

Blue Ridge Educational Center

Parent and Student Handbook



Unlocking Learning Potential

606 Massanutten Avenue

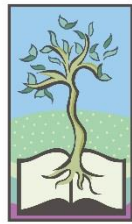
P.O. Box 1820

Front Royal, Virginia

22630

Phone: (540) 631-9503 Fax: (540) 631-9504

www.blueridgeeducation.org



*Blue Ridge
Educational Center
Unlocking Learning Potential*

Table of Contents

Institutional Philosophy	6
Our History	7
Non-discrimination Policy	7
Description of Programs	8
Admission Requirements	10
Admission Procedures	11
a. admissions procedures for students placed by public schools	
b. admissions procedures for students placed by parents	
c. provisional acceptance	
Contact with Parents, Guardians, and Local Educational Agencies	13
Tuition and Other Student Charges	13
Minimum Cancellation and Settlement Policy of the School	13
Description of General Physical Facilities and Equipment	14
Visitors and Guests	14
Complaint Resolution Procedures	14
Policy Regarding Management of Student Records	16
Service Animals	17

Student Rights	20
Transitioned Students	20
The Day School Program	
Instructional Program and Educational Objectives	21
Functional Life Skills	22
Self-determination	23
Emotional Intelligence	23
Development of Education Plans	23
a. IEP's for publicly placed students	
b. IIP's for publicly placed students without disabilities and students unilaterally placed by their parents	
c. 504 plans	
Student Attendance	24
a. attendance reporting	
b. tardiness	
c. early dismissal precautions	
d. medical and dental appointments	
e. illness	
Make-up Work	26
Grading Scale	27
Required Levels of Performance for Graduation	27
Diplomas and Certificates	27

Collaboration with LEA's for Graduation Requirements	28
Student Achievement Expectations	28
Transition Services	28
School-sponsored Activities	29
Virtual Courses	29
Equipment, Instructional Materials and Media	29
Snacks and Lunch/Nutrition and Food	30
Calendar for the School Year and Inclement Weather	30
Unscheduled Remote Learning Days	31
School Climate & Student Conduct	31
Suspension or Expulsion of Students with Disabilities	37
Behavior Management and Intervention	37
Use of Time-out	40
Searches	41
Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting	41
Medication, Health and Use of Epinephrine	42
Transportation of Students	44
Field Trips	44
Emergency Plans & Procedures	44
Emergency Remote Learning	45

Institutional Philosophy

BREC's goals are for all students to achieve their highest academic learning potential, to develop positive core values reflective of our community, and to be prepared for higher education and/or the workforce. We strive to deliver an educational program respected statewide through the commitment and expertise of qualified school administrators, teachers, and school staff. We provide appropriate instructional resources and current technology. We seek to achieve the mission through community support, active parental involvement, and business partnerships.

a. Our Mission

Our mission is to help emotionally and intellectually challenged students develop the academic, emotional, and life skills they need to be successful in the world. Working in close partnerships with schools, we find creative solutions to complex student needs in a safe, community-based, educational environment, addressing each individual through a comprehensive whole-person approach.

b. Our Vision

Our vision is that every student has access to an integrated network of community and family support that provides the skills and opportunities they need to realize their full potential in their personal lives and as citizens in their communities.

Our History

Blue Ridge Educational Center has been open since September 2000, emphasizing full inclusion among their peers for students with physical, emotional, and/or cognitive challenges. We offer students a quiet environment and a slower pace than that which is available in the traditional school setting.

Our average teacher-to-student ratio is 1:5. Teachers also work collaboratively with Instructional Assistants allowing our average staff-to-student ratio to be 1:3. This creates a classroom setting where students are offered highly individualized instruction based on their learning styles and social-emotional needs. Some students feel overwhelmed in a traditional school setting, and as a result, become truant. In our supportive environment students become motivated to attend regularly and are able to concentrate better. Students are able to develop relationships with teachers in whom they can trust and share aspects of their lives that impact their learning and their future.

Over the years, BREC has expanded its services in response to community needs, especially those of students with disabilities. Many students with disabilities are at risk of placement in expensive programs outside the community. Local school districts in the area have recognized our success with students with a wide range of needs and abilities and have utilized BREC as a successful and creative way to best serve students in need of individualized care and education. We maintain longstanding and growing partnerships with local schools, county governments, local mental health providers, expressive therapies and vocational programs, as well as with nonprofit agencies which have played a key role in our program's effectiveness. We believe in a whole-child, whole-school, whole-community approach to working with youth.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Equal educational opportunities shall be available for all students, without regard to sex, race, color, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity (including gender expression), ethnicity, religion, disability, ancestry, or marital or parental status. Educational programs shall be designed to meet the varying needs of all students within the perimeters of BREC's license to operate under the determination of the Virginia Department of Education. No student, on the basis of sex or gender, shall be denied equal access to programs, activities, services or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege or advantage or be denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

Description of Programs

Day Program

BREC provides a day educational program for a variety of students in grades 6-12, many of whom have experiences in the traditional school setting, home-school programs or alternative schools. Our average teacher-to-student ratio is 1:5 and we typically serve approximately 12 students at a time, with a capacity for 15. The small school setting allows for individualized education opportunities in a low-stress, supportive environment. Students from public school programs may be placed at BREC by their respective public school IEP teams and funded by the Comprehensive Services Act fund operated by the local Comprehensive Planning and Management Team. BREC works with local school divisions and IEP teams on implementing IEPs. Students may also be privately placed at BREC by a parent/guardian. BREC assists privately placed students and their families with choosing a course of study that is most appropriate for the respective student's needs. In addition to their academics, students in our day program participate in programs for social-emotional growth and transition.

Individual Tutoring

Individual hourly tutoring is available for public, private and home-schooled students, including adults. Academic tutoring focuses on maximizing a student's strengths and minimizing any barriers to learning. Services are based on staff availability and the student's need.

Home-bound Academic Support

In certain circumstances, BREC may provide instructional support to a student placed on home-bound instruction by their placing school division. Home-bound academic support includes providing materials and curriculum to a student during a temporary extended absence from school. BREC does not provide direct instruction to any student placed on home-bound, but coordinates with the person overseeing the student's academic work at home. Before these services can be administered a service agreement must be made with a student's Local Educational Agency (LEA) and the student must be listed on our school roster. Once approved, a BREC teacher will maintain records of the student's academic progress, provide course materials, syllabi, and curriculum, generate grade reports to the student's parent/guardian and LEA, and coordinate with the person overseeing the student's work while at home. Teaching staff will be available for the student to access by email or phone. If a home-bound student has an IEP, the IEP goals will also be monitored by BREC teaching staff and periodic team meetings will be scheduled to assess the student's progress. Home-bound academic supports are provided on an individual, as-needed basis and with the student's recovery and return to school in mind.

Extended School Year (ESY)

BREC provides instructional programming to students during the summer months who are in need of enrichment, academic remediation or continued development of skills. Eligibility for ESY services is determined on an individual basis and must be approved by student's IEP team and LEA. Parents may opt to privately place a student into the summer program but will be responsible for associated costs. Many factors are considered when determining a student's need for extended school services, including regression and recoupment associated with an interruption in education and critical skill development which might be lost due to the interruption of summer vacation. ESY is based on the individual student's specific skills that are critical to his/her overall educational progress. The program is designed to maintain objectives represented in the student's IEP, IIP or 504 plan, and considers strategies for minimizing regression of skills for a reasonable readiness to begin the next school year.

Additional Services

In accordance with our mission as an academic safety net, we strive to respond to special requests that may be presented according to staff availability.

Admission Requirements

If the youth is accepted as a student at BREC, the parent or agent will ensure that all required admissions documents are completed and delivered to the school no later than the student's first day in class. Prior to admitting a student, BREC shall require:

- 1) A report from a qualified licensed physician or a licensed nurse practitioner or licensed physician assistant acting under the supervision of a licensed physician, of a comprehensive physical examination.
- 2) Documentary proof that the pupil has been immunized against communicable diseases as required by law.
- 3) Obtain and review the applying students IEP or 504 plan.

The following are key criteria in determining a student's suitability for admission:

- Students should want to be here (or at least be cooperative about attending) and be willing to do work that is required for their learning.
- Students must be respectful of staff and fellow students at all times.
- Students must have read and agreed (in writing) to the contents of this handbook.
- Parents or other designated adults must be readily available in case of emergency or if a student needs to go home during the course of a school day.

The school cannot accept students who exhibit:

- a history of intentionally setting fires or with arson charges;
- present a serious risk of doing harm to themselves or others;
- are considered to be actively suicidal or homicidal;
- explosive temper outbursts;
- untreated addictions to drugs or alcohol;
- repetitive sexually offending or predatory behavior;
- are actively psychotic;
- any student requiring daily nursing attention or who is taking medications that require blood level monitoring during the school day; and,
- any student whose disability category and severity prevent he/she from being able to access regular curricula.

Admission Procedures

BREC has a rolling admissions policy for students in grades 6-12 throughout the academic year. A student may be referred to the school by a parent or by the Special Services Director of the local school division. A representative from the school division should contact BREC's Executive Director. Should this initial contact result in a decision to apply for enrollment, pertinent school records are to be sent to BREC. BREC staff will review this information and, if BREC's recommendation is to continue the process, a visit by the student and/or parent(s) or agent(s) for a face-to-face interview will be arranged.

a. Admissions Procedures for Students Placed by Public Schools

In order to facilitate a smooth transition into this very small setting with highly individualized programming, the procedures listed below shall be followed for students who are to be placed by their respective school divisions:

- 1) Referral through the Special Services Director for the student's local school division.
- 2) Review of the student's most recent eligibility minutes, triennial evaluation and IEP or 504 Plan.
- 3) Team meeting and tour at BREC (this must include the parent).
- 4) Completion of application to BREC and submission of accompanying documents. BREC does not request a fee for application to the school.
- 5) Acceptance decision (typically within 2 weeks of receiving application and documents). A second meeting may be requested for additional information.
- 6) Conduct an IEP meeting for placement at BREC.
- 7) Schedule pending admission date and parent-student orientation to BREC's program.
- 8) Completion and return of BREC's registration packet, including the Parent/Student Handbook, and receipt of other pertinent records (this must be completed prior to the start of classes).
- 9) Transportation arrangements in place.
- 10) Completion of the contract for services with the placing school division.
- 11) Team meeting scheduled for review of the student's progress after 30-days.

b. Admission Procedures for Students Placed by Parents

- 1) Completion of application and acceptance by BREC.
- 2) Receipt of a copy of the IEP, medical and immunizations forms, and any other pertinent records.
- 3) Completion and return of BREC's registration packet.
- 4) Signing of an Authorization to Release Information allowing BREC to communicate with previous educational/institutional settings, physicians, counselors, and other community

service providers.

- 5) Identify state approved curriculum in which he/she desires to be enrolled.
- 6) The family will be responsible for monthly tuition payments. An agreed-upon attendance schedule will determine the tuition amount based on the most current scale, and a contract must be signed stating the agreed-upon hours and monthly tuition. It should be noted that a limited amount of grant funds may be available for those families experiencing financial hardship.
- 7) Prior to admission to BREC, the parent or legal guardian of the child shall provide, upon registration, a sworn statement indicating whether the student has been expelled from school attendance at a private school or in a public school division of the Commonwealth or another state for an offense in violation of policies relating to weapons, alcohol or drugs, or for the willful infliction of injury to another person; and a sworn statement or affirmation indicating whether the student has been found guilty of or adjudicated delinquent for any offense or any substantially similar offense listed under the laws of any state, the District of Columbia, or the United States or its territories.
- 8) Each student new to Blue Ridge Educational Center, Inc. must have a physical examination by, or under the direction of, a physician prior to enrollment. We must have a physician's certificate of a physical examination before admission, as well as an immunization record that indicates that the student is current on all required vaccinations.
- 9) Transportation arrangements in place.
- 10) Team meeting scheduled for review of the student's progress after 30-days.

c. Provisional Acceptance

All new students are admitted on a provisional basis for the first month. The educational team will assess the appropriateness of the enrollment on a weekly basis during that term. A team meeting may be requested by BREC in order to review the student's progress during the provisional period.

All new students at BREC will have an individualized plan. Any publicly placed student with a disability will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed by the placing school division. Students without disabilities or those students who are privately placed will have an Individualized Instruction Plan (IIP) that addresses their educational goals.

Contact with parents, guardians and local educational agencies

Upon enrollment and at least annually, the school shall provide parents access to, or a copy of upon request, the school's policies and procedures, including those governing the management of student behavior, the school's curriculum, and the school's promotion and retention policies. At the time of admission, the most viable means for contacting the parent shall be established and modified as necessary. Each student who anticipates earning a diploma and graduating from a public Virginia high school must follow the requirements for graduation outlined in the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (8VAC20-131). BREC will coordinate with LEA case managers to ensure that each student's educational objectives are being met in accordance with the outlined graduation requirements. To ensure effective communication between BREC and the local schools from which students are placed, BREC will provide interim progress reports and quarterly report cards to the student's home school division. A BREC instructor and administrator or designee will attend IEP and 504 meetings as scheduled with the placing school division.

Tuition and Other Student Charges

Students placed by the local school division are billed at a daily rate. At the end of each month, the placing school division is sent an invoice detailing each student's time and cost for the month. Parents of students who are privately placed are billed in advance at the beginning of each month. Each privately placed student will have an individual contract between the parent or guardian and BREC regarding tuition, fees, supplies, and needed materials. BREC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Tuition and educational funding for privately placed students shall be determined based upon a family's financial circumstances.

Any costs associated with field trips, community-based activities or school projects will be communicated in advance to the parent and must be paid prior to the event or activity.

The Minimum Cancellation and Settlement Policy of the School

When a contract for a privately placed student is terminated by either party, a pro-rated refund (minus five school days) is given if at least five school days are unused in that month. This policy is not applicable to publicly placed students who are funded by the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA). If BREC closes permanently and ceases to offer instruction after students have enrolled and instruction has begun, BREC will use its best efforts to make arrangements for students to transition to their home public school, or other suitable transition. In addition, a pro-rated refund of tuition will be made to private-pay students. In the event that such arrangements cannot be made, the Virginia Department of Education shall be available to assist in making special arrangements for students to complete that year's program or students will be advised of their rights.

Description of General Physical Facilities and Equipment

Located at 606 Massanutten Ave. in Front Royal, VA, our spacious, barrier-free facility includes five computer-equipped classrooms, a social room with a kitchen for student use, and an outdoor recreational area for games and movement. Activities of daily living are encouraged and supported. Our program assists students with developing essential skills for living independently; including, but not limited to, self-care, laundry access, food preparation, career and post-graduation exploration and community-based teaching sessions to increase student access to community resources.

Many of our students require accommodations in terms of assistive technology or tactile and sensory devices, such as “fidgets” and special cushions. Our staff consult with occupational therapists for resources and new ideas that can be implemented in our school. Many sensory tools are available to all students, and specialized accommodations are provided with the consult of the student, parent, IEP team and other professionals. Speech and occupational therapy must be provided by a specialist from a student’s placing locality. BREC strives to work closely with professionals involved with our students for creative planning and feasible accommodations to enhance each student’s potential for learning.

Visitors and Guests

All visitors are required to sign in as guests upon arrival. To protect the privacy of our students, individuals working with students must complete our confidentiality agreement. Anyone picking up a student prior to the start of the school day will be required to present identification and must sign the student out at the front desk. Blue Ridge Educational Center reserves the right to prohibit any potential visitor from entering the building.

Complaint Resolution Procedures

Any student who believes he or she has been the victim of discrimination, any student with knowledge of possible discrimination, and any employee with knowledge of possible discrimination should report the alleged discrimination as soon as possible, within five days, to the BREC Executive Director. The complainant will be asked to fill out a [Report of Discrimination](#) or to present an oral report which will be recorded and then signed by the complainant and the recorder. Any complaint that involves the Executive Director shall be reported to the Blue Ridge Educational Center, Inc. Board of Directors. The identities of any involved in the report, including the complainant will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law. A complainant who wishes to remain anonymous will be advised that such confidentiality may limit BREC's ability to fully respond to the complaint.

Complaints will be investigated by the Director or a designated third party. The investigation shall be completed as soon as practicable. BREC shall take necessary steps to protect the complainant and others pending the completion of the investigation. The Director shall issue a written report to the BREC Board of Directors upon completion of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether the allegations are substantiated, whether this policy was violated and recommendations for corrective action, if any. Within 5 calendar days of receiving the report, the Board of Directors shall issue a decision regarding (1) whether this policy was violated and (2) what action, if any, should be taken. This decision must be provided in writing to the complainant. If the Board of Directors determines that prohibited discrimination occurred, BREC shall take prompt, appropriate action to address and remedy the violation as well as to prevent any recurrence. Such action may include discipline up to and including expulsion or discharge.

If the Board of Directors determines that no prohibited discrimination occurred, the student who was allegedly subjected to discrimination may pursue other avenues of recourse to address concerns relating to prohibited discrimination: initiating civil action, filing a complaint with outside agencies or seeking redress under state or federal law.

BREC shall take appropriate action against any student or employee who retaliates against another student or employee who reports alleged discrimination or participates in related proceedings. Students or school personnel who make false charges of discrimination shall be subject to disciplinary action. When a student believes that he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability, the student shall have the right to request a hearing with BREC's Board of Directors. If the Board of Directors determines that no prohibited discrimination occurred, the student who was allegedly subjected to discrimination may pursue other avenues of recourse to address concerns relating to prohibited discrimination: initiating civil action, filing a complaint with outside agencies or seeking redress under state or federal law.

In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with BREC's internal complaint resolution, a complaint can be filed with the Office of Private Day Schools for Students with Disabilities, Virginia Department of Education, P.O. Box 2120, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

Policy Regarding Management of Student Records

BREC is required by law to maintain the privacy of protected information. Any and all information received about a student will be used only to assist in formulating and carrying out academic and behavioral goals. Student records are maintained in a locked filing cabinet and located in a secure setting, accessible only to BREC personnel and shared only with those persons or agencies designated on a signed Authorization to Release Information form.

Use and Disclosure of Student Information

Upon signing BREC's Authorization to Release Information form, parents/guardians are allowing BREC to use and disclose necessary information about their child within the school and with appropriate agencies in order to provide services, receive payment of provided treatment/service, and conduct our day-to-day operations.

Specific Circumstances for Disclosure

Although parents/guardians have the right to consent to the disclosure of information BREC maintains about their child, BREC is allowed by federal and state law in certain circumstances to disclose specific health information about a child without parent/guardian consent.

These specific circumstances are the following:

- 1) As required by law (for example, court-ordered warrant, Virginia health information)
- 2) Public health activities (for example, communicable diseases)
- 3) Judicial and administrative proceedings (for example, an order from a court or administrative tribunal, or legal counsel to the agency, or Inspector General)
- 4) Law enforcement purposes (for example, reporting of gunshot wounds: limited information requested about suspects, fugitives, material witnesses, missing persons; witnesses to criminal conduct on premises)
- 5) To avert a serious threat to health and safety (for example, in response to a statement made by person intending to harm self or another or inflict substantial property damage)
- 6) Children or incapacitated adults who are victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- 7) Specialized government functions
- 8) National security and intelligence activities (for example, in relation to protective services to the President of the United States)
- 9) State Department (for example, medical suitability for the purpose of security clearance)

Other Uses and Disclosures

Authorization is required to disclose a child's protected health information for any reason other than treatment/services, payment, or health care operations, and those specific circumstances outlined previously. BREC uses an Authorization to Release Information form that specifically states what information will be given to whom, for what purpose, and is signed by parents/guardians or by their legal representative. Parents/guardians have the right to revoke the signed authorization at any time by a written statement except to the extent that BREC has acted on the authorization.

Tracking Access to Students' Records

Each student's file will contain a list of persons who have access to that file and a log for each inquiry. The log will include the date, name of person accessing the file, and the purpose of that access.

Maintenance

All student records will be filed in a central location, accessible to BREC personnel. Administrative staff are responsible for the collection of data, record maintenance and security, access to records, and dissemination of information from records. The Executive Director will provide periodic reviews of records and the removal of data no longer educationally useful.

Service Animals

a. Service Animals

An individual with a disability is permitted to be accompanied by his/her service animal on school property when required by law, subject to the conditions of this policy. We do not discriminate on the basis of disability. We strive to make reasonable accommodations for use of a service animal on school property. We have established the following procedures for evaluating whether and how a request to bring a service animal on school property can be implemented under the circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

A "**service animal**" means a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

The Executive Director or Administrator can ask the owner or handler of an animal whether the animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to do unless the answers to these inquiries are readily apparent. School officials may not ask about the nature or

extent of a person's disability and may not require documentary proof of certification or licensing as a service animal.

b. Requirements That Must be Satisfied Before a Service Animal Will be Allowed on School Property

Request: A person who wants to be accompanied by his/her service animal must make a prior written request of the Executive Director if the service animal will come into the school. A person who wants to be accompanied by his/her service animal in other locations during the school day must make a prior written request of both the Executive Director of Blue Ridge Educational Center and the superintendent from the student's placing school division in accordance with policies from that school division. These requests must be renewed each school year.

Vaccination: The service animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal.

Health: The service animal must be in good health. The owner or handler of the animal must submit to the program Director each school year documentation from a licensed veterinarian of the following: a current veterinary health certificate; and proof of the service animal's current vaccinations and immunizations.

Control: A service animal must be under the control of its handler at all times. The service animal must have a harness, backpack or vest identifying the dog as a trained service dog, a leash (blaze orange in color) for hearing dogs, a harness for guide dogs, or other tether unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, backpack, vest, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, backpack, vest, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control.

c. Service Dogs in Training

Experienced trainers of service animals may be accompanied on school property by a dog that is in training to become a service animal. The dog must be at least six months of age. Trainers must wear a jacket identifying the organization to which they belong. Persons conducting continuing training of a service animal may be accompanied by a service animal while on school property for the purpose of school business. Persons who are part of a three-unit service dog team may be accompanied by a service dog while on school property provided that person is conducting continuing training of a service dog. A three-unit service dog team consists of a trained service dog, a disabled person, and a person who is an adult and who has been trained to handle the service dog. The dogs may accompany these persons while on school property for school purposes.

A dog that is in training to become a guide dog or a currently trained guide dog that is undergoing continuing training must be in a harness.

A dog that is in training to become a hearing dog or a currently trained hearing dog that is undergoing continuing training must be on a blaze orange leash.

A dog that is in training to become a service dog or a currently trained service dog that is undergoing continuing training must be in a harness, backpack, or a vest identifying the dog as a trained service dog.

The training cannot disrupt or interfere with a school's educational process. It is expected that training would not normally take place in the classroom during instructional time.

All requirements of this policy which apply to service animals, such as health certificates, annual written requests, and supervision, care and damages, also apply to dogs in training.

d. Extra Charges

The owner or handler of a service animal cannot be required to pay an admission fee or a charge for the animal to attend events for which a fee is charged.

e. Supervision and Care of Service Animals

The owner or handler of a service animal is responsible for the supervision and care of the animal, including any feeding, exercising, and clean up.

f. Damages to School Property and Injuries

The owner or handler of a service animal is solely responsible for any damage to school property or injury to personnel, students, or others caused by the animal.

g. Removal of Service Animals from School Property

The Executive Director may request the removal of a service animal if the animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it, or the animal is not housebroken. Factors that may be considered under this element are that the service animal:

1. is clean, well-groomed and does not have an offensive odor;
2. does not urinate or defecate in inappropriate locations;
3. does not solicit attention;
4. does not vocalize unnecessarily; i.e. barking, growling, or whining;
5. shows no aggression towards people or other animals;

6. does not solicit food or other items from students or school personnel;
7. must not interfere with the educational program of any student;
8. must not pose a threat to the health or safety of others; or
9. does not require a fundamental alternation to the service, program, or activity of the school.

If the service animal is removed, the individual shall be provided with the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without the service animal.

h. Denial of Access and Grievance

If a school official denies a request for access of a service animal or a dog in training, the disabled individual or parent or guardian can file a written grievance with the placing school division's Section 504 Coordinator.

Student Rights

Upon enrollment, students and guardians are given a copy of Virginia Special Education Procedural Safeguard Notice under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (revised September 2013). Blue Ridge Educational Center will protect each student's rights under this law.

Transitioned Students

Upon transitioning from BREC, the parent/guardian of the student will be mailed a survey to determine parental satisfaction with the program. The data from this survey will be used in strategic planning to improve the quality of the services provided by the school. A second notice may be sent if the survey is not returned. The Executive Director and Office Manager will communicate with the parent, adult student, or other care providers about the student's progress since transitioning from the school program. This will be documented and maintained in the student's permanent file. Consistent with our vision for students to have access to an integrated network of community and family support, former students and parents are encouraged to maintain contact with BREC following a student's transition. We aim to maintain lasting connections with the students and families whom we serve.

The Day School Program

Instructional Program and Educational Objectives

BREC's instructional program reflects the philosophy and mission of the school. Learning objectives for all students center on demonstrating positive core values reflective of our community, preparing students for higher education and the workforce, and encouraging each student to achieve his/her highest learning potential.

BREC shall provide a program of instruction for grades 6 through 12 that is aligned to the Standards of Learning established by the Board of Education and that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Board of Education. Students shall be provided 140 clock hours per year of instruction in each of the four disciplines of English, Mathematics, Science and History/Social Science.

BREC embodies an educational program which strives to:

- 1) Provide guidance and instruction in an academic and social setting to enable each student to earn a high school diploma.
- 2) Develop and implement an instructional program (as described in course syllabi and curricula guides) that promotes the individual student's developmental growth and academic achievement at successive grade levels appropriate for each student in age-appropriateness, cultural norms, and physical and cognitive abilities.
- 3) Implement evidenced-based practices to improve academic, behavior, and social outcomes for all students.
- 4) Provide a program of daily instruction that clearly articulates learning outcomes for the core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science) utilizing the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL).
- 5) Ensure additional instruction for any student who is unable to read instructional materials with comprehension.
- 6) Provide advanced coursework opportunities (foreign language instruction in French or Spanish, for example) for students pursuing an Advanced Diploma.
- 7) Provide a program of health and physical fitness to meet credit requirements for graduation.
- 8) Provide students with opportunities to appreciate and practice Art and Music.
- 9) Provide secondary school students with instruction in Economics and Personal Finance and occupational readiness.
- 10) Provide opportunities for students to gain knowledge and occupational readiness skills necessary for transition to post-secondary training, employment, and independent living.

- 11) Prepare students to enter adulthood with effective life, work, and communication skills.
- 12) Facilitate the transition of students with disabilities into the public school setting to whatever extent is feasible for the student.
- 13) Provide behavioral management strategies for students and maintain reasonable academic, social, and behavioral expectations for students.
- 14) Employ qualified administrators, counselors, and teachers.
- 15) Conduct staff development in-services based on current research and best practices for the purpose of continually improving curriculum, instruction, and behavioral practices conducive to learning.
- 16) Provide a safe, structured, age-appropriate and comfortable learning environment that promotes healthy behaviors and positive relationships among the student's peer group for work and study.
- 17) Develop learning, behavioral and communication strategies to meet the needs of individual students in collaboration with the parent(s) and deliver services in accordance with the student's IEP, IIP or 504 plan.
- 18) Communicate frequently with parents about the needs and accomplishments of their child.
- 19) Access community resources to meet student needs, collaborate with placing school division personnel and other service providers including but not limited to: IEP case managers, CSA case managers, teachers, guidance counselors, in-home counselors, and other service providers involved with individual students.
- 20) Assist students with developing the knowledge and skills needed to qualify for further education, gainful employment, or training in a career or technical field; and develop the ability to apply such skills for eventual employment, lifelong learning and to achieve self-sufficiency.

Functional Life Skills

Functional skills are all those skills a student needs in order to live independently. A goal for each of our students to gain as much independence and autonomy as possible, whether their disability is emotional, intellectual, physical, or a combination of multiple disabilities. At BREC, functional life skills are addressed through:

- Life Skills (such as self-care)
- Academic Functional Skills
- Community-Based Learning
- Social Skills

Self-determination

Self-determination is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for themselves, and to take the initiative to reach these goals. Self-determination involves many attitudes and abilities including: self-awareness, assertiveness, creativity, pride, problem solving and self-advocacy skills. Self-determination is encouraged and developed throughout a student's experience at BREC. BREC staff support students with developing personal goals and link them with community resources through transition activities and the development of transition portfolios, group and individual therapeutic activities, direct instruction, models, and opportunities to practice skills associated with self-determined behavior.

Emotional Intelligence

“Emotional intelligence is your ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others, and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships.”

*Drs. Travis Bradberry
and Jean Greaves*

BREC values the development of the whole student and supports learning and growing emotional intelligence as a core component of a student's education. Self-awareness and self-management skills, partnered with social awareness, empathy, and management of relationships are taught through group activities, mindfulness education, individual mentoring, role-modeling, and regular positive reinforcement as an imbedded part of every classroom, each day of school.

Development of Education Plans

a. IEP's for Publicly-Placed Students with Disabilities

Individual Education Plans are developed by the student's local school division. Once admitted, a representative from BREC will attend IEP meetings upon the request of the student's school division and, in collaboration with the parent and additional team members, be involved in decision making affecting the student's IEP. BREC must review any applying student's IEP prior to formal admission. Any meetings to review and revise a student's IEP may be initiated by BREC at the discretion of the student's school division. BREC will not change or amend any IEP. IEP progress is reported during the interim period, or every 4 ½ weeks. A copy of the progress report is sent to the parent and case manager at that time. When a child with a disability is placed at BREC by a local school division or family assessment and planning team (FAPT), all rights and protections under state and federal regulations shall be extended to the child (8VAC20-671-10-460).

b. IIP's for Publicly Placed Students without Disabilities and Students Unilaterally Placed by Their Parents

An Individual Instruction Plan (IIP) team consisting of, but not limited to, the student, parents, a special education teacher, and classroom teachers will meet to set attainable and measurable academic and behavioral goals, and to plan accommodations within 30 business days of enrollment. The IIP will include the student's strengths, needs, current level of functioning, goals and objectives, course of study, and post-secondary goals for students 14 years of age and older. The IIP will be reviewed at least annually by a team that includes a school administrator, teacher, parent(s) and the student as appropriate. Student progress will be provided to the parent both quarterly and for the interim, or every 4 ½ weeks.

c. 504 Plans

504 plans are developed for a student by their identified school division. BREC will implement the plan and cooperate with the school division in its annual review. An IIP will be developed for each student with a 504 plan in accordance with provisions outlined in section b. Progress on objectives outlined in a student's 504 plan and IIP will be recorded both quarterly and for the interim, or every 4 ½ weeks. A copy of the progress report will be sent to the parent and, if applicable, the student's case manager from the placing school division.

Student Attendance

Student attendance is a cooperative effort and BREC shall involve parents and students in accepting the responsibility for good attendance. Each parent/guardian of a student is responsible for such child's regular and punctual attendance at school as required under provisions of the law. A reasonable effort shall be made to contact a parent/guardian of each absent student every day, and to obtain an explanation for the student's absence, and where there is no indication that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence. Any student who is absent must bring a valid note stating the reason for absence upon returning to school and/or the parent or guardian of that student must contact office personnel regarding the nature of an absence. Unexcused absences will be documented accordingly. BREC must be notified in advance of prearranged absences. A parent/guardian should notify us by 9:00 am if a student will not be attending school on that day. A message may be left on our answering machine at any time. If BREC receives no word from the parent, attempts to reach the parent by phone and/or by email will be made. If the student's absence is not verified, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Any student who may require extended absences from school due to medical necessity may be provided with a remote instruction model to accommodate learning from home or care setting. This should be arranged in collaboration with the student's attending physician, parent/guardian, LEA and BREC.

Students who are absent by reason of observance of a religious holiday will not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, which he/she missed by reason of such absence, if the absence is verified in an acceptable manner.

All students shall attend school for a full day unless otherwise excused or outlined in the IEP, IIP or 504 plan. All other exceptions to a full day schedule must be approved on an individual basis by the Executive Director or designee, in partnership with the parent and Academic Coordinator.

Any absences which are considered chronic and/or negatively impacting the student's academic progress or hindering goals identified in the student's IEP, IIP or 504 plan will result in a conference involving the parent and the placing school division to determine the cause and discuss solutions.

If a parent or other caregiver is picking a child up early on a given day, it is best to notify BREC in advance of the pick up as to prevent disruptions to the academic schedule and so staff members can attempt the best accommodations for that student. **If the student receives transportation provided by the placing agency, it is the parent's responsibility to notify that office in order for them to be able to adjust their plans accordingly.**

a. Attendance Reporting

Student attendance is monitored and recorded daily. Quarterly attendance is reported to each placing school division. BREC administrative staff may provide more frequent attendance reports per request of any parent or placing agency.

b. Tardiness

Students shall not report late to class or school without appropriate parental permission, school permission or an otherwise valid excuse. BREC should be notified as far in advance as possible for prearranged tardiness. ***Parents should phone BREC if their child will be more than 10 minutes late.*** In the case of habitual tardiness, missed class time will be made up during scheduled breaks.

c. Early Dismissal Precautions

BREC will not release a student during the school day to any person not authorized by the student's parent/guardian to assume responsibility for the pupil. Students shall be released only on request and authorization of parent or guardian.

d. Medical and Dental Appointments

We ask that parents make every effort to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of school hours as much as possible in order to minimize lost instruction time. Absences or late arrivals due to medical or dental appointments will be excused with a note from the physician.

e. Illness

Students who are ill should remain at home until improved, including being free of fever for at least 24 hours (without fever-reducing medications). Students who are under a physician's care for a contagious illness may attend upon approval from their physician or when released from care.

Conditions requiring exclusion from school include:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Vomiting
- Rash or skin infection (other than poison ivy)
- Diarrhea
- Contagious diseases or infestations, including but not limited to: scabies, impetigo, conjunctivitis, live lice, varicella, and MRSA.

For persons with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 to know when they are likely no longer contagious:

- If you had COVID-19 symptoms and were directed to care for yourself at home, you can leave your "sick room" and home after these 3 things have happened:
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared,
 - At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication, and;
 - Other symptoms have improved
- If you tested positive for COVID-19 and never had any symptoms and were directed to care for yourself at home, you can leave your "sick room" and home if:
 - At least 10 days have passed since the date of your first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, and;
 - You continue to have no symptoms since the test. (CDC, 7/17/2021)

Make-Up Work

Students are expected to make up missed work for any absences, whether full or partial day. A plan for completing missed assignments will be established between the student, teacher (and parent if needed) within a reasonable time frame. Alternatives, such as a prolonged academic school day or tutoring

sessions may be considered with support of the parent. If a major illness or other unusual circumstances are involved, a grade of “Incomplete” may be reported for the quarter and a student may be given a reasonable extension in order to be successful with course work. Any grades recorded as “Incomplete” will be subject to review by the student’s case manager from the placing locality.

Grading Scale

Grades recorded on student report cards directly reflect student achievement. Student achievement is what a student knows or is able to do according to the skill sets defined by each curricular content area. The manner which grades are derived give students opportunity to show success. The figuring of grades includes both mathematical computation and professional judgment. Final grades should always reflect student achievement. If attendance, participation, behavior and/or effort are factored into academic grades, it will be described within the course syllabus at the start of the course. Letter grades are the primary reporting method for report cards. BREC utilizes a ten point grading scale:

A=90-100

B=80-89

C=70-79

D=60-69

F=59 and Below

Required Levels of Performance for Graduation

Graduation requirements are determined by the local school divisions. Student progress is monitored in collaboration with BREC and the local placing agency. Academic progress and course work is reviewed each semester to ensure students are making adequate progress toward graduation.

Diplomas and Certificates

Public school students are awarded diplomas in accordance with the requirements and options of their respective home school division or homeschooling agency. Any student who attends BREC and who anticipates earning a diploma and graduating from a public Virginia high school must follow the requirements for graduation outlined in the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (8VAC20-131).

Students placed at BREC privately by parents will complete the required course work as outlined by the home-schooling institution of their choice. Any home-school curriculum administered by BREC must be VDOE approved.

Collaboration with LEA's for Graduation Requirements

BREC shall address the learning, communication and behavioral needs of individual students in collaboration with the parent and the placing school division. Participation in the Virginia assessment program by students with disabilities will be prescribed by provisions of their IEPs or 504 Plans as required by law (8VAC20-671-450).

Any student who attends BREC and who anticipates earning a diploma and graduating from a public Virginia high school must follow the requirements for graduation outlined in the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (8VAC20-131).

BREC will cooperate with the public schools in the administration of SOL tests. To ensure effective communication between BREC and a student's local school division, BREC will provide reports on progress and academic grades in accordance with the academic calendar and not less than once every quarter. BREC staff will attend meetings regarding individual IEPs or 504 Plans.

Student Achievement Expectations

Most students placed at BREC through local public school divisions are required to participate in SOL testing. Arrangements are made with the placing school regarding testing sites, dates and assurance of individual student accommodations. Participation in the Virginia assessment program by students with disabilities will be prescribed by provisions of their IEP's or 504 plans. Any student who attends BREC and who anticipates earning a diploma and graduating from a public Virginia high school must follow the requirements for graduation outlined in the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (8VAC20-131).

Transition Services

BREC staff will collaborate with placing school divisions and parents to ensure that each student has a transition plan beginning no later than 14 years of age and is implemented according to the student's IEP, 504 Plan or IIP. Transitional goals include movement from the private school setting to a public school setting that the student would normally attend upon the readiness of the student. BREC will work with LEA's for publicly placed students to encourage student participation in post-school activities, including vocational training where available. All students will be encouraged to utilize community supports in order to increase independence, employment, post-secondary education, adult services and community participation. BREC's public partnerships aid in linking students with additional supports to enhance their success as emerging adults. In addition to transitional objectives outlined in the IEP or IIP, BREC's involvement with students extends beyond school-based learning outcomes to best prepare our youth for

life-long learning and self-sufficiency. With parental involvement and staff guidance, each secondary education student shall maintain an individual transition portfolio documenting his/her explorations. All student transition portfolios are individualized and follow the student upon exit from our school.

School-sponsored Activities

BREC staff shall accompany students for all school-sponsored activities. Staff must be CPR and First Aid certified. Staff shall supervise activities to ensure the health, safety and medical management of all students. Parental permission is required prior to activities involving, but not limited to: outdoor adventure activities, activities requiring transportation of students beyond Front Royal town limits, activities requiring fees, waivers, or special accommodations, or any activity of which the Executive Director or Designee should see fit to require parental consent prior to a student attending.

Virtual Courses

"Online course" means a course or grade-level subject instruction that (i) is delivered by a multi-division online provider primarily electronically, using the Internet or other computer-based methods and (ii) is taught by a teacher primarily from a remote location, with student access to the teacher given synchronously, asynchronously, or both.

"Virtual school program" means a series of online courses with instructional content that (i) is delivered by a multi-division online provider primarily electronically, using the Internet or other computer-based methods; (ii) is taught by a teacher primarily from a remote location, with student access to the teacher given synchronously, asynchronously, or both; (iii) is delivered as a part-time or full-time program; and (iv) has an online component with online lessons and tools for student and data management.

An online course or virtual school program may be delivered to students at BREC as part of the regularly scheduled school day. The virtual course shall be proctored by a licensed teacher or appropriately trained paraprofessional who is supervised by a licensed teacher. A BREC teacher or paraprofessional will be available to the student throughout the course.

Equipment, Instructional Materials and Media

BREC provides a computer system and supplementary educational materials, including the internet, to promote educational excellence. The term "computer system" includes hardware, software, data, communication lines and devices, terminals, printers, CD-ROM devices, tape drives, servers, mainframe and personal computers, the Internet, social media and any other internal or external network. All use of

BREC's computer system, media and educational materials must be in support of educational pursuits, educational resource sharing, and/or innovation and communication. Use of the computer system is a privilege, not a right. Any communication or material used on the computer system, including electronic mail or other files deleted from a user's account, may be monitored or read by school administrators. The use of BREC's computer system shall be consistent with the educational mission or administrative function of the school as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental needs of our students. BREC's computer system is not a public forum. All students must read and sign BREC's computer usage agreement for each attending school year. The computer usage agreement is good for one year.

Snacks and Lunches

We encourage students to bring nutritious lunches, including a protein source, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Water, juice, and unsweetened herbal tea are good choices for a drink. Please leave sugary treats, sugary drinks, sodas, and “energy drinks” at home. Students should eat breakfast prior to arriving to school. Those student who bring a lunch from home must keep it in a labeled container. Students have access to a kitchen and may use the microwave, refrigerator, sink, dishes and utensils as part of the development of functional life skills. Students should bring in a water bottle from home, labeled with his or her name in permanent marker. This bottle will be accessible throughout the school day. Healthy snacks will be allowed during class breaks. Students may order lunches each day upon arrival. Lunches are offered through partnership with Warren County Public Schools. Any student who orders lunch must have a student account set up through WCPS and our office. Any parent who would like more information about free and reduced lunch program can contact the school office for more information.

Calendar for the School Year and Inclement Weather

BREC maintains a standard school year of at least 180 days or at least 990 teaching hours per year with at least 140 hours per year in each of the four disciplines of English, Mathematics, Science and History/Social Science. Extended School Year (ESY) may be offered during the summer and outside of the regularly scheduled school year. ESY is considered annually and is based upon the student population and determination of individual student needs, in collaboration with parents, placing agencies and school divisions.

BREC follows the Warren County Public Schools decisions on inclement weather regarding delays and early releases. Radio and cable TV stations will be notified when schools will be closed. In addition to the BREC Facebook page and school website, students and parents can refer to the following resources for emergency closings or contact BREC directly at 540-631-9503:

Radio Stations	TV Stations
WFTR (95.3) Front Royal	WHSV TV 3
WINC (92.5) Winchester	WTTG
WSQU (102.5) Winchester	WJLA TV 9

Unscheduled Remote Learning Days

During the 2021 legislative session, the General Assembly passed House Bill 1790 and Senate Bill 1132 allowing the use of up to ten unscheduled remote learning days (full or partial) to apply to the 180-day or 990-hour teaching time requirement when the closure is due to severe weather conditions or other emergency situations. The bills state that a “school division may declare an unscheduled remote learning day whereby the school provides instruction and student services, consistent with guidelines established by the Department of Education to ensure the equitable provision of such services, without a reduction in the amount paid by the Commonwealth from the Basic School Aid Fund.” BREC will only exercise the option for school-wide remote learning days when appropriate and reasonable infrastructure, services, and supports are provided equitably to all students, understanding routine interruptions with limited impact.

School Climate and Student Conduct

School climate involves all of the members of the school community and reflects the relationships, practices, and organization of the school community in establishing conditions for learning to support the physical and emotional safety, connection, support, and engagement of students. BREC prioritizes a safe, supportive and effective school environment which fosters social and physical safety; provides support that enables students and staff to realize high behavioral expectations; ensures effective academic instruction that provides opportunities for authentic instructional engagement; and encourages and maintains respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community.

The standards of student conduct are designed to define the basic rules and expectations of students at BREC. BREC staff have the responsibility of exercising reasonable judgment in enforcing student conduct rules. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that all students, staff members and parents are provided the opportunity to become familiar with this policy. Each parent of a student is called upon as a partner in assisting the school with enforcing the standards of student conduct and attendance in order that education may be conducted in an atmosphere free of disruption and supportive of individual rights.

The Parent-Student Handbook includes the standards of student conduct and is sent to all parents upon application to the school along with other materials customarily distributed at that time. A statement for the parent and student's signature acknowledging the receipt of the Parent-Student Handbook are required prior to the start of a student's first class. BREC maintains records of the signed statements.

Each student has the right to expect an educational environment in which he or she can strive to achieve his or her intellectual potential. The student is expected to attend school regularly, be diligent in his/her studies and conduct him/herself in such a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. The student is expected to accept and demonstrate the obligation of good citizenship to help prevent problems from happening and help solve problems if they occur. Parents are expected to maintain regular communication with the school, monitor and require daily attendance and to bring to the attention of the school any problems that affects their student or other students in the school. It is the parents' responsibility to notify the school of any unusual behavior pattern or medical problem that might lead to serious difficulties.

a. Student Dress

Students are to be dressed appropriately at all times. Clothing shall not be such that it disrupts, distracts, or creates an unhealthy and/or unsafe environment. Prohibited clothing includes, but is not limited to: halter tops; baggy jeans; short skirts, short shorts; bare feet; untied shoelaces, sagging or low-cut pants; low-cut necklines; tube tops; backless blouses or blouses with only ties in the back; head coverings, unless required for religious or medical purposes; clothing constructed of see-through materials; clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene; or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia; clothing that reflects gang affiliation; clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, the midriff, or undergarments; or clothing that is otherwise sexually provocative. Clothing should fit, be neat and clean, and conform to standards of safety, good taste, and decency. *Students who are inappropriately dressed will be sent home to change clothes and are expected to return to school dressed in appropriate clothing.*

b. Attendance and Truancy

Students must attend school on a regular and punctual basis unless otherwise excused in accordance with Student Attendance policy within this handbook. Multiple unexcused absences may result in action taken by the placing school division or jeopardize a student's placement at BREC. "Truant" means unexcused absence from school. Virginia law does not define a truant specifically but does define a child who is habitually and without justification absent from school as a "child in need of supervision" when certain other conditions are met. BREC may provide reports to LEA's, Truancy Officers or other case

managers as required by law if a student is determined to be chronically truant or identified by the court of law as “a child in need of supervision”.

c. Personal hygiene

Any student who exhibits distractingly poor hygiene may be dismissed from a classroom or activity in order to remedy the problem. Because of the potentially significant impact, we cannot sidestep hygiene issues with students. Staff members will address the student with honesty and directness, but also with sensitivity and concern for the student's emotional well-being. If personal care is an area of weakness for a student, a parent may be asked to assist by helping establish resources for their student if/when a problem arises at school. A parent conference may be requested after repeated episodes and/or the IEP team may consider additional life skill objectives in order to best support the student. In all instances, dignity, respect and the student's privacy are of the utmost importance.

d. Disruptive Conduct

Students are entitled to a learning environment free of unnecessary disruption. Any physical or verbal disturbance which interrupts or interferes with teaching and orderly conduct of school activities, is prohibited.

e. Profane, Obscene or Abusive Language or Conduct

Students shall not use vulgar, profane or obscene language or gestures or engage in conduct that is vulgar, profane, and obscene or disrupts the teaching and learning environment. Prohibited conduct includes verbal or written conduct consisting of comments regarding the race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical abilities or characteristics or peers of the targeted person. Profane, obscene and pornographic content are prohibited.

f. Threats or Intimidation

Students shall not make any verbal, written, or physical threat of bodily injury or use of force directed toward another person. Students shall not use electronic technology or communication devices, such as the internet or cell phones, to intimidate or threaten for any reason.

g. Assault and Battery

A student shall not assault or commit battery upon another person on school property, on school buses or during school activities on or off school property. An assault is a threat of bodily injury. A battery is any bodily hurt, however slight, done to another in an angry, rude or vengeful manner.

h. Bullying

A student, either individually or as a part of a group, shall not harass or bully others either in person or by the use of any communication technology including computer systems, telephones, pagers, or instant messaging systems. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, physical, verbal, or written intimidation, taunting, name calling, and insults and any combination of prohibited activities. "Bullying" means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. "Bullying" includes cyber-bullying. "Bullying" does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

i. Use and/or Possession of Alcohol, Tobacco, Vapes, and Drugs

A student shall not possess, use, and/or distribute any of the restricted substances listed below on school property, on school buses or during school activities, on or off school property. A student shall not attempt to possess, use, consume, procure, and/or purchase, any of the restricted substances listed below or what is represented by or to the student to be any of the restricted substances listed below or what the student believes is any of the restricted substances listed below. A student shall not be under the influence of any of the restricted substances listed below, regardless of whether the student's condition amounts to legal intoxication.

Restricted substances include but are not limited to: alcohol, tobacco, vapes and inhalant products, or other controlled substances defined in the *Drug Control Act, Chapter 15.1 of Title 54 of the Code of Virginia*, such as anabolic steroids, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, marijuana, imitation and look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia, and any prescription or non-prescription drug possessed in violation of school policy.

BREC may require any student who has been found in possession of, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol in violation of school policy to undergo evaluation for drug or alcohol abuse, or both, and, if recommended by the evaluator and with the consent of the student's parent, to participate in a treatment program.

In addition to any other consequences which may result, possession of restricted substances is considered a critical incident and will be reported and reviewed with a student's parent, placing case manager and educational team prior to or upon the next school day.

j. Gambling

A student shall not bet money or other things of value, or knowingly play or participate in any game involving such a bet, on school property, on school buses or during any school related activity.

k. Vandalism and Restitution

Students shall not willfully or maliciously damage or deface any school building or other property owned by BREC or under the control of the School Board. In addition, students shall not willfully or

maliciously damage or deface property belonging to or under the control of any other person at school, on a school vehicle or at school-sponsored events. A student (and/or parent) shall be required to reimburse BREC for any loss, breakage, destruction of, or failure to return property owned by or under the control of BREC or the School Board.

l. Possession or Use of Weapons or Other Dangerous Articles

Students shall not have in their possession any type of unauthorized firearm or other article which may be used as a weapon, regardless of whether it is commonly accepted as such.

m. Theft

A student shall not intentionally take or attempt to take the personal property of another person by force, fear or other means.

n. Transportation-Related Offenses

Students shall not behave in a disruptive manner or otherwise violate these Standards of Conduct while waiting for a school vehicle, while on a school vehicle, or after being discharged from a school vehicle.

o. Cheating

Students are expected to perform honestly on schoolwork and tests. The following actions are prohibited:

- 1) cheating on a test or assigned work by giving, receiving, offering and/or soliciting answers;
- 2) plagiarizing by copying the language, structure, idea and/or thoughts of another, and,
- 3) falsifying statements on any assigned schoolwork, tests or other school documents.

p. Communication Devices

Personal communication devices such as a beeper, cellular telephone, smart phone, tablet, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), I-Pod or other communication devices are generally not permitted during school hours. Students may be in possession of such devices on school property provided that the device remains off during instructional time and kept in the main office or individual bookbags prior to the start of classes. Devices are permitted beyond the school lobby for instructional purposes at the direction of the student's teacher. At no time may any device be used in connection to BREC's Internet. If a student possesses such a device other than as permitted in this policy, in addition to other disciplinary sanctions which may be imposed, the device will be confiscated from the student and returned only to the student's parent. Electronic devices such as I-Pods, other electronic devices and items for personal recreational use (toys, gadgets, guitars, skateboards, etc.) are not to be brought to school without prior approval from administrative staff. **BREC is not liable for devices brought to school or to school-related activities.**

q. Fighting

Any exchange of physical contact such as shoving, pushing or hitting, with or without injury is prohibited. Students involved in acts of violence, including fighting, are subject to disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.

r. Harassment

Harassment of a student by another student or by a teacher or other staff member is a violation of school policy. This includes (but is not limited to) harassment based on race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or disability.

s. Public Display of Affection (PDA)

Being overly affectionate in school creates an environment that is not conducive to concentration and learning, therefore students should refrain from inappropriate, intimate behaviors at school or at school related events & activities. Students are expected to show good taste and conduct themselves respectfully at all times. Inappropriate public displays of affection will not be tolerated. This behavior will result in a parent meeting and possible suspension if inappropriate behavior continues after being warned. The expression of feelings of affection toward others is a personal concern between two individuals and not of others surrounding them. Therefore, good taste and respect for others is the guideline for appropriate behavior.

t. Videotaping

No student shall be videotaped without written consent of the parent and eligible student. Any videotaping of students shall be maintained confidentially unless there is explicit written permission to release or disclose from the parent and eligible student. Buildings and grounds surveillance is not considered videotaping.

u. Other Conduct

In addition to these specific standards, students shall not engage in any conduct which materially and substantially disrupts the ongoing educational process or which is otherwise a violation of federal, state or local law.

w. Corrective Actions

The following corrective actions are among those available to the school administration for violation of the Student Code of Conduct. The facts and circumstances of each offense are considered fully in determining reasonable corrective actions.

- 1) Counseling
- 2) Admonition
- 3) Reprimand
- 4) Loss of privileges, including access to the computer system
- 5) Restitution
- 6) Parental conference
- 7) Modification of student classroom or schedule
- 8) Behavior contract
- 9) Removal from class
- 10) Referral to intervention, mediation, or community service programs within the student's placing school division
- 11) Tasks or restrictions assigned by the program Director or designee
- 12) Detention after school or before school
- 13) Suspension from school
- 14) Notification to legal authority
- 15) Evaluation for alcohol or drug abuse, or other behavioral or mental health supports
- 16) Dismissal from BREC

Suspension or Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are expected to follow the same student code of conduct and academic standards as students without disabilities. However, students who receive special education services are provided additional procedural protections that must be met when the school system disciplines a student with disabilities. The procedural protections are required for all students with disabilities regardless of their level of special education and related services. Please refer to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) or section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Administrators, teachers and parents should refer to the placing school division's Special Education Services Handbook and the Section 504 Handbook to determine the correct disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities.

Behavior Management and Intervention

BREC aims to prevent inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors. Positive behavioral interventions and supports are implemented for any student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or the learning of others. School-wide systems for student success consist of proactive universal supports and are combined with individual, assessment-based interventions outlined within

students' IEP's. Individualized interventions are based upon a student's demonstrated level of need. Instructional staff, Administrators and the Special Education Supervisor continuously monitor program progress to determine impact of interventions. Parental involvement is included in this process. A support staff member may be requested to meet with a student in the classroom, observe the student's behavior and be consulted on identifying least intrusive interventions for problematic behaviors. The well-being and safety of the school community stand above all else. Any behavior which seriously frightens or endangers students or staff members may result in dismissal from the program.

Behavior management techniques are applied in order of their degree of intrusiveness and the conditions under which they may be used by trained staff. Unless otherwise stated, behavior techniques utilized by all staff within the academic program include:

Preventative classroom management: Effective teaching practices, frequent monitoring, clear rules and procedures, social praise, and consistent scheduling.

Prosocial behavior: Systematic reinforcement, modeling of pro-social behavior, verbal instruction, role playing.

Social problem solving: Direct teaching of problem-solving skills (e.g. alternative thinking, means-ends thinking), guided self-talk, and dialoguing.

Effective communication models: Values clarification activities, active listening, communication and interpersonal skills education.

Self / Staff Selected Time-Outs: This involves limiting student access to reinforcement as a means for adjusting undesired behavior. The purpose is for a student to access designated "thinking time" away from an activity to reduce undesired behavior and return to the activity. Time-outs may be staff or student directed and follow BREC's policy on the use of time out. A time-out may be contingent observation in the classroom or exclusionary. Staff will review procedures when a student consistently chooses to stay in time-out beyond the time limit to determine that it has not become a reinforcement.

Administrative Disciplinary Referral: Any student who disrupts the learning environment at BREC or violates school rules may be given a written disciplinary referral. Disciplinary referrals are reviewed by the school Administrator and processed with the student. A structured problem-solving tool may be completed as a result of the referral and parent or guardian may also be contacted. Multiple referrals may result in a team meeting.

Prevention with Authorities Assistance: BREC maintains a relationship with the Front Royal Police Department. Representatives from the FRPD may be present within the building during the school day. It is BREC's policy to communicate with the FRPD as a proactive measure when a student exhibits signs of escalation and other interventions have not been successful. The FRPD may become involved in attempting to de-escalate a student's behavior in the school setting. The student will be free from any undue legal charges. FRPD is a resource for behavior management and least restrictive interventions.

Restraint: *It is Blue Ridge Educational Center's policy that the use of physical restraint is to be avoided by employees and may only be utilized in an emergency situation.* The use of restraint is prohibited except when necessary to protect the student or others from imminent danger, personal harm, injury, death and other less restrictive interventions were unsuccessful. All full-time instructional staff and Administrators complete annual training through Crisis Wave Behavioral Management System and are trained to use restraint minimally and only when deemed necessary to protect the student or others. Face down restraints, mechanical restraints, pharmacological restraints and any other restraint that restricts breathing, causes harm or interferes with a student's ability to communicate are prohibited. Any incidents requiring the use of restraint at BREC are considered critical. Multiple incidents of restraint with the same student will trigger a review and/or revision of current behavioral strategies and conceivably a recommendation for change in school placement. If positive behavior strategies are not in place, staff shall develop them. In instances where a student has a history of dangerous behavior where the use of restraint was considered or used, the school will have a plan developed in consultation with the parent/guardian and IEP team. Physical restraint may only be implemented, monitored and discontinued by staff who are properly trained according to BREC's policy and shall not be used for disciplinary reasons, as a punishment, or retaliation, or for convenience. Each student is entitled to be completely free from any unnecessary use of physical restraint. BREC does not utilize electronic surveillance. BREC does not permit the use of seclusion at any time. A parent/guardian and home school division shall be notified of any critical incidents as soon as possible but within 24 hours of the occurrence. Any use of physical restraint shall be fully documented in the student's record. A written report shall be made available to the parent/guardian within two business days of the occurrence and opportunity given for the parent and student, as appropriate, to discuss the matter with school staff. BREC shall collect and annually report to the Department of Education the number of times restraint was implemented during the school year.

Managing Student Behavior in Emergency Situations: The above-written methods are utilized in preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, suicide and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors occurring within groups of students or with an individual student. Corporal punishment and abusive techniques are not authorized, permitted, or condoned. The Front Royal Police Department will be contacted in the event of a critical incident. BREC staff members and its students are subject to the

decisions made by law enforcement officials. Any incident that requires assistance from police or warrants a critical incident report will also be reported to the student's parent or guardian and the student's case managers as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the occurrence.

In the event that a student should be hospitalized for psychiatric care, BREC requires a team meeting to be held prior to the student's return to classes. BREC shall be provided with all information regarding the student's medications and treatment recommendations. A safety plan will be developed with the family. Parental participation is required in this process.

These procedures are in place in order to best address the needs of the student and ensure safety within school. If a student's symptoms present concern for their overall mental health or if there is concern for potential self-harm/injury, the Executive Director may request an IEP team meeting to pursue a more appropriate academic placement.

Use of Time-Out

Time-out is a procedure that involves limiting student access to reinforcement as a means for adjusting undesired behavior. The purpose is for a student to access designated "thinking time" away from an activity to reduce undesired behavior and return to the activity. Time-out can be implemented on two levels; contingent observation and exclusionary (defined below), and can be either staff or student directed. BREC does not implement or permit seclusionary time-outs.

Contingent observation requires that the student remain in a position to observe the group without participating or receiving reinforcement for a specified period of time, with the understanding that the student will be able to return to the activity. Contingent observation combines instruction with a brief time-out (from being a participant in an activity to becoming an observer of the activity).

Exclusionary time-out limits a student's access to reinforcement by changing the student's assigned area to a location outside of the activity. The use of exclusionary time-outs and staff checks on the student shall be documented.

Guidelines for Use of Time-out

- 1) Parent/Guardian and student should be aware of BREC's policy on the use of time-out as provided in this handbook annually.
- 2) Time-outs must only be used as one component of an array of behavior interventions.

- 3) Each student is entitled to be completely free from any unnecessary use of time-out.
- 4) If a student is posing physical danger to self or others, a time-out may not be the appropriate intervention and other behavioral interventions may be implemented.
- 5) Students should never be secluded in a time-out. BREC does not permit the use of seclusion.
- 6) A student in time-out must be able to communicate with staff.
- 7) A time-out may not occur for more than 15 minutes at a time (non-sequentially). If the student is determined to be using time-out as a way to escape or avoid instruction, a time-out will not be effective. If a time-out period exceeds 15 minutes, another intervention may be considered.
- 8) Staff shall check on the student at least every 15 minutes and more often depending upon the nature of the student's condition, disability or behavior. Staff will assess when time-out is not working.
- 9) The use of exclusionary time-out and staff checks on the student are to be documented on the TIME OUT RECORD form.
- 10) Staff will review procedures when a student consistently chooses to stay in time-out beyond the determined time limit to determine that it has not become a reinforcement.

Searches

Searches of student property are limited to instances where they are necessary to prohibit contraband and to ensure the safety of a student and the school. Pat down searches are prohibited. Any pat down search occurring during the school day must be conducted by a police officer. Any property search or necessity for pat down search by the police shall be treated as a critical incident and documented appropriately. Searches of student property may only be conducted by the following staff members: Executive Director or designee, Assistant Director, Office Manager, Instructional Leader, Academic Coordinator and one or more witnesses.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

Any employee of BREC, in his professional or official capacity, who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child shall immediately report the matter to the Child

Protective Services department for the jurisdiction in which the child resides; or to the Director (or designee), who in collaboration with the staff member, shall make the report forthwith to Child Protective Services, as required by law. Any person who, in good faith, participates in such reporting or in any judicial proceeding resulting from such reporting shall be immune from civil or criminal liability. It is not the responsibility of the Director or the employee who initiated the report to prove that the child has been neglected or abused.

Medication, Health and Use of Epinephrine

a. Physical Examinations and Immunizations

All students are required to have on file evidence of a comprehensive physical examination by a qualified licensed (i) physician, (ii) nurse practitioner, or (iii) physician assistant acting under the supervision of a licensed physician. The examination must contain, at a minimum, information required on the Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form. A form can be provided to a parent upon request. All students must have a current certificate of immunization before attending classes. Physical examination reports shall be placed in the child's health record at the school and shall be made available for review by any employee or official of the State Department of Health or any local health department at the request of such employee or official.

Any student or staff member with a medical condition that is contagious or infectious shall take leave from school while in that condition unless attendance is approved by a qualified health care provider.

b. Medication and First Aid

Any medication which needs to be administered to a student during the school day will only be accepted in the original container with written permission signed and dated by the parent and prescribing physician. The use of all prescription medications must be authorized in writing by a licensed prescriber. All medications must be properly labeled and securely locked and stored within the school's main office. An individual medication administration record is maintained for each student and includes both prescription and over-the-counter medications. Students may only receive over-the-counter medications at school with written consent from a parent and authorization in writing by a physician. An over-the-counter medication form is provided upon admission to BREC and is updated at least annually. Students are prohibited from transporting medication at any time (unless directed otherwise by the student's health care plan). Parents are required to bring all medications to the school's main office *in person*. A parent and staff member must validate and sign an acknowledgment of the receipt of all medications at school. This shall be completed on the student's individual medication administration record. If any

medication needs to accompany a student for an off-site activity that medication shall remain with an approved staff member at all times and administered in accordance with the same policies for administering medication at school.

BREC employees receive annual training regarding blood-borne pathogens and medication administration (including administration of epinephrine) and are certified in CPR/First Aid. All staff responsible for medication administration have successfully completed a medication training program approved by the Board of Nursing.

A first aid kit is maintained and readily accessible for minor injuries and medical emergencies in the main office and throughout the building, within the school vehicle and included in any off site school activity.

c. Disposal of Medication

A parent must pick up any unused medication within one week of the expiration date or the date that the medication is no longer required. Parents will be notified when medication should be picked up. Any medication that remains at school after reasonable requests to the parent for pick up shall be destroyed. Any medication that needs to be destroyed shall be done so by the Executive Director (or designee) and witnessed by another administrative staff member along with documentation of the medication type, amount destroyed and circumstances.

d. Epinephrine

Epinephrine is used to treat and reverse the symptoms of anaphylaxis. It is a prescribed medication and is administered by injection, either intramuscularly by either an auto-injector or by a syringe. BREC maintains non student-specific epinephrine for circumstances where a staff or student is believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction. All school staff receive yearly training on the recognition of anaphylactic reaction and the emergency administration of epinephrine. School employees may provide the life-saving medication and summon emergency care to a student believed in good faith to be having an anaphylactic reaction. Any incident involving the administration of epinephrine at school or at a school activity shall be documented according to BREC's policy for critical incidents and a parent will be contacted as soon as reasonably possible.

Parents/guardians of students known to have a need for epinephrine availability should provide the school with student-specific medical orders, an individualized health care plan and their own supply of epinephrine promptly at the start of the school year or upon transfer to the school.

Transportation of Students

All school-related transportation provided to students must comply with local, state and federal laws relating to vehicle safety and maintenance, licensure of vehicles, licensure of drivers, child passenger safety, vehicle liability insurance, and safety measures that take into consideration the age and condition of the students. BREC utilizes a school-owned compact vehicle with a capacity for five persons for school-related business and any necessary transportation of students during the school day. Local school divisions or parents must provide transportation to and from school. Prior to enrollment in classes, a student's transportation plan must be in place and addressed in a student's IEP, IIP or 504 plan where appropriate. Local school boards may suspend a student from using school transportation services when the student endangers the health, safety or welfare of other riders. In such cases, the parent or guardian is responsible for transporting the student.

Field Trips

Field trips are off-site instructional activities and can provide excellent educational experiences for students by enriching curriculum and creating more meaningful learning experiences. Teachers will plan advance activities that prepare students for the trip and follow up activities that assist students in summarizing, applying and evaluating information learned on the trip. Parents will be notified in advance of field trips. All students must have signed permission forms in order to attend. No student will be denied the opportunity to participate in a field trip because of lack of funds. BREC staff take into consideration social, emotional and behavioral needs of students when considering off-site trips. Any student who endangers the health, safety or welfare of others, or who demonstrates behavior of concern prior to a field trip may not attend and will be expected to remain at school.

Emergency Plans & Procedures

The most important consideration in dealing with a crisis or critical incident is the health, safety and welfare of the students and staff. Every staff member is trained in CPR and First Aid and equipped with a general pre-planned response to various emergencies or crisis situations. Each year BREC's emergency plans and procedures are reviewed and adapted in accordance with policies and procedures recommended by the Virginia Department of Education and the Local Emergency Planning Commission. This plan is created in collaboration with Warren County Fire & Rescue and the Front Royal Police Department. A detailed copy of this plan can be provided to the parent of an actively enrolled student upon written request.

BREC administrative staff will maintain contact with the local emergency coordinator at least annually to determine (i) local disaster risks, (ii) community-wide plans to address different disasters and emergency

situations, (iii) conduct and review a school safety audit, and (iii) assistance, if any, that the local emergency management office will provide to the school in an emergency.

BREC will maintain records of regular safety, health and fire inspections that have been conducted and certified by local health and fire departments. The frequency of such inspections will be determined by the Board of Directors in consultation with the local health and fire departments.

In addition, the school administration will:

1. Conduct fire drills at least once a week during the first month of school and at least once each month for the remainder of the school term. No fire drills will be conducted during periods of mandatory testing. Evacuation routes for students shall be posted in each room. At least one simulated lock-down and crisis emergency evacuation activity should be conducted in the school year.
2. Ensure that the school has written procedures to follow in emergencies. The plan will be reviewed with staff and students during the first week of each school year.
3. Ensure space for the proper care of students who become ill.
4. Develop a written procedure for responding to violent, disruptive or illegal activities by students on school property or during a school sponsored activity; and written procedures to follow for the safe evacuation of persons with special physical, medical, or language needs that may need assistance to exit the school.

Emergency Remote Learning

In situations where BREC must temporarily close for in-person instruction, all efforts will be made to provide continuity of instruction through synchronous remote learning or at-home activities. Despite careful planning and consistent implementation of prevention strategies, some situations may result in temporarily closing school to in-person instruction, typically in consultation with the local health department. These decisions shall be made based on careful consideration of a variety of factors and with the emphasis on ensuring the health and wellness of students, their families, and school staff.



This Handbook belongs to:
