the respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the educational records of a student who is your child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen (18) or older, or those who are emancipated, your own educational records. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to the Head of School a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Head of School will make arrangements for access and provide notice of such arrangements
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s educational records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights. To request the school to amend a record, parents/guardians or eligible students should write the Head of School, specify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights. If the school decides not to amend the record, it will notify the parents/guardians or eligible students of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing before the governing board. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided with the notification of the right of the hearing.
3. The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning the alleged failures by BIA to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400  
Maryland Avenue, SW,  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

4. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s educational records, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a member of the governing board; a person with whom the school has contracted to perform a specific task (such as attorney, auditor, or therapist); or a parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee.) A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school district forwards educational records without prior consent to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. In addition, attendance and disciplinary information will be shared with the Georgia Department of Driver Services, pursuant to Sec. O.C.G.A. 40-5-22.

## Media

The media may choose to cover interesting events that occur at BIA throughout the year. If for any reason a parent/guardian does not wish his/her child to appear on video, photographs, print material or on television, you must submit a request in writing to the school office.

## Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

It is always BIA’s policy to provide equal opportunities without regard to race, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, national origin, ability, genetic information, or veteran status in its educational programs and activities. This includes, but is not limited to: admissions, educational services, access to facilities, financial aid, or employment. Inquiries regarding BIA’s Equal Opportunity policies, Title VI, VII, IX, Georgia Equity in Sports, EEO, and Section 504/ADA may be referred to the school administrators.

For questions regarding Title IX contact the BIA Title IX coordinator **Tedra Norwood, [tnorwood@biaschool.org](mailto:tnorwood@biaschool.org)**  
186 Hunter Street, Norcross, GA 30071, (770) 538-1550 or to the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/aboutocr.html> or both as required by the regulation implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments at 34 C.F.R. 106.8(b)(1).

For questions regarding 504 contact the BIA 504 coordinator Cynthia Bogues, [cbogues@biaschool.org](mailto:cbogues@biaschool.org)  
186 Hunter Street, Norcross, GA 30071, Phone: (770) 538-1550

## Student-Parent Grievance Policy

If an individual feels they have been discriminated against or treated unfairly, he or she should immediately report concerns to the Head of School, teacher, counselor, or other school administrators. A formal complaint may be filed in accordance with the Student-Parent Grievance Process. Retaliation on account of filing a complaint at any level is strictly prohibited. The following person has been designated to coordinate compliance efforts regarding the School's non-discrimination policies:

Head of School  
Brookhaven Innovation Academy  
186 Hunter Street  
Norcross, GA 30071

## Student-Parent Grievance Process

The purpose of this grievance policy is to settle any complaint or grievance of a student enrolled in Brookhaven Innovation Academy for allegations of harassment, discrimination, or any other grievance for which a complaint or appeals process has not been defined elsewhere.

### Level I – Informal Discussion

Students and parents are encouraged to seek resolution through an informal discussion with the appropriate school personnel prior to filing a formal complaint. If the grievance or complaint is related to classroom concerns, the student or parent should request a meeting with the teacher. Questions about appropriate school personnel in other matters should be directed to the Associate Head of School.

### Level II – Formal Complaint

In the event that a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached through informal means, the aggrieved party must file a written complaint with the Head of School or his or her designee within 30 days of the alleged wrongful act or violation. The written complaint must, at a minimum, include the following information:

- The date(s) of the alleged wrongful action;
- The name(s) of the school employees and/or students allegedly involved in the wrongful act;
- A written statement detailing the specific allegations;
- The specific law or School policy allegedly violated;
- The names and contact information, if known, of any witnesses to the alleged wrongful acts;
- A clear statement of relief sought by the complainant.

Upon receipt of the written complaint, and any supporting documentation, the Administrator will determine the nature of the grievance and begin collecting all the relevant information and data. Following an investigation, the Administrator will make every effort to provide the complainant with a written decision within thirty (30) working days of the receipt of the complaint. If circumstances require additional time for investigation, then an update on the status of the investigation with the estimated time of completion shall be provided on this date.

### Level III – Appeal

The original complainant may appeal this decision to the School's Board of Directors within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the written decision. The appeal, which will be limited to the matter under review, must be filed, in writing, with the Chair of the Board and state the reasons for the appeal, including the specific reasons for dissatisfaction with the initial decision. If needed, the Board may request additional written information from the grievant and/or other persons involved with the complaint. The Board shall review the facts and findings of the investigation and, if practicable, issue a written decision within thirty (30) working days of receiving the request for appeal. The decision of the Board will be final.

## Governing Board of Directors

BIA is a public charter school with a Governing Board that establishes policies which guide the school.

- The basic responsibilities of BIA's Governing Board align with the following areas of decision-making authority as identified in The Charter Schools Act of 1998: personnel decisions, financial decisions,

resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations.

- BIA's Governing Board will uphold the mission and vision of the BIA through visible leadership and stewardship. Leading by example in personal and professional endeavors, this Board will provide strategic oversight impacting education of BIA students and will connect the school to the broader local and state communities.
- BIA's Governing Board will provide expertise to the school, assist with fundraising, and drive key governance functions and legal responsibilities including management oversight, strategic planning and policymaking, and fiduciary requirements.
- BIA's Governing Board will work to ensure there are adequate resources and local partnerships; serve as a support mechanism on personnel, community, and grievance matters; and support the school and its staff in accomplishing performance goals set forth in the charter application. Information about BIA's Governing Board can be found on our webpage.
- BIA's Governing Board will typically meet on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm. Meeting information and the agenda will be posted on the BIA website 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Anyone is welcome to attend the public portion of the meetings.