



Cardinal Cushing Centers

*All ages. All abilities. All together.*

**BRAINTREE ST. COLETTA DAY SCHOOL  
(BSCDS)**

**Handbook for  
Students, Families and  
Guardians  
2022-2023**

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**PLEASE NOTE:** All policies referenced within the Student/Parent Handbook can be found in our Policies & Procedures Manual located in the reception area of BSCDS. Parents may request a copy of the Policies & Procedures Manual via the Student Program Coordinator.

## Welcome from Amy Purkis Vice President, Student Programs and Services

Dear Students and Families,

As we continue to move forward from the pandemic, I'm excited at the prospect that the upcoming year will be full of opportunities for our students. None of this would be possible without our dedicated Cushing Community. I continue to be incredibly proud of the strength and resilience shown by our staff, our families and our students. Thank you all for your support.

Cardinal Cushing Centers is a place where people of diverse ages and abilities find possibility, opportunity, and growth, along with the possibility to achieve greater levels of success, the opportunity to be life-long learners, and the hope that each tomorrow will bring personal fulfillment, new experiences, and shared happiness.

Our organization aligns with the Franciscan Values that have been instilled with us since our founding in 1947 by the Sisters of Saint Francis of Assisi:

**Community:** We respect the strengths of each person, while fostering caring relationships, kindness and friendship.

**Creativity:** We encourage independent thinking, learning and initiatives where solutions and approaches can be different than the current ones.

**Stewardship:** We collectively are responsible to oversee and improve the performance of our organization to ensure longevity for future generations.

**Accountability:** We accept personal responsibility to efficiently use organizational resources, improve our services and systems and help others improve their effectiveness.

It is our foundation in these values that helped guide us through the last year. Success and challenges over the last year have allowed us many opportunities for reflection and growth. I am looking forward to working with all of you as we move forward, continuously improving Cardinal Cushing Centers while holding true to our mission and values.

With gratitude,

Amy Purkis, Vice President, Student Programs and Services

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

### **Our Program Philosophy**

The driving philosophy of BSCDS/Cardinal Cushing School is to give all students opportunities that lead to self-determination and satisfying lives.

### **Our Goal**

Our primary goal is to maximize a student's independence in all areas of life. We work to make strides in academics, employability, daily living, leisure skills, emotional regulation, social skills and communication. We focus on preparing our students for life after 22 and providing them with the skills and tools to lead fulfilling lives full of fun, purpose and community involvement.

### **Our Students**

BSCDS is proud to provide a day program to students with intellectual disabilities. We welcome students from a variety of towns and cities in Massachusetts. Our students include those with Autism, Down syndrome, seizure disorders and intellectual disabilities. BSCDS also serves students with a wide range of psychological and behavioral characteristics that are secondary to their intellectual impairment. Our student diversity creates a unique environment for students to learn from each other, serve as role models and make friendships. Student needs vary from communication devices to ADL skills to transportation to work – and sometimes all of the above. Students are most often referred by school districts, advocates and state agencies. For students not fully funded by the local school district, financial arrangements, made according with the Placement Agreement, are done with the coordination of the Finance Office.

### **Our Services**

BSCDS provides academic and vocational learning environments in classrooms, on-campus jobs and at jobs sites in the local community. Health services are provided by a nurse during the school day. A full complement of support services is offered that includes case management, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, behavior therapy, recreation, adapted physical education, art, music.

**CARDINAL CUSHING CENTERS/BSCDS IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY  
AND FULLY INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATION**

Cardinal Cushing Centers/BSCDS is an equal opportunity educational provider and employer. As such, Cardinal Cushing Centers/BSCDS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and/or age in educational programs or activities or in employment decisions. Cardinal Cushing Centers/BSCDS is required by Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1976, as amended, as well as board policy not to discriminate in such a manner.

At Cardinal Cushing Centers/BSCDS we strive to create an inclusive environment that is safe, supportive and accepting. We believe in creating a respectful and nurturing environment that embraces diversity and the right of all students to experience an educational environment that is welcoming and respectful.

All students at BSCDS have the opportunity to express themselves and live authentically with privacy and free from stigma and discrimination because of religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

## ADMISSIONS

BSCDS has a rolling admissions policy so that referrals may be made at any time. Applicants considered range in age from 6 – 22 and present cognitive, behavioral and/or emotional deficits who will benefit from a safe, structured, therapeutic, educational setting.

Though diverse, BSCDS does not currently serve those with severe physical/medical conditions, blindness, profound deafness, severe behavioral disorders, acute psychiatric difficulties, active substance abuse, sexual offending behaviors, arson and delinquent behaviors.

The BSCDS accepts both public and private referrals. A referral packet is required and should include:

- Educational and psychosocial assessments
- Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Current psychological testing
- Ancillary services reports (e.g., Speech, OT, Physical Therapy, etc.)
- Pertinent clinical/psychiatric reports
- Medical evaluation
- Dental exam
- State Identification for those over 18
- Copies of Guardianship and Rogers paperwork if applicable

Students deemed appropriate by the Board of Admissions participate in an interview which includes their parent/guardian. The public school district may also participate in this interview. The Program Director, or designee, will also be available to the parent/guardian and the public

school member. During this interview process the student and parent/guardian are given the opportunity of taking a tour of the school to see the facilities and meet the staff members and other enrolled students. The interviewer will explain the school's purpose and services, policies regarding student and parent/guardian rights, including student records, the health program including the procedures for providing emergency health care and the procedure for termination of a student. This is also an opportunity to review current services provided to the student, including the IEP grid, and discuss available services and service models in our setting. Applicants may participate in an evaluative visit to determine appropriate classroom. If still found to be appropriate by the Board of Admission, the student is accepted and an admission date is set.

As stated above, all students are required to have a comprehensive medical and dental evaluations within one year of a planned admission. The program shall require a written report from the physician and dentist of the results of the examinations and any recommendation(s) and/or modification to the student's activity prior to admission.

BSCDS requires a written contract with the responsible school district consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 28.06(3)(f).

Upon admission and every year at the beginning of August, a general permissions form is mailed to parents/guardians. Initial permissions are followed until parents revoke them. The yearly mailing serves as a reminder of their signed consents and offers the chance to change any options.

## PROGRAMS & SERVICES

The BSCDS consists of two primary programs: Education and Vocational Training.

Services consist of Case Management, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Assistive Technology, Adaptive Physical Education, Behavioral Support, and Medical Care.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Our education program provides an environment that facilitates healthy emotional, personal and physical growth for all students. Students are encouraged to learn and work cooperatively and independently within their abilities. Maintaining positive attitudes, habits of mutual respect, self-esteem, self-expression/advocacy, decision-making, and tolerance are stressed. Learning activities are integrated into all areas of the program and are designed to build and enhance the productivity, knowledge and self-esteem of each student in our care.

The keystone in our mission of challenging all students to achieve their greatest potential is embedded in positive behavioral supports, technology and vocational inclusive pathways. We offer high staff to student ratios and the integration of the Common Core and Massachusetts Frameworks into a comprehensive school and community-based curriculum that includes academics, supportive employment, recreation, social skills, and community living.

The Education Program is licensed to serve students from age six to twenty-two and class size ranges to a maximum of six students per classroom. All classrooms have a licensed teacher and educational assistant/s. The school program runs 216 days from 8:30am until 3:15pm.

Classrooms offer academic and vocational opportunities in the classroom and beyond. Classrooms are language based and utilize formal programs to enhance language expression including sign and visual programs for students with verbal communication challenges.

The academic curriculum is aligned to all the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Students are assessed according to the state guidelines of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). MCAS Alternate utilizes the portfolio to document student progress. The classrooms use formal math and reading programs, as well as, adapted and supportive materials which are used to relate learning to the student's daily life.

### **Art**

The Art program teaches a variety of mediums to increase knowledge of art principles and to foster enjoyment and an appreciation for art. Projects completed by students adorn classrooms, offices, meeting rooms and the corridors of our school. Art is integrated into all aspects of the St. Coletta program.

### **Music**

The Music Program purpose is to expose students to various modalities of music such as sound, rhythm and song. Singing and popular music is a major component of this program. Small instruments are used to give students the ability to create sound.

### **A.P.E.**

The Adapted Physical Education program offers skill development in many sports, activities, and rhythmic movement (in conjunction with Music).

### **Technology**

Technology is an essential part of the program for students at BSCDS. Students have access to computers, chrome books and iPads in their classroom.

In addition, we recognize the importance of helping our students self-determine how they want to live, work and form relationships in their community. We achieve this goal through self-advocacy development and empowerment in these essential components:



- Individualized academics
- All-inclusive community-based employment and transition services
- Communication and language development
- Community trips
- Integrated speech, counseling, occupational therapy and physical therapy
- School-wide positive behavioral interventions and support
- Nursing services

## VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

At BSCDS all students, regardless of the severity of challenges, can achieve their transitional employment goals. To accomplish this, we provide a quality instructional program which incorporates best practice assessment, curriculum, instruction and employability skill development. Our mission is to provide an effective, evidence-based transition process involving students, families, educators, community employers and adult service agencies.

The goal of this program is to prepare students to live, work, and socialize in an integrated community setting. To reach this goal, students, their families, schools, and community agencies work together to identify instructional programs, areas of responsibility and the linkages necessary to meet the transition needs of exiting students with disabilities.

### **Our Goals:**

1. To assist all of our students in developing vocational skills that better prepare them to live and work in their communities as independently as possible.
2. To connect the bridge from school to adult life by offering early, inclusive and varied opportunities.
3. To help our students define and determine their own meaning of genuine success in the workplace by providing a range of options.

### **Pathways to Success:**

The Vocational Program provides every student a continuum of career development opportunities that include:

- Classroom-based career awareness and interests
- Self-determination and self-advocacy skills
- Job acquisition skills
- Comprehensive transition assessment
- Group supportive employment
- Job coach supportive employment
- Inclusive community employment
- Employer natural supports

### **Community Jobs**

BSCDS Vocational program have a variety of community-based job opportunities which were created to match students' interests and skills. Opportunities include paid employment, internships and volunteer opportunities. Job development skills, job placement and job coaching services are provided to all students entering community placements.

## BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Behavioral Services operates using a consultative integrated collaborative model. Based on the principals of Applied Behavior Analysis, our team strives to support the students we serve in improving socially significant behaviors. Socially significant behaviors include communication, social skills, academics, adaptive living skills such as, toileting, dressing, eating, personal self-care, domestic skills, and work skills. This can also include decreasing behaviors of concern through a focus on functionally equivalent adaptive behaviors.

Services include: staff training, modeling of interventions/teaching techniques, data analysis, classroom observation, consultation on classroom management, school-wide incentive programs, crisis management, individualize behavior plans and functional behavior assessments. Ongoing consultation and oversight, including data analysis, is provided for students with individualized behavior management treatment plans. Members of the behavioral services team regularly attend staff meetings and TEAM meetings for individual students.

### **SAFETY-CARE**

Safety-Care Behavioral Safety Training™, trained in thousands of provider settings, is the only crisis prevention course providing staff with a combination of behavioral competencies crisis prevention, and management skills. With applied behavior analytic content throughout, staff acquires the best of prevention skills. The program is used to support individuals with a wide variety of diagnoses and conditions, including those related to mental health, developmental disability and neurological conditions. The curriculum is designed to provide a set of skills and strategies that allow staff in a variety of settings to safety and humanely provide support to individuals who may sometimes exhibit disruptive or dangerous behavior. The prevention and de-escalation interventions in Safety Care are drawn from extensive clinical research. This research has developed powerful, non-coercive ways to prevent crisis and teach positive alternatives to dangerous or disruptive behavior. It teaches concepts and skills related to the prevention and de-escalation of behavioral incidents and provide staff with physical techniques for responding safely to dangerous behavior.

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

At BSCDS we utilize a Universal Framework across all learning environments which focus on teaching positive, independent behaviors to our students.

This universal framework, PBIS, is a team-based process for creating proactive, educative, and functional support systems used in the development of effective interventions for problem behavior. This framework is not one specific intervention or a reward system. It is a combination of many evidence-based practices.

The Prism Program (Promoting Responsibility and Independence in a Structured Manner) is a component of the PBIS program which is designed to help students set and achieve individual goals. It is designed to use “real world” language- rights and responsibilities- to help teach students the connection between their behavior (expected and unexpected) and the consequences that come with it.

PBIS teaches our students how to meet their needs for freedom, fun, achievement, and relationships using new, more effective behaviors.

Our ultimate goal is to build supportive environments in which positive behavior is more effective than problem behavior.

For details about the PBIS program, please speak with your Student Program Coordinator.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

BSCDS provides a nurse for the students during the school day to address medical concerns, in addition to providing regular medication administration.

### **Medical Policies and Procedures**

Braintree St. Coletta Day School must be in compliance with all current regulations and requirements for students regarding medication orders, medication administration, and transportation of medication to and from BSCDS. Also, practices must be maintained that ensure student safety and welfare.

### **PROCEDURE REGARDING MEDICATION ORDERS**

- Medication is administered to a student only with written authorization from the parents/guardians. In order to maintain this authorization, a parent/guardian is required to sign a consent form annually.
- Complete and legible orders signed by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or certified physician assistant are required for any medication administration, therapeutic measure, or diagnostic procedure. A prescription is not acceptable as this is the order for the pharmacy to fill the medication. This includes over-the-counter medications (i.e. ibuprofen, tums, benzoyl peroxide face wash, etc).
- All students on long-term medication schedules will have written orders renewed annually.
- The properly labeled medication container from a pharmacy may be accepted as an order for medications given for less than two weeks.

- Over-the-counter medications may be administered according to standing orders established in medical protocols.
- Medications must be delivered to the school in containers labeled by a physician or pharmacy. Doses may be prepackaged.
- All controlled substances (i.e., Concerta, Adderall, Ativan, Valium, etc.) are required to be blister packed.
- If a family member or caregiver reports a change in a medication schedule, a written order signed by the licensed prescriber is required.
- If a change in medication orders occurs while the student is at school, the parents/guardians will be notified.
- The medication order will include:
  - student's name
  - name of medication
  - dosage and route of medication
  - frequency of administration
  - date of medication order
  - specific directions for administration
  - signature of licensed prescriber
- Administration of selected anti-seizure drugs and psychoactive drugs requires that established protocols be followed to monitor efficacy and detect untoward effects. Protocols will be established and routinely reviewed by the Coordinator of Health Services.
- A review of medications administered to a student is incorporated into the student's IEP.
- A written record of the administration of a prescribed medication is maintained for each student receiving a medication, documenting its side effects, and notification to the doctor of any changes in the student's behavior or health which may have resulted from the medication.

### **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

Medication administration may be delegated to unlicensed personnel (Teachers, Teacher Assistants, etc.) if those persons are willing to accept the responsibility. Only unlicensed personnel who have completed the Department of Public Health (DPH) medication delegation program and passed the competency test will be allowed to administer prescription medications. This instruction is given by a Registered Nurse who has completed the DPH Train the Trainer Course. An initial training program will be provided as well as annual reviews. The Health Center will maintain a list of medication-trained personnel. Medication delegation responsibilities may be revoked at any time at the discretion of the Director of Health Services.

### **PHYSICAL EXAM**

A current physical exam is required upon entry for all students and annually thereafter.

### **ILLNESS AND FIRST AID**

On admission, all students are required to have a consent form signed by parent/guardian authorizing emergency first aid or medical treatment. No emergency first aid or medical treatment will be administered to a student without written authorization from a parent. These forms are renewed annually in September.

Please help the health center care for your child by:

- updating emergency phone numbers so the school can always reach you
- letting the health center know if your child has any chronic or acute illnesses
- communicating with the health center directly if medication, health needs change or if they have been exposed to a communicable disease
- keep your child home from school if he/she has: a temperature 100 or above; vomiting; diarrhea; strep infections of any kind; ringworm; conjunctivitis; or impetigo-these need to be treated for 24 hours prior to returning to school; rash of unknown origin-students should be seen by their health care provider. Students should be 24 hours without fever, vomiting, diarrhea before returning to school.

### **REPORTING INJURIES/ILLNESS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

In the event a student is injured or ill while under the care of BSCDS, parents/guardians will be notified by the nurse.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL**

BSCDS require immunizations to be up to date for entry into school and up to date as per Massachusetts Department of Public Health immunization standards. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping immunizations current and providing documentation to the school nurse when their child has received additional immunizations.

Upon recommendation of the health center, students may be excluded from school if immunizations are not up to date or if a student has a communicable disease to prevent transmission of the disease in school. For example, if there is a chickenpox outbreak at school and your child does not have documentation of having had either chickenpox or the chickenpox vaccine, your child will not be allowed to go to school for a length of time specified by the MA Department of Public Health.

### **PANDEMICS AND OTHER HEALTH EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a pandemic or other health emergency, BSCDS will follow the direction provided by government officials and our licensing bodies. This includes the Center for Disease Control, Department of Public Health, Executive Office for Health and Human Services and our licensing agencies, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Early Education and Care. As responses to these situations are rapidly evolving, updates to families will be provided via email and written communications. Families with questions are encouraged to reach out to their students' program for clarifying information.

### **STUDENTS RETURNING TO PROGRAM AFTER HOSPITALIZATION/EXTENDED LEAVE**

Any student returning from a Hospitalization or extended leave (14 consecutive days out of program) must be cleared through by the nurse before returning to program. The nurse must receive a Discharge Summary or a Medical Report from the hospital/emergency room/health care provider providing the following information:

- If the student is being cleared to participate in full programming (including physical, recreational and vocational tasks)
- Whether or not medications were administered to the student during his/her stay at the hospital/emergency room and the names/dosage of any medications if administered
- Whether or not any procedures were performed and a description of the procedures, if performed
- A detailed description of any restrictions
- Follow up recommendations
- An end date if restrictions are indicated

Students returning to Program after suffering an injury at home or at school must return with medical clearance from a doctor providing the following information:

- If the student is being cleared to participate in full programming (including physical, recreational and vocational tasks)
- A detailed description of any restrictions
- Follow-up recommendations
- An end date if restrictions are indicated

A Guardian who chooses for their student to not seek medical attention after an injury must provide, in writing, permission for the student to participate in full programming.

Students who return to school without the above information will be brought immediately to the Health Center. The Health Center or Student Program Coordinator will contact the parent or Guardian. If the above information cannot be provided the Student will remain in the Health Center until the parent or guardian can pick the student up from school. Students will not be allowed to return to program until the above information is provided.

## IEP SERVICES

### **CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICE**

Each student and family at BSCDS are provided with a Case Manager to provide case management services and serve as a contact person and advocate, this person is also the IEP Coordinator. The Case Manager is responsible for ensuring that the student's IEP is being followed, accommodations are in place, interventions, strategies and guidelines are being followed and parental concerns are being addressed. The Case Manager works with all members of the student's team (e.g., teacher, clinician, occupational therapist, etc.) in order to

ensure up to date and thorough communication. In addition to facilitating internal communication and services, the Case Manager is the primary contact for the funding agencies, such as school districts and state agencies. The Case Manager/IEP Coordinator is expected to know the specific needs of their students and have frequent contact with families and guardians.

**RELATED SERVICES: Speech-Language, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Assistive Technology**

In order to best meet each individual student's needs, we provide therapeutic intervention that is both functionally and evidence-based. Depending on the student's goals, this may include a therapeutic trial of service, individual and/or small group therapy, consultation to all areas of the student's program. These services can take place in a variety of settings:

- Vocational sites
- Community-based activities
- Classroom-based activities
- General therapeutic environment

Our services are coordinated with our educational and vocational programs on both the Braintree and Hanover campuses. We offer evaluations; individual, group, and therapeutic trials and consults; staff and family training; and home exercise programs and family training. As part of an interdisciplinary team the therapy staff work closely with team members from the clinical, nursing, and adaptive physical education.

**Speech-Language:** the focus of this therapy area is to promote functional communication skills across all settings including on and off campus. Areas addressed may include alternative/augmentative communication, hearing, safe swallowing, and social skills.

**Occupational Therapy:** the focus of this therapy area is to promote independence in functional skills such as self-care, fine motor, and visual/perceptual skills. Areas addressed may include sensory integration, vision, safety, activities of daily living e.g., showering, cooking, dressing, eating, modifications of work environments, energy conservation, and/or use of adaptive equipment. Through the use of therapeutic techniques and equipment, strategies are incorporated into all areas of a student's program to promote self-regulation, calmness, and body organization.

**Physical Therapy:** the focus of this therapy area is to promote functional mobility and safety across all settings. Areas addressed may include activities to increase strength, function, balance, safety, mobility, endurance, energy conservation, body mechanics, fitness, and community access.

**Assistive Technology:** consultation to the team around AT issues. AT includes devices, systems, and software that assist students to meet their goals. Areas addressed include computer access, reading, writing, math, learning & studying, communication, hearing, vision, mobility, seating & positioning, environmental control, and recreation & leisure. Services provided

include: completing evaluations and consults, coordinating the acquisition of AT, providing training to students and their teams, and providing technical assistance.

### **IEP TEAM PROCESS**

Your student's Team consists of you, your School District (when applicable), any outside agencies or advocates and the BSCDS Team. The BSCDS Team is led by the IEP Coordinator and includes the teacher. In addition, any staff member that provides a service to your student is part of the Team. This can include a clinician, OT, SLP, PT or member of our Behavioral Support department. IEP meetings are chaired by the District or by the IEP Coordinator at BSCDS. This position serves as the point person for compiling and coordinating an IEP that meets regulations, the needs of the students and Cushing's standards.

### **MEETINGS**

Various meetings take place within BSCDS for each student. Several meetings require parent and school district attendance while others occur with the student's BSCDS team. All meetings regarding your student take your feedback and concerns into consideration. The IEP Coordinator will communicate with outside parties any information gathered or decisions made at any meeting.

### **SERVICE PLAN MEETING**

Within the first 2 weeks of admission, a Service Plan meeting will take place. Our Admissions department or the Student IEP Coordinator will often schedule these meetings on the day of admission. This meeting serves to transfer the contact person from Admissions to IEP Services and introduce all the members of the students BSCDS team to the parents.

**IEP** - Annual IEPs most often take place at the St. Coletta School building. You will continue to receive a meeting invitation from your School District. Either your School District or St. Coletta's IEP Coordinator will chair the meeting. All members of your student's team are invited and expected to be in attendance. After the age of 14 we make every effort to have the student attend and participate in as much of the meeting as they are able.

**Transition Meetings** - Once a referral for Adult Service Eligibility (a 688) is filed by the school district various agencies and providers will contact the Student Program Coordinator to start the process of getting to know your student and their needs. Meetings can include various members of the Team and St. Coletta staff will work with parents to assist in making the transition to adult life at 22 a smooth one.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF**

Every employee of Cardinal Cushing Centers undergoes a thorough orientation upon hire. In addition, employees are required to complete mandated trainings on a yearly basis. These trainings include:



- Mandated Reporting of Neglect and Abuse
- Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Human Rights
- First Aid & CPR
- Safety-Care & Behavior Management Supports
- Evacuation and Emergency Procedures
- Bullying Prevention and Intervention
- Medical Information & Procedures
- Transportation Safety
- State and District-Wide Assessments
- Runaway Students
- Among other policies to ensure the safety and well-being of our students.

Cardinal Cushing Centers, Inc. releases students at noon on several Wednesdays throughout the year to allow for professional development time. Please refer to the school calendars for specific early release dates. Professional Development topics reflect best practices in the field such as:

- Curriculum and Instructional Methodology
- Differentiated Instruction and Universal Design for Learning
- Positive Behavioral Supports and Classroom Management
- Transition Skills, Self-Determination, and Self-Advocacy
- Progress Monitoring and Assessment
- Life Skills and Expanded CORE Curriculum
- The IEP Process, Civil Rights, and Special Education Regulations
- Technology
- The Role of the Paraprofessional and Job Specialist
- Therapeutic Interventions with Specific Disabilities

## FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

### **Family Code of Conduct: Statement of Purpose**

Cardinal Cushing Centers recognizes the importance and value of a mutually supportive relationship between the school and families. The education of a child is best served when the school and parents/guardians share a commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and when roles, responsibilities, and expectations are clearly defined.

We expect parents/guardians to have a fundamental understanding and commitment to the following:

- Teachers, administrators and parents/guardians want all children to succeed.
- Teachers, administrators and parents/guardians must work together for the benefit of our students.
- All parents/guardians and visitors, as well as all members of the school community, deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

### **Family Code of Conduct: Prohibited Behaviors**

In order to provide a peaceful and safe school environment, Cardinal Cushing Centers prohibits the following behaviors by parents/guardians and visitors:

- Abusive, threatening, profane or harassing communication, either in person, by e-mail or text/voicemail/phone or other written or verbal communication
- Threatening to harm to an employee, visitor, fellow parent/guardian or student
- Damaging or destruction of school property
- Excessive unscheduled campus visits, e-mails, text/voicemail/phone messages or other written or oral
- School staff and administration may not always be immediately available to speak with you. The only way to ensure that you are able to speak with a staff member or administrator is to schedule an appointment. Staff and administrators have a practice of attempting to return all phone calls/e-mails within 24 hours with great success. Your calls and visits will be responded to consistent with this practice if someone is not immediately available to speak with
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or school staff made publicly to others.

- Any concerns that you may have regarding these matters must be made through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively for all

BSCDS clearly recognizes that families, guardians and other outside parties with dedication and investment in your student are crucial members of the student's team. We strive to create an open and welcoming school and encourage visitation and collaboration. We commit to families a collaborative and respectful partnership and request the same of each family member involved.

### **Limited English Modifications**

All English Language Learners will be afforded full access to Cardinal Cushing Centers, Inc. services, activities, and benefits. Parents of ELL students who have limited English proficiency will be provided written communication in the language that affords them the greatest comprehension and access.

### **Family Visit Guidelines**

In an effort to be consistent in our relationships with families and honor the privacy and needs of all students in our care, the following guidelines are in place.

1. Families are always welcome to visit their child at BSCDS.
2. If the visit is planned between 8:45 a.m. and 2 p.m. we ask that you let us know you will be visiting by calling or e-mailing your child's IEP Coordinator or Program Director. This allows us to inform staff and ensures your child remains on campus, so he/she will be here for the visit.
3. Parents are always welcomed to observe/visit their children in their classroom or vocational site; however, an assigned staff must accompany the parent in these settings. The Case Manager/IEP Coordinator is happy to make these arrangements.
4. BSCDS reserves the right to ask a family member to leave at any time. Often staff may be aware of the confidential needs of another student and may decide that visitors need to leave for the benefit of the other student's needs.
5. Behavioral incidents may also warrant a family member being asked to leave. Parents are not permitted to engage in behavioral interventions or therapeutic strategies involving other students.

### **The PAG**

The Parent Advisory Group is comprised of any and all parents interested in attending meetings, having updates or holding an office. All parents are welcome at any time. Meetings are held throughout the year and notifications are sent out through e-mail or a phone call. Each meeting will provide a presentation or informational component for you to learn more about Cushing or other services related to having a child with special learning and emotional needs. If you would like more information about the PAG, have ideas or suggestions please contact the Admissions Director.

## **Events**

Parents, guardians and extended families are welcome to attend many events on the Hanover and Braintree campus. From talent shows to basketball games, all are welcome. These events are listed on our website and on our school and recreation calendars. In addition, families are invited to fundraising events and our Fall Festival. This annual autumn event helps kick off the school year with activities and information geared for new and returning families.

## **Guardianship**

The great majority of students at BSCDS come here through the Chapter 766 process. That means they are here voluntarily or through the decision of their parents/guardians in coordination with their local school systems or other state agencies. For these students, their parents are most likely their guardians. As these students come close to their 18th birthdays, guardianship is an issue that must be discussed at their Team meetings. At the age of 18, these students become their own guardians unless someone, usually their parents, files for guardianship with the courts. The person filing for guardianship must show the person/student is not capable of taking care of himself/herself or making responsible decisions. Some of our students over the age of 18 are their own guardians and must be treated as such. A student who is his/her own guardian must sign his/her own Individual Education Plan and any other documents that would require the signature of the student's guardian, including the acceptance of the Behavior Management Program.

Students with specific custody arrangements must have a legal copy of the arrangements on file at BSCDS. St. Coletta staff cannot uphold custody guidelines without legal notification.

## **Parent and Student Grievances**

We commit to families a collaborative and respectful partnership and request the same of each family member involved. Cardinal Cushing Center strives to resolve any conflicts that are identified by parents/guardians and/or students in an expeditious, fair and objective manner. Any parent/guardian and/or student, who believes that any policy, procedure, or federal or state standard has been violated, has the right to file a grievance according to the procedures outlined in this policy.

A parent/guardian and/or student will not be discriminated against, harassed, intimidated or suffer any reprisal as a result of filing a grievance or participating in the grievance process. If a parent/guardian and/or student feel that he/she is being subjected to any of the above, the parent/guardian and/or student may appeal directly to the Vice President of Student Services and Programs if there is a conflict of interest concerning the Program Director.

Any parent/guardian and/or student are encouraged to resolve issues informally and as soon as possible with their Case Manager or Designee. If a solution cannot be reached, a parent/guardian and/or student may present a formal complaint in the manner described below. All complaints will be facilitated in a timely manner with the goal of resolving the complaint within twenty (20) calendar days from the time of formal initiation through the completion of STEP 1. Should the grievant choose to continue the process, a goal of ten (10)

calendar days will be established for each additional step throughout the process. All parties will be notified if an extension is necessary. Meeting times will be mutually agreed upon depending on schedules with the goal of upholding the time frames outlined in this policy.

If an issue cannot be resolved informally, a parent/guardian and/or student must request and complete a Parent/Guardians/Student Grievance Form (Grievance Form). This form should include the facts that form the basis of the grievance, the specific policy/procedure/regulation allegedly violated, and how the facts presented by the grievant support a violation of a policy/procedure/regulation. Any action taken to date and the specific action requested by the grievant should be indicated on this form.

The Grievance Form should be completed within twenty (20) calendar days of the alleged policy/procedure/regulation violation and should include the name of any individual(s) who can substantiate the grievance. The IEP Coordinator will assist the parent/guardian/ and/or student in completing the Grievance Form if required. In the event that the grievance involves the IEP Coordinator, the appropriate Program Director will assist the parent/guardian and/or student in completing the form.

### **PROCESS:**

**STEP 1:** The parent/guardian and/or student will present to the Director (or designee) a completed Grievance Form that includes the pertinent information and the action requested by the parent/guardian and/or student. If the parent/guardian and/or student feel that it would be inappropriate to forward the Grievance Form to the Director, the form should be presented to the Vice President of Student Programs or designee. This would occur in the event that the grievance is being filed against the Director or if the Director has a conflict of interest.

The Director (or designee) will notify the V.P. of Student Programs or designee to assist in the facilitation and coordination of the process as required. If the Director in consultation with the V.P. of Student Programs deems that a legitimate grievance exists, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent/guardian and/or student and the Director at which time the matter will be thoroughly discussed and possible corrective actions developed. Following the meeting, the Director will provide a written decision to the parent/guardian and/or student and send a copy to the V.P. of Student Programs. If the Director deems that a legitimate grievance does not exist, he/she will provide the parent/guardian and/or student with a written explanation of the decision.

**STEP 2:** If the parent/guardian and/or student are not satisfied with the decision by the Director (or designee), the parent/guardian and/or student can forward the Grievance Form to the directly to the Vice President of Student Programs. Specific issues and reasons for not being in agreement with the Director should be outlined in the Grievance Form. A similar process to Step 1 will be followed.

STEP 3: If the parent/guardian and/or student are not satisfied with the decision by the Vice President of Student Programs, the parent/guardian and/or student can forward the Grievance Form to the Chief Operating Officer (COO). Specific issues and reasons for not being in agreement with the Vice President of Student Programs should be outlined in the Grievance Form. The COO will facilitate a meeting with the parent/guardian and/or student to thoroughly discuss the matter and attempt to resolve the issue. As an additional step the COO may recommend a review and determination by an Ad-hoc Grievance Committee. If the COO dismisses the grievance, that decision is final. If the Chief Operating Officer refers the grievance to an Ad-hoc Grievance Committee, the committee will review the grievance and provide a written decision. The decision of the committee is final.

Prior to commencing any legal action against the Organization, its Board of Directors, or any supervisor, a parent/guardian and/or student should exhaust his/her/their rights under this grievance procedure.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS/STUDENT GRIEVANCE FORM

Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
Step 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/guardians/Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Witness and/or Individual(s) that can substantiate grievance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Please detail all the facts in the area provided below that form the basis of the grievance. Please include the specific policy/procedure allegedly violated, how the facts support a violation of each policy/procedure you have identified, any action taken to date, and the specific relief requested by you. If there is not enough room on this form, please attach as much information as necessary to this document. Please submit this form to your Student Program Coordinator or the appropriate member of Senior Management.

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Parents/guardians/Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## STUDENT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RESTRICTIONS

Our students are encouraged to participate in their programming decisions. Students have opportunities to attend Team meetings, and make appointments with various member of their Team. Students who require augmentative communication are given visuals and access to devices to provide input as well. Students have input in choosing their after-school activities, sports teams, and various leisure activities. Through systems such as PBIS and the Levels of Independence Students can earn opportunities by demonstration of continued growth and skill acquisition.

### **Civil Rights**

Cardinal Cushing Centers is committed to ensuring that all programs and facilities are accessible to all. We actively seek to prevent discrimination or harassment on the basis of age, gender, color, homelessness, disability, national origin, religion, race, or sexual orientation.

### **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

Students at Cardinal Cushing Centers are covered under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Under this statute, our students are entitled to an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), Appropriate Evaluation, Parent and Teacher Participation, and Procedural Safeguards. In addition, students have the right to confidentiality of information, transition services, and appropriate discipline.

### **Student Confidentiality**

BSCDS maintains current and complete files for all students and shall manage such files consistent with the Massachusetts Student Record Regulations and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The Administrative Assistant in the IEP Services Department serves as the records clerk and is responsible for the oversight and maintenance of the student records.

All students at BSCDS are instructed that they have the right to confidentiality in terms of all their school records being shared with any staff or outside agency not directly serving the student and that such written or oral communication is subject to student and/or guardian approval.

Additionally, students are instructed that any communication with IEP members at the student's or the IEP Team member's request is confidential. Such instruction occurs annually with each student and a record of these instructions is kept in the student file.

Students are further instructed that at their discretion, they have a right to private and confidential conversations with any member of their IEP Team.

1. Individual records of enrolled Massachusetts students are available to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon request.



2. Staff notes or reports regarding a student are legibly dated and signed by persons making those entries.
3. An access log is maintained as part of each student's record. If parts of the student record are located apart from the main record, a separate access log is maintained for each part. The log indicates the names of all persons who have obtained access to the student record (See "NOTE" at the bottom of this page.) and provides the following information:

If information is going to be released to an individual outside the organization, the following should be included in the access log:

- The name, position and signature of the person releasing the information;
- The name, position, and, if a third party, the affiliation, if any, of the person who is to receive the information;
- The date of access;
- The parts of the record to which access was obtained; and,
- The purpose of such access.

**NOTE:** This log requirement shall apply to authorized personnel, e.g., state agency representatives who inspect the student records for licensing and monitoring purposes; BSCDS professional staff who work closely with the students; administrative office staff and clerical personnel who add information to the student records; and the school nurses who inspect the students' health records.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Cardinal Cushing Centers, Inc. prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender in educational programs and activities of the public schools. This policy applies to both educational and employment opportunities. Cardinal Cushing Centers is committed to maintaining an educational atmosphere in which each and every student can pursue scholastic achievement and personal fulfillment.

Sexual harassment is a destructive behavior that interferes with the educational process, and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is a violation of an individual's right to privacy and personal dignity.

As part of our yearly "Positive Words" assembly, Students will be informed of their rights and responsibilities in relation to our sexual harassment policy.

### **Student Transportation Safety**

While at BSCDS, students will participate in off campus trips as part of the program. Many of these trips will be in small groups and in BSCDS/Cardinal Cushing vans. On occasion, larger group activities or whole school trips students will ride on school busses. Students are trained on a yearly basis on expectations in passenger safety.

## **Student Restrictions**

Although our students have many rights and opportunities there are certain activities and possessions that are not allowed on campus regardless of age, permission or skill level.

- Students at the BSCDS are not allowed to buy or consume “Power Shots” or other high-caffeine, energy drinks; and staff members are not allowed to consume these drinks in the presence of students.
  - Students are not allowed to use tobacco products of any kind or drink/possess alcohol on campus, at any school related event, trip or function, or at any time under the care and supervision of Cushing staff.
  - Students cannot take any medications, prescribed or over the counter without a Doctor’s order on file at the Health Center.
  - Students at BSCDS are not permitted to wear the following:
    - Clothing, hats, pins, or other materials that advertise or promote tobacco, violence, alcohol, drugs, or sex.
    - Clothing that is overly revealing, e.g. halter tops, short shorts, bare midriff, pants that expose under garments, etc.
    - Clothing or accessories that can be perceived as gang related.
    - Students are not permitted to wear (or possess), at school or at any off-campus activity, any clothing with attachments that have the potential to be used as weapons (e.g., chains, etc.)
    - Additional restrictions may be implemented on a case by case basis following clinical recommendations and input from the student’s team.
    - The following items have been designated as contraband and are not allowed to be in the possession of students while under the care of BSCDS:
      - Weapons of any kind
      - Drugs/alcohol
      - Fire-setting materials
      - Cigarettes, E-Cigarettes, Vape, or other smoking/tobacco related products
      - Laser Pointers
1. Students are not allowed to have contraband items in their possession while at BSCDS. In the event that that contraband is found:
    - a. if an item that is legal, but inappropriate for BSCDS, it will be stored in a locked container in the Health Center. The item will be given to the student’s parent/guardian with a request that the contraband not be returned to school. Items that are not collected by the parent/guardian within 14 days will be disposed of.
    - b. if an item that is illegal will be given to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### **Search Policy**

BSCDS does not have a policy of searching students on a regular or random basis without reasonable cause for a search. In the event the Team determines, in order to protect the safety of students and others, routine searches of a particular student's belongings are necessary, the student's Service Plan must be amended to include these searches.

In the event that the BSCDS staff has reasonable cause to suspect a student has materials on his/her person, or backpack, that may be a danger to him/herself or others (e.g., weapons, drugs, alcohol, etc.), or that may be contraband, BSCDS staff will follow the procedure described below.

2. The student, the student's Case Manager, the Program Director, and the student's parent/guardian will be notified that a search of the student's body, or backpack will be taking place.
3. In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, and it is deemed necessary that the search take place immediately due to concerns for the safety of the student or others, the search will be authorized by the Program Director (or designee). The Case Manager will contact the parent/guardian at the earliest possible time. The parent/guardian will be informed of the reason for the search, the results of the search, and the reason the search was conducted prior to notifying them.
4. If a student's body is to be searched, a gender-appropriate staff person with a gender-appropriate witness will conduct the search. A body search is defined as a pat-down search including having a student empty his/her pockets. **BSCDS does not search a student by having him/her remove clothing.** Body searches will be conducted in a private area away from other students.
5. If a staff person has reason to believe that a student has an item on his/her person that may be a serious threat to his/her or others' safety—and a pat down search has not discovered the item—the staff may recommend contacting a local law enforcement agency so that a member of that agency may take whatever steps are necessary to retrieve the item.
6. If any contraband materials are found, the student, the student's parent/guardian, the student's Case Manager, and the Program Director will be notified at the earliest possible moment.
7. In the event that that contraband is found:
  - c. if an item is legal, but inappropriate for BSCDS, it will be stored in a locked container in the Health Center. The item will be given to the student's parent/guardian with a request that the contraband not be returned to school. Items that are not collected by the parent/guardian within 14 days will be disposed of.
  - d. if an item is illegal, it will be given to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

8. Searches of a student's body or backpack must be documented on a Critical Incident Report and sent to the critical incident distribution list.

The Administrative Team will review all incidents involving searches and contraband and will select a designee to report incidents to outside agencies as appropriate.

## EMERGENCY POLICIES

### **Suspension, Expulsion and Termination Policies**

#### **Suspension**

A student may be suspended from BSCDS for a time span not to exceed three (3) calendar days with the approval of school administrator or designee.

A student may be suspended for any behavior that is deemed a serious threat to the safety of others or to himself/herself including, but not limited to; physical aggression that causes harm to another; bringing a weapon to school; bringing drugs or alcohol to school; returning to campus under the influence of drugs or alcohol; consuming drugs or alcohol while on campus; and selling or distributing drugs or alcohol while under the supervision of BSCDS.

In the event that BSCDS deems it necessary to suspend a student, the student's parent/guardian and the student's public school system or agency will be immediately notified of the reason for the suspension and its duration. Within 24 hours, BSCDS will send a written explanation for the suspension to the student's parent/guardian and the public school system or agency.

If a student is to be suspended he/she will be entitled to all due process rights through implementation of the student grievance policy.

If a student is deemed an immediate threat to the safety of others, it may be necessary to immediately enforce a suspension; however, the student will be entitled to a due process hearing at the earliest possible date and time following implementation of the suspension.

#### **Suspensions Exceeding 3-Day**

If a student requires a suspension of three or more consecutive school days or five or more non-consecutive school days, the following procedures will be followed:

- BSCDS, in collaboration with the parents/guardians and the public school district or agency, will explore all possible program modifications within the school to attempt to prevent a lengthier suspension of the student from the program.
- BSCDS, through the collaboration of the Program Director, Director of Behavioral Services and Case Manager/IEP Coordinator, will track the number and duration of suspensions, including suspensions from any part of the student's IEP program.

### **10+ Day Suspensions - Joint Responsibilities of BSCDS and the Responsible School District**

BSCDS adheres to the following procedures if suspensions for a child may exceed 10 consecutive school days or when a pattern of suspensions may exceed 10 cumulative days:

- BSCDS staff will request that the responsible school district convene an IEP Team meeting. If a state agency is involved in the student's placement, that liaison will be informed of the 10-day suspension.
- BSCDS staff will participate in the Team meeting in order to develop or review an assessment of the behavior or modify an existing behavior plan. During this meeting, BSCDS will also participate in any discussion involving the identification of an appropriate alternative educational setting.
- BSCDS staff will also participate in a manifestation determination to determine the relationship, if any, between the disability and the behavior. In addition, BSCDS in coordination with the school district, and with the consent of the parents will modify the IEP, the behavior intervention plan and/or the placement if appropriate.

### **Expulsion Policy**

BSCDS operates a special education school to manage issues presented by students with cognitive/behavioral/emotional needs. Because students are referred to BSCDS with these issues, expulsion occurs only in situations in which a student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of himself/herself or others, and the BSCDS is unable to provide a safe environment for him/her. If it is determined that the student may be better served in another environment (e.g., other school or facility), the BSCDS staff will work closely with those placing the student to ensure a smooth transition to a more appropriate setting.

### **Planned Terminations**

For planned terminations, BSCDS will notify the public school district (and/or agency) of the need for an IEP Team review meeting and provide notice of this meeting to all appropriate parties ten (10) days in advance of the intended date of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to develop a clear and specific termination plan for the student which will be implemented in no less than thirty (30) days—unless all parties agree to an earlier termination date.

### **Emergency Terminations**

In the event that emergency termination is necessary, BSCDS will immediately contact the student's public school district (and/or agency) and will not terminate the student until the public school district (or agency) assumes responsibility for the student.

- a. At the request of the public school district, BSCDS may delay termination of the student for up to two (2) calendar weeks to allow the public school district the opportunity to convene an emergency Team meeting or to conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's termination from BSCDS.
- b. The termination of enrollment may be delayed for longer than two (2) calendar weeks only if there is mutual agreement between BSCDS and the placing public school district.

- c. For emergency terminations, which are circumstances where the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of himself/herself or others, BSCDS will follow the procedures required under 603 CMR 28.09(12) (explained above) and immediately notify parents/guardians of the student, the sending school district and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **Missing Students**

In the event a student is missing, parents/guardians are notified as follows:

1. If the student has not been located within 15 minutes, the student's parents/guardians are notified. The Administrator will contact the student's parents/guardians. A report is sent to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education whenever a student has been missing for more than 30 minutes.
2. When the student has been located, the Administrator will notify the student's parents/guardians.
3. When a student goes missing when not on BSCDS grounds, staff will immediately notify the local police department. Following that, they call and notify the BSCDS Administrator who will then contact the student's parents/guardians.

### **Fire and Lockdown Drills and Lessons:**

Fire evacuation drills are held a minimum of at least twice per year in the school building and vocational sites. Fire drills offer the students the opportunity to experience the fire alarm and to practice their evacuation routes and meeting places.

In addition to fire drills, each classroom is required to complete fire safety lessons on a monthly basis. Lessons include crawling under smoke, touching the door for temperature, discussing alternate escape routes, etc.

Lockdown drills and lessons are completed per DESE regulations.

### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention:**

BSCDS observes a zero-tolerance policy with regards to bullying. We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation in our school buildings, on school grounds, in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, and extracurricular activities and parent or guardian involvement.

\*For more details, please refer to our Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy. The policy can be found on our website or may be requested via your Case Manager. The following page contains our Potential Bullying Incident Report form.



Please understand that you can contact the school administration directly by phone, email, or in-person. However, if you wish to remain anonymous, you can use this form to report an incident. Please send the form to your student program coordinator or the program director.

**Your name** (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**Your email** (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**Your phone number** (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you become aware of this incident?**

☐ I witnessed it in person ☐ I heard about it ☐ I saw it on the internet

**If you chose internet**

☐ Snapchat

☐ Instagram

☐ Facebook

☐ Twitter

☐ Other Platform \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident in as much detail as possible. Please provide names, dates, locations, and any other details that you think will help.

**Incident details**

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## PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Students are permitted the privilege of having personal technology, equipment and entertainment devices. These include but are not limited to; cell phones, iPads, and tablets. BSCDS does not assume responsibility for the care of the technology/equipment or for any damage caused to the equipment by misuse, power fluctuations, lightning, or damage by another student. The BSCDS does not assume financial responsibility for equipment that is lost, damaged or stolen.

The use of these devices is limited, and it cannot interfere with programmatic activities. This expectation has been developed to ensure those students who use such devices do so in an appropriate, approved, and safe manner. Students must understand that using these devices is a privilege and not a “right.” Failure to comply with these guidelines set forth may result in the loss of this privilege. At any time if a student uses their personal device in an unsafe, threatening, irresponsible manner or if it is interfering with progress and program access the team may determine restriction on access for that student. If a repeated concern is presented and not successfully resolved, the property may be sent home not to return.

Below are additional guidelines around specific devices, this guidance is not exhaustive and not intended to address all scenarios. Each student’s plan will be reviewed on an individual basis influenced by the success and responsibility of the student.

### STUDENT CELL PHONES

1. A student enrolled at BSCDS may have and use a cell phone at school with a parent or guardian’s permission and the full awareness of their Case Manager. A student who is their own guardian does not need outside approval for a cell phone. Any concerns regarding cell phone use must be brought to the Case Manager’s attention.
2. Students are expected to have their cell phones turned off during programmatic activities unless indicated in written guidelines provide by a member of the student’s team.
3. If a student has a cell phone allowing for texting, internet access, camera use and music BSCDS is not able to provide constant monitoring for content. BSCDS staff can address issues that are brought to their attention and will contact the parent or guardian if restrictions to cell phone use need to be made. Parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor usage at the level which they are comfortable.
4. The parent or guardian is responsible for the care and cost of any cell phone provided.
5. Use of phones deemed to be unsafe, or otherwise interfere with progress may result in the student’s team providing student specific restrictions.

### COMPUTERS

1. Any iPad, tablet, computer, peripheral, or electronic equipment brought by a student to BSCDS for use at the school must be fully accessible to be viewed by the student’s staff person.



2. Any CD-ROMs, DVDs, or other media to be used with the computer must be clearly marked as commercial products—or must be examined, approved and marked by the student's staff person.
3. The student must follow all time constraints that his/her staff may develop regarding the student's use of his/her computer or electronic equipment.
4. Any media found to contain inappropriate material (e.g., pornography, gambling, excessive violence, and/or racist material) will be confiscated and will be sent home. Any computer or electronic equipment used for these purposes may also be sent home at the discretion of the student's Team.

## **PORTABLE LISTENING DEVICES**

The primary concern for students when they use listening devices is safety. If the device is loud enough to be heard by others, the volume is loud enough to damage a student's hearing. Students will be asked to turn down the volume of the device.

1. Listening devices can be used at the following times:
  - a. During scheduled break times in the classroom or work sites;
  - b. In the vans while being transported off campus;
  - c. For behavioral and/or therapeutic reasons under specific circumstances. If used for therapeutic purposes, a student must have a written plan in his/her file specifying therapeutic use.
2. Listening devices cannot be used at the following times:
  - a. When crossing streets, the students must remove earphones from their ears;
  - b. During programmatic activities including classroom hours, vocational/work-site hours, assemblies, and when at the Health Center;
  - c. During meals;
3. Students must adhere to rating systems for (age appropriate) content. Any content that students have on their listening device that is overly violent or sexually explicit is prohibited. However, BSCDS does not have a reasonable way to enforce this and will not be responsible for reviewing the content of each student's listening device.

## **ACCESS TO INTERNET AND CUSHING WI-FI NETWORKS**

During school instruction hours students are not permitted access to internet on personal devices.

Each student using the wireless network is expected to commit to the internet safety pledge and adhere to policies. BSCDS will filter Internet content to prevent access to pornography and other material that is deemed otherwise inappropriate for minors. There is no guarantee that users will be not be able to access internet resources that are inappropriate. Students should report accidental or intentional exposure to inappropriate content to staff immediately. Access to internet may be restricted as warranted if there is perceived violations of safety standards and policies.

## ADDITIONAL KEY POLICIES

### OFF-CAMPUS VISITS

If a non-immediate family member is picking a student up, they must be listed in the student's file as an approved visitor, emergency contact or designated contact or the Case Manager must have written approval from the student's parents/guardians for the person to pick up their child.

It may be necessary to obtain a Release of Information from the parent/guardian to allow disclosure of information about the student's behavior to the person taking responsibility for that student.

A staff person must release the student to the parent/guardian or other authorized person. A student should never be picked up at the school by anyone who hasn't had contact with a staff person.

### SWIMMING POLICY (Hanover campus Pool and Off-campus Sites)

1. If a student who is admitted or on at BSCDS for a transitional visit wishes to participate in swimming, a completed/signed permission form is required from the parents/guardian of the student. A student who is 18 years old, and is his/her own guardian (even though legally able to sign his/her own permission slips, IEPs, etc.) must have a completed/signed permission form from the parent/guardian. There are no exceptions to this rule.
2. The parents/guardian of a student with a seizure condition must have the student's physician submit a signed permission form. This may be part of the annual physical examination.
3. The Health Center nurse will regularly inform the Program Director/Case Manager, in writing, of any student who may not participate in swimming due to current health concerns. The nurse will also inform staff of any medical issues of concern regarding any student participating in the swimming program.
4. A file containing emergency contact numbers and emergency medical information for all students participating in swimming will be available to staff.
5. The Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) has mandated staff-to-student ratios that must be maintained while students participate in any swimming program.
6. Prior to swimming, staff must be aware of the individual needs of their students (e.g., current seizure disorders, need for earplugs, etc.). A list of the students and their needs will be available at the Health Center.
7. A student with a history of seizures, but without documentation of seizures within six months, must wear a T-shirt.

8. A student with an active seizure disorder will wear a T-shirt or Class I, Coast Guard-approved life jacket or have no less than a 1:1 staff-to-student ratio. The staff member must be in the water and in close proximity with the student at all times.
9. All staff members involved in the Swimming Program will receive training with regard to policies and emergency procedures as required by DEEC and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).
10. In case of an emergency or crisis situation, all students are to be immediately taken out of the pool/water and directed to a location outside the pool area.
11. Staff members must be aware that their students are going into the water/pool—prior to the students going into the water/pool.
12. In addition to the Lifeguard, there must always be at least one designated staff member who is out of the pool/near the water for purposes of observing the students from pool side or at the water's edge at an off-campus site.
13. Whenever the pool is used, a certified American Red Cross Lifeguard must be present at the pool.
14. No one is to use the pool facilities alone.

## IMPORTANT RESOURCE LINKS FOR FAMILIES

### Cardinal Cushing Centers, Inc.

[www.CushingCenters.org](http://www.CushingCenters.org)

*All subject areas below are accessible from:*

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links.html>

- Disability Related Links
- Autism Blind and Visually Impaired
- Communication Impairment
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Developmental Delay
- Emotional Impairment
- Health Impairment
- Intellectual Impairment
- Neurological Impairment (including Traumatic Brain Injury)
- Physical Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Assistive Technology
- Board of Education Advisory Councils
- Global Special Education and Disabilities Sites
- Federal Sites
- Inclusive Education
- Massachusetts Approved Private Special Education Schools
- Massachusetts Educational Collaboratives
- Massachusetts State Agencies

- National Sites
- Occupational Therapy
- Section 504 and the American with Disabilities Act
- Transition

**Other Helpful Links:**

Parent Notice of Procedural Safeguards

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb>

Massachusetts Student Record Regulations 603 CMR 23.00

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23.html>.

Problem Resolution and Bureau of Special Education Appeals

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/prs/>

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/docs.html>.

Transitional Services

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition/default.html>

The IEP Process

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/proguide.pdf>