

BLIND BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENT AND FAMILY GUIDEBOOK



2017-2018

BLIND BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT AND FAMILY GUIDEBOOK

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DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The Blind Brook-Rye Schools are the cornerstone of our community. Our mission is to prepare our students to be active, lifelong learners who have the skills and confidence necessary to achieve their highest potential. We encourage our students to be curious, compassionate and strong in their ability to face challenges. We are committed to preparing our students to be reflective, adaptable citizens with an open world view. We aspire to instill integrity as a core value and to influence our students to be ethical and responsible members of society.

Blind Brook Belief Statements

1. We value the development of caring, respectful and ethical individuals and are committed to cultivating in our students an integrity that will inform their conduct in all aspects of their lives.
2. We believe that open and respectful communication between students, district employees, parents and the community will contribute to a more dynamic and effective school environment.
3. We strive to develop creative, adaptable and skillful individuals who think critically, solve problems and take leadership roles in society.
4. We believe that a physically and emotionally safe and healthy environment is essential for the growth and development of our students and employees.
5. We embrace the varied learning styles and capabilities of our students and are committed to providing diverse opportunities for them to demonstrate their gifts and maximize their potential.
6. We are committed to recruiting, developing and retaining high quality individuals to work with our students and families.
7. We believe interdisciplinary learning best promotes intellectual development, personal growth and effective communication.
8. We believe that appreciating differences fosters a common respect for each others' humanity.
9. We are committed to providing students opportunities to pursue their passions through a wide range of academic and extra & co-curricular activities.
10. We believe that access to information and proficiency in technology are essential components to teaching and learning.

Adopted by the Board of Education, 12/07

Middle School Philosophy

Early adolescence is a critical period when students make a transition from the protective environment of the elementary school to the more demanding high school setting which requires individual responsibility, emotional maturity and independent decision-making. Because the Blind Brook Middle School values the development of the whole child, the school must emphasize the balance between academic and social/emotional growth and provide opportunities for exploration and development in both. The environment will help all students develop a self-image of competence and strength, enable them to succeed in high school and beyond, and lead them to realize the importance of lifelong learning and growth.

We believe:

1. In a challenging, academically and culturally rich standards-based educational program.
2. In an environment that fosters ethical, respectful and responsible behavior in all of the members of the school community.
3. In a nurturing environment in which all students are encouraged to take risks in a safe and supportive educational structure.
4. In a community that promotes appreciation of diversity and enables all students to reach their highest potential.
5. In an environment that promotes the intellectual and personal transition from childhood to young adulthood and provides rich and varied curricular and extracurricular activities to move students from dependence to independence.
6. In a supportive climate which fosters professional and personal growth and collegial responsibility.

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS FOR 2016-17

Mr. Jeffrey Diamond, President
email: jdiamond@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020

Mr. Ryan Goldstein, Vice President
email: rgoldstein@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2019

Mr. Daniel Savitt
email: dsavitt@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2018

Ms. Jennifer Schlactus
email: jschlactus@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020

Ms. Ashley Welde
Email: awelde@blindbrook.org
Term of Office: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2018

Board Meetings

Board Workshop Sessions - The purpose of Board Workshops is to review with the Superintendent, on a regular basis, policy making matters that relate to the District’s educational services, finance administration, facilities supervision, and personnel/legal administration. Resolutions and related decisions for the Board’s public meeting the following Monday are reviewed and discussed in detail. All Board Workshops are open to the public. Public participation on agenda items is strongly encouraged for all workshop sessions. Only personnel matters and issues related to contracts, negotiations, tax certiorari and those items specifically designated by law will be reserved for executive session and the public will not participate.

Public Board Meetings - Public Board Meetings will include citizens’ comments, resolutions and items for discussion in the areas of Educational Services, Finance Administration, Personnel Administration and, where appropriate, an Attorney’s Report. A brief educational presentation, highlighting one of the several components of the district’s educational program, will be provided on a regular basis.

Meetings will be scheduled for 7:30 p.m. the third Monday of each month, unless otherwise noted.

2017-18 Board Meetings

<p align="center">ALL MEETINGS HELD AT BLIND BROOK MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL IN THE LIBRARY AND WILL BEGIN AT 7:30 PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE 2017-2018 Presentations are listed in red</p>	
DAY	MEETING
Thursday, July 6	Reorganization / Regular Meeting - 6:30 PM 2016-2017 Goals Review
Tuesday, July 25	Board Retreat
Monday, August 14	Regular Meeting - 6:30 PM Construction Update Bond Resolution Discussion
Monday, September 11	Board Workshop 2017-2018 Goals Discussion Bond Vote Presentation #1
Monday, September 25	Regular Meeting Bond Vote Presentation #2
Monday, October 16	Board Workshop External Audit Report

Tuesday, October 17	Bond Vote
Monday, November 6	Regular Meeting Assessments
Monday, November 20	Board Workshop STEAM Update
Monday, December 11	Regular Meeting Technology Update
Monday, January 8	Board Workshop Pupil Services Update
Tuesday, January 22	Regular Meeting MS/HS Scheduling Update
Monday, February 12	Board Workshop: Supt's 2018-19 Proposed Budget BBHS Auditorium
Saturday, March 3	Board Workshop/Community Budget Discussion Budget Discussion
Monday, March 5	Community Budget Discussion Health Education & Physical Education Update
Monday, March 19	Regular Meeting Budget Discussion
Monday, April 9	Board Workshop Budget Discussion
Tuesday, April 17	Regular Meeting/2018-2019 Budget Adoption Student Projects Presentation
Tuesday, May 1	Candidate's Night
Monday, May 7	Budget Hearing 2018-2019 Budget Update
Monday, May 14	Regular Meeting College Acceptances Update
Tuesday, May 15	Annual Election & Budget Vote
Monday, June 4	Regular Meeting Project-Based Learning Discussion
Monday, June 11	Regular Meeting Celebration of Teaching

390 North Ridge Street • Rye Brook, NY 10573
Phone: 914-937-3600 • Fax: 914-937-5871

ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES AND PERSONNEL

Principal

The Principal, Mr. Todd A. Richard, is responsible for all aspects of the middle school operation, including curriculum, personnel, and student and parent affairs. The MS Assistant Principal, Mrs. Fredericka Butler will provide additional supervision in the building and assist the Principal with administrative responsibilities.

School Counselors

The middle school counselors are responsible for all aspects of the guidance program in grades 6-8. The counselor's' function is to assist students with academic and personal concerns. It is their goal to help students realize their academic potential and make informed decisions regarding their studies. Another goal is to help students explore options available to resolve personal and social issues. Students are encouraged to visit the Guidance Office to make individual counseling appointments. Parents may make appointments to discuss any concerns they may have by calling the counselor's office at x3210 (Mrs. Arzt - grade 6) or x 3132 (Ms. Sosnow - grades 7 and 8).

WORKING PAPERS: Working papers may be secured through the BBHS Guidance Office. See the high school guidance secretary, Grace Carroll, for the proper information and forms (x3130).

School Psychologist

Ms. Carrie Merlo, the School Psychologist, works closely with the school counselors to assist students with their academic and personal needs, and is responsible for all individual psychological testing. The School Psychologist also provides confidential counseling for students experiencing personal problems and interpersonal difficulties at school or elsewhere. Ms. Merlo has expertise in memory and learning issues, child development, social skills, developmental disabilities, and childhood disorders, including those that impact mood and behavior. Ms. Merlo is available to provide individual or group counseling, to refer students to outside agencies or to provide parent consultations. She can be reached at ext. 3155.

School Social Worker

Ms. Rachel Mileo, the School Social Worker, works closely with the school counselors to assist students with their academic and personal needs. The School Social Worker also provides confidential counseling for students experiencing personal problems, such as drug and alcohol issues or interpersonal difficulties at school or elsewhere. Ms. Mileo is available to provide individual or group counseling, to refer students to outside agencies or to provide parent consultations. She can be reached at ext. 3211.

Director of Pupil Services

Mr. Harry Burg, the Director of Pupil Services, can be reached at ext. 3033. The Assistant Director of Pupil Services is Ilana Sitcoff. She can be reached at ext. 3097.

Director of Physical Education, Health and Interscholastic Athletics

Mr. Douglas Goldman is responsible for all aspects of the district's Physical Education, Health Education and Interscholastic Athletics programs including developing and evaluating the department's academic program and budget, program management, hiring and evaluation of coaches, team scheduling, and student selection and discipline. He can be reached at ext. 3118.

School Nurse

The school nurse, Gerilyn Park, is responsible for all matters relating to individual student health issues, including verifying medical excuses, monitoring individual student health matters, emergency intervention, and special programs related to student health. She can be reached at ext. 3139.

Student Assistance Services

Monique Tricarico, Youth Prevention Specialist, meets with 7th and 8th grade students for education and prevention activities to correct erroneous perceptions about substance use and to teach students skills to identify and resist social and situational pressures to use substances. Parent meetings corresponding to our prevention program will also be offered. Mrs. Tricarico will be available to see students who are using substances, gambling or have peer, school or family issues that could increase their risk of using substances including involvement in bullying situations. She can be reached at ext. 3144. All calls will be kept confidential.

Department Coordinators

Department Coordinators assume the instructional and curricular leadership of the department. They are also responsible for the routine management of the school's academic departments, for assisting in developing the academic schedule, and for the development and evaluation of each department's academic program and budget.

English - J. Ambrosio, x 3412

Social Studies - M. Greenwald, x 3253

Math - M. McCarvill, x 3165

Science - S. Horowitz, x 3254

Special Education - P. Weistrop, x3222

World Languages - Christina Sabatella, x 3158
Madeline Salvatore, x 3163

Faculty and Staff Members

English

Richard Donoghue
Lisa Fellin
Toni Messina
Abby Schwittek
Sandra Stevens
Cher Treacy

Social Studies

Ellen Boutis
Jonathan Dakers
Mark Greenwald
Michael Lombardi

Mathematics Department

Elizabeth Connolly
Alessandra Tamburro
James Tamucci

World Languages

Matthew Castelli
Joanna Hellman
Danielle Palmiotto

Science

Molly Harrington
Seth Horowitz
Cathy Schaefer
Samantha Sofer

Phys. Ed./Health

Nazareth Flory
Lauren Murphy
Kacie Schulman

Unified Arts

Steven Giglio (Technology)
 Kaitlin Lazere (General Music)
 Jane Romm (FACS)
 Terry Saglibene (Art)
 Samantha Sofer (Technology)
 Andre Soto (Computer Education)
 Donald Whitman (Instrumental Music)

School Psychologist

Carrie Merlo

School Social Worker

Rachel Mileo

Special Education

Jaci Barrett
 Jennifer Castelli
 Melissa Daly
 Nancy Knabl
 Brian Lazere
 Penny Weistrop

Library Media Specialist

Tracey Wong

6TH Grade

Jon Dakers, Social Studies
 Geri Fisher, Math
 Sanchita Krishna, Science
 Toni Messina, ELA
 Tom Pesce, ELA & Math
 Sandra Stevens, ELA

School Counselors

Amanda Arzt (Gr.6)
 Elise Sosnow (Gr.7/8)

School Related Staff

Lori Paisley	(Secretary to Principal)
Amrita Dhanoa	(Nurse)
Luis Rodriguez	(Head Custodian)
Deirdre Smithies	(Attendance)
Don Ahrenberg	(Security Officer)
Joe Funigiello	(Security Officer)
Gary Liebstein	(Security Officer)
Denise Longua	(Security Officer)
William Santoro	(Security Officer)
Marnita Brown	(Library Clerk)

Full time and Part Time Teacher Aides and Assistants

BASIC INFORMATION

BLIND BROOK-RYE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT CALENDAR FOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE 2017-2018

FINAL

Aug					September					October					November					December									
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F					
28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31									
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30																	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31																							

January					February					March					April									
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F					
1	2	3	4	5				1	2				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	16	17	18	19	20	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31			26	27	28			26	27	28	29	30	30					30				

May					June				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4					1
7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30	31		25	26	27	28	29

UNUSED SNOW DAYS

*If 3 days remain no school on May 24, May 25, and May 29
If 2 days remain no school on May 24 and May 25
If 1 day remains no school on May 25*

NOTE: Snow days are included in the total of days of Attendance (Teacher & Student).

Should additional make up days be needed for snow days, April 6, 5 and 4 will be used respectively in that order.

2017-2018 Days of Attendance

Month	Teacher	Student
August	+2	0
September	17	17
October	21	21
November	19	19
December	16	16
January	21	21
February	15	15
March	21	21
April	16	16
May	22	22
June	16	16
	184+2	184

2017-2018 KEY DATES

August 28-29	New Teacher University
August 30	Superintendent's Conference Day
August 31	Superintendent's Conference Day
September 4	Labor Day
September 5	1 st Day of School for Students
September 21-22	Rosh Hashanah
October 9	Columbus Day
November 7	Early Dismissal: MS/HS - 11:15AM PRSS - 12:00PM
One-half Supt Conference Day	
November 10	Veteran's Day
November 23-24	Thanksgiving Recess
December 25-29	Christmas/New Year's Recess
January 1	New Year's Day
January 2	Schools Open
January 15	Martin Luther King Day
February 19-23	Winter Recess
February 26	Schools Open
March 16	Early Dismissal: MS/HS - 11:15AM PRSS - 12:00PM
One-half Supt Conference Day	
March 30	Spring Recess Begins
April 2-6	Spring Recess
May 28	Memorial Day
June 14-22	Regents Exams
June 22	Last Day of School

Policy on Religious Observance

The Board of Education recognizes that school will occasionally be in session on days during which students and their families must be absent to practice their religious beliefs. Accordingly, the Board of Education directs the faculty and staff to make every effort to facilitate the exercise of students' religious beliefs without placing them in a compromising position relative to school-based academic and other expectations.

When a student and/or his/her family notifies the school that a student will be absent for religious reasons, the school will make accommodations in testing and test review procedures on a case by case basis. These accommodations may include rescheduling a specific test for an individual student, providing notes or tape recordings of review sessions, providing make-up review sessions, and the like.

School Hours and Daily Schedule

The regular school day at Blind Brook Middle School is from 7:50am until 2:40pm. It consists of nine 40-minute instructional periods including a lunch period. An Activity Period is scheduled every day from 2:20 to 2:40pm.

Our interscholastic athletic program begins at 3:15pm and our detention is held before school at 7:10am.

Bell Schedule

First Bell	7:45
Homeroom	7:50 - 7:53
1 st Period	7:53 - 8:33
2 nd Period	8:36 - 9:16
3 rd Period	9:19 - 9:59
4 th Period	10:02 - 10:42
5 th Period	10:45 - 11:25
6 th Period	11:28 - 12:08
7 th Period	12:11 - 12:51
8 th Period	12:54 - 1:34
9 th Period	1:37 - 2:17
Activity Period	2:20 - 2:40

1-Hour Delay Schedule

First Bell	8:45
Homeroom	8:50 - 8:52
1 st Period	8:52 - 9:28
2 nd Period	9:31 - 10:07
3 rd Period	10:10 - 10:46
4 th Period	10:49 - 11:25
5 th Period	11:28 - 12:04
6 th Period	12:07 - 12:43
7 th Period	12:46 - 1:22
8 th Period	1:25 - 2:01
9 th Period	2:04 - 2:40
Activity Period	No activity period

2-Hour Delay Schedule

First Bell	9:45
Homeroom	9:50 - 9:56
1 st Period	9:56 - 10:25
2 nd Period	10:28 - 10:57
3 rd Period	11:00 - 11:29
5 th Period	11:32 - 12:01
6 th Period	12:04 - 12:33
7 th Period	12:36 - 1:05
8 th Period	1:08 - 1:37
9 th Period	1:40 - 2:09
4 th Period	2:11 - 2:40
Activity Period	No activity period

3-Hour Delay Schedule

First Bell	10:45
Homeroom	10:50 - 10:52
1 st Period	10:52 - 11:14
2 nd Period	11:17 - 11:39
5 th Period	11:42 - 12:06
6 th Period	12:09 - 12:33
7 th Period	12:36 - 1:00
8 th Period	1:03 - 1:25
9 th Period	1:28 - 1:50
3 rd Period	1:53 - 2:15
4 th Period	2:18 - 2:40
Activity Period	No activity period

Opportunities for Students to Work with Teachers

Going to teachers for support, extra help, to make up work and other reasons is essential to academic success in middle school. Middle school students have two opportunities every day to work with their own teachers. These are:

“Triple A”: Triple A means Teachers Available for Academic Assistance. This help is available to students during lunch periods. Students must get passes from teachers prior to lunch in order to sign out of the cafeteria. Typically, students eat lunch for 20 minutes and go to teachers for the remaining 20 minutes of the 40-minute lunch period. This is a quiet and focused time for students to receive support and assistance from academic teachers.

Activity Period: 6th, 7th and 8th graders have assigned classroom locations for this time of day which is from 2:20-2:40 pm. However, they may access other academic teachers for help if needed once attendance is taken. Activity periods will also be utilized for advisory discussions and activities related to Character Education.

Please note: **If students are instructed by a teacher to report at a certain time for academic assistance and they ignore the instruction, a disciplinary referral can be written.** Many students choose to go to teachers during these times of day. However, if

a student is specifically told to report for a certain reason, he or she must show up as instructed by the teacher.

Reporting Student Absences

Parents/Guardians are required to call the Attendance Office at ext. 3145 by **10:00 am** if their child is absent from school. Students who enter school after the first bell (with a note from their parent) must sign in at the Security Desk where they will be given a pass to class. Students without a note must sign in with Security and report to the middle school main office for a pass to class.

Health Office Procedures

The nurse's office is located on the first floor across from the high school main office. The nurse is on duty between the hours of 7:50am and 3:00pm to assist students with health related issues.

Health Problems: Parents of students with health problems should inform the school nurse at the beginning of the school term or when such problems arise. Special problems include vision, hearing, diabetes, epilepsy, rheumatic fever, recent surgery, medication or anything that might impact students' activities at school.

Sports Physicals

New York State law requires that each student participating in an interscholastic activity must have a physical which must be conducted by one of the school's doctors. Physicals are done during the school day or students may make appointments with the school's doctors at other times by calling: Dr. Linda Silberstein (937-3434) or Dr. Jonathan Herbst (937-3999). Students who see either doctor at any time other than scheduled school appointments are responsible for payment directly to the School Physician at the time of exam.

Use of Medication

New York State law prescribes specific guidelines for the legitimate use of medication by students in school. Our procedures for the administration of internal medication to students during school hours are as follows:

1. The school nurse must have on file a written request from the family physician indicating the frequency and dosage of a prescribed medication and a written request from the parent to administer the medication as specified by the family physician.
2. The labeled medication should be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent.

In the event of illness or accident, school personnel will give emergency care only. Parents are responsible for any additional care needed.

Procedure When a Student is Ill during School Hours

When a student is ill during the school day, he/she must obtain permission from the teacher to go to the Health Office.. No student may leave school grounds for illness unless excused by the nurse. Students may refer themselves to the nurse between classes.

Accidents

Every accident in the school building, on the school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any athletic event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the person in charge, to the school nurse, and to the administration.

Emergency Regulations Related to Child Abuse Hotline

Effective January 17, 2017, Section 409-l of the Education Law, was adopted and requires that all public school districts post the toll-free telephone number (1-800-342-3720) of the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to receive reports of child abuse or neglect, along with directions for accessing the OCFS website at in English and in Spanish.

Additionally, on January 25, 2017, the Commissioner added new emergency Regulations in compliance with Section 409-l which require that Districts:

- (1) Post such information on the district and/or school's web-site(s), if such a website exists; and
- (2) Post such information in highly-visible areas of school buildings; and
- (3) Make such information available at the district and school building-level administrative offices, where applicable; and
- (4) Providing such information to parents and persons in parental relation at least once per school year in a manner as determined by the school, including, but not limited to, through electronic communication and/or sending such information home with students; and
- (5) Provide each teacher and administrator in the school with such information.

Emergency School Closings

In accordance with regulations of the Commissioner of Education, the district has developed an Emergency Management Plan to safeguard the safety and health of students and staff, as well as district property, in the event of a true emergency.

Each year, the school will stage a “test” or drill of the Emergency Plan, including practice in sheltering students and staff, or an early dismissal at a time not more than 15 minutes earlier than the normal dismissal time. Parents/guardians will be informed of any such “test” at least one week prior to the drill.

The Superintendent of Schools may close the schools or dismiss students/staff early when hazardous weather or other emergencies threaten health or safety. Parents are requested to avoid calling schools on days of poor weather, as it is important to keep school phone lines open. School closing and delayed starting times will be announced over local radio stations. The following radio stations will carry information regarding emergency closings:

WFAS - AM 1230kh

WGCH - AM 1490kh

WHUD - FM 100.7mh

In addition, an email blast will be sent by the District whenever possible.

Evacuation and Lockdown Drills

The Principal and Assistant Principal are responsible for conducting evacuation and lockdown drills in order to instruct students and staff in exiting the school building during an emergency in the shortest time possible and without confusion and panic. Evacuation and lockdown drills will include instruction on exits and alarm boxes, as well as drill procedures. Schools are required to conduct eight evacuation drills and four lockdown drills every year. Most are unannounced in order to provide meaningful practice.

All students are expected to cooperate with staff members during evacuation drills, and to leave the buildings in a quiet and orderly manner. The exit route is posted in each room. Students must stay with their teacher. Distracting behavior will be subject to either teacher or administrative disciplinary action, according to the Discipline Code.

Messages to Students

We ask that parents minimize the number of messages they leave for students. Of course, if there is an urgent need to relay a message to a student, parents may call the Middle School office at ext. 3119.

PARENTS SHOULD NOT TEXT OR CALL STUDENTS ON CELL PHONES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY. STUDENT PHONES ARE TURNED OFF AND IN THEIR LOCKERS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.

Copy Machine

A copy machine is located in the library for student use. Students are NOT permitted access to office copy machines.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found is located in the main office and in front of the middle school cafeteria. Please inquire at the main office when personal belongings are lost.

Use of School Elevator

The school elevator is only available to students and teachers by prior arrangement and for special circumstances.

Bicycle Rack

There is a bicycle rack at the front of the school to the left of the entrance for students who wish to ride their bikes to school. Students are expected to provide and use their own locks to secure their bicycles.

Eligibility Requirements for Transportation

Transportation will be provided for all resident children who legally attend public, private or parochial school from 1.5 to 15 miles from their homes, as required by State Education Law. Any pupil in middle school will be eligible if he or she lives more than 1.5 miles from the school.

Any resident now living in the district who applies on or before April 1 of each year will be provided with transportation. The District will accept late applications if a reasonable explanation is provided, as required by law. New residents will need certified proof of the date of residence and will be provided transportation only if applications are filed within 30 days after moving into the district, and in accordance with Chapter 3635 of the New York State Education Law.

School Bus Scheduling and Routing

Bus routes will be established under the direction of the Superintendent in cooperation with the district administrator overseeing transportation.

Authorized bus stops will be located at convenient intervals in places where students may board and disembark, cross highways, and await the arrival of buses with the utmost safety allowed by road conditions.

Fixed bus stops will be established using the following guidelines:

1. Numbers of students at bus stops will be varied according to the concentration of riders in an area, the degree of traffic, and bus turnaround requirements.
2. An effort will be made to minimize crossing of the road by students.
3. Private Roads: Transportation will not be provided on highways that have not been dedicated and/or maintained by town, county, and/or state highway departments.
4. Turn-arounds will not be established unless adequate space is available and this space is properly maintained. No turn-around will be permitted if it requires the bus being backed up to make the turn.
5. A District map will be used in determining the transportation requirements necessary to satisfy the needs established by state law, Board policy and voter mandate. This map will clearly show student location, loading and unloading locations, and routes traveled. The map will be reviewed annually.

BUILDING PROCEDURES

Food and Drink

Food and drink may NOT be consumed out of the cafeteria unless special permission has been given by the Administration. Eating and drinking anything but bottled water is prohibited in hallways and classrooms. Students may bring bottled water only to classes. Students with special dietary needs must obtain permission from the nurse to consume food and drink outside the cafeteria. MS students are not allowed to order food to be delivered to the school, e.g., pizza, Chinese food, etc.

Students may not bring peanuts, peanut butter or any other nut products to school or school events.

The MS cafeteria and Commons must be kept clean at all times. Students are members of the school community and have a role in maintaining the facilities. Students are expected to work cooperatively with their tablemates to leave a clean table at the end of lunch. Lack of cooperation or disrespect for the lunch monitors will result in disciplinary consequences.

Off Campus Privileges

Middle school students are NOT permitted to leave the school campus during the academic day unless signed out by a parent or guardian.

Prohibited and Electronic Devices

Any equipment that interferes with the educational environment is not permitted in the school building or on the school grounds at any time. The following items are specifically not permitted in the middle school: skateboards, rollerblades, playing cards, laser pens, rollers on shoes, and any item (toys, etc.) that resemble a weapon of any kind. This list is not exclusive and any other item that is unsafe or disruptive to the educational process will be prohibited. Students bring personal possessions to school at their own risk. Lockers should be kept locked at all times

Cell Phones/Ipods

If a student brings a cell phone or Ipod to school, the following rules apply:

- The item must be OFF and IN YOUR LOCKER during the school day, which includes lunch and Activity Period.
- Cell phones and Ipods that are visible, audible or otherwise in use during the school day will be confiscated for student pick-up at the end of the day. A detention is assigned for the second offense. The third and subsequent offenses will require the parents to pick-up the item at school and appropriate disciplinary consequences including further detentions.

- The school is NOT responsible for lost or stolen cell phones and Ipods.

Cameras/Recording Devices

May only be used with prior approval of the Administration.

Hats

Wearing hats is prohibited, unless extenuating circumstances.

Party Souvenir Clothing

Shirts and other clothing items which are given at bar and bat mitzvahs, confirmation or other parties are discouraged at the middle school because they highlight divisions between friend groups and heighten the anxiety of young adolescents about social issues. Wearing this party clothing to school is a student/parent decision, but we hope that all understand the negative effects of such traditions on the environment of our middle school.

Backpacks and Tote Bags

Backpacks may be brought to and from school, but must be stored in lockers during the day. Tote bags may be used by all students to carry books around the building during the school day. Students may visit lockers as often as they wish. Most students go to lockers four times per day: before classes, before and after lunch, and at the end of the day.

Care of Textbooks and Uniforms

Students are issued required textbooks and team uniforms. Students are held strictly accountable for the care of books and team uniforms issued to them and are charged the full replacement value for damage or loss.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Introduction

BBMS recognizes that homework is an important part of academic growth in middle school. It has the potential to affirm the learning partnership among students, teachers, and parents/guardians. We believe that family and leisure activities are important as well and the amount and type of homework should reflect this belief. We acknowledge individual student differences in ability, achievement levels, and needs, and that some students may take more or less time to complete assignments. The purpose of this homework policy is to guide teachers, parents/guardians, and students in ensuring that homework is meaningful and supports the learning experience for all students.

Definition of Homework

Homework is any activity or assignment directed by the teacher to be performed outside the classroom that may include, but not limited to, practicing skills learned in class, gaining knowledge for the following day's lesson, reading, studying, projects, research, or completion of assignments. Short term assignments are defined as class work that is finished at home or work due 1-2 school days after assigned. Long term assignments are generally more project based assignments and exceed the 1-2 school day duration of short term assignments.

Purpose of Homework

BBMS recognizes the importance of assigning meaningful and quality homework to students. The purpose of homework is to promote mastery of skills and concepts taught during classroom instruction. Homework provides excellent opportunities for helping students to self assess their understanding of concepts, developing good study habits, teaching students to budget time, acknowledging individual differences and abilities, and encouraging self-initiative on the part of the student. All students should be in the habit of doing some homework every school evening. Homework fosters student achievement, independence and responsibility, and serves as a vital link between school and home. The following bullets summarize the various purposes of homework:

- To give students a chance to review and practice what they have learned
- To prepare students for the next day's lesson
- To reinforce and extend concepts introduced in class
- To help students self assess
- To activate prior knowledge and assess student understanding
- To allow parents/guardians to monitor student progress and gain insight as to what is being taught in the classroom
- To allow for more in-depth exploration of topics than is possible during class time
- To help students develop time management skills, study skills, organizational skills and self reliance

Assignment of Homework

Long-term assignments and tests should be coordinated among departments, whenever possible. The assignment and coordination of homework for each course shall be the responsibility of the teacher. Teachers are encouraged to assign homework that adapts to the maturity and learning needs of individual students, and to provide a balance between long-range and short-term assignments. Homework should be a properly planned part of the curriculum extending and reinforcing the learning experiences of the school. It should be reviewed with the class or answers posted so students have specific feedback on their work. General study skills and specific study skills for each discipline should be taught by the teacher.

Quantity of Homework

The district's goals, consistent with New York State Regents Standards for Education, require students to assume increased responsibility for their assignments as they progress in school. Homework assignments, given at all grade levels, reflect the increased instructional demands students encounter as they proceed through school. Homework may be assigned every school night and the time allotted will increase gradually from grade to grade. Teachers will set forth homework expectations at the beginning of the year in their course syllabus.

There are variations in the amount of time each child will spend on homework as each child will address homework assignments at different rates. Certain 8th grade classes/programs, such as Regents Algebra, Regents Earth Science, and Level 1 World Language classes, may have additional homework requirements as they are considered high school classes.

In addition to homework, all children in the district are urged to read at home for 20 minutes daily.

Research has shown that children who read for 20 minutes daily outperform those who do not. Experience has shown us that this amount of daily reading practice allows all of our students to become the best readers and writers they can be. It is recommended that children read to or with their parents/guardians, as well as independently.

Special Education Pupils

Classified pupils in special education or mainstreamed classes will receive homework based upon the modifications noted within their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The special and individual needs of these pupils will dictate the amount and structure of their homework assignments. The special education instructional staff is available to assist mainstream teachers regarding individual pupils' assignments.

Student Responsibilities

- Apply each teacher's guidelines for homework and study skills to your classes
- Know the assignment for each course, each day and be able to find assignments if absent from class
- Be aware of the importance of homework
- Ensure homework is completed to the best of his/her ability and with academic integrity
- Complete homework in the given time frame
- Manage time on projects and studying
- Ask for assistance from teachers, classmates, and parents/guardians as needed
- Make up work from class absence in a timely manner
- Take initiative by reaching out to teachers when unclear about a homework assignment/task

Parental Responsibilities

Parents are expected to encourage completion of homework, monitor assignments and provide conditions that are conducive to their successful completion. As homework is an integral part of a child's education success, parents are important in establishing positive attitudes, good study habits and supporting students' success with homework. Parents are encouraged to:

- Show interest in schoolwork their children bring home
- Provide a suitable place to study, free from disturbances/distractions
- Supply needed materials for completing homework
- Offer to clarify instructions
- Ensure that work is completed when notified that student is not completing homework
- Encourage their children to do their best work and praise them for their efforts
- Assist children with their management of time
- Monitor the television, Internet, and digital device use of their children
- Stay in close communication with teachers
- Acknowledge errors but refrain from doing the work for the child
- Encourage students to seek extra help at school when having difficulty

Notify the teacher if:

1. the child experiences extreme difficulty with the homework and/or takes an excessive amount of time

2. materials are unavailable
3. a situation in the family's personal life conflicts with homework
4. the child's uninterrupted time spent on homework regularly exceeds the expected amount of time
5. the student is participating in non-school sponsored academic intervention

Teacher Responsibilities

- Assign relevant, challenging, and meaningful homework
- Posting homework online and notifying parents and students how to access the assignment.
- Provide students with information on general study skills and study skills that are relevant to the specific discipline
- Give clear instructions and ensure students understand the expectations, including how homework will be assessed
- When study guides and/or review packets are provided, they should be provided with enough time for students to get feedback or ask questions about the material
- Long term assignments have check-ins that are appropriate for the developmental stage of the students.
- Offer assistance when needed (AAA or Activity period)
- Provide verbal or written feedback to students as promptly as possible
- Maintain homework records and communicate with parents/guardians promptly if homework completion or effort begins to negatively impact the grade, or after two assignments are missed in any given quarter.
- Discuss in Team Meetings to ensure the amount of homework assigned is reasonable, taking into account competing home obligations, extracurricular activities, and homework or assessments planned or assigned by other teachers

Religious Observance, Extended Absences, State and Local Testing, and Vacation

The Blind Brook School District recognizes the diversity of families in the community and honor family experiences outside school. The frequency and appropriateness of homework shall be planned carefully and evaluated periodically by site administration and leadership teams. In addition, consideration shall be given to homework assignments with respect to the occurrence of religious holidays, extended absences, State and local testing, and school vacation as noted in the school calendar.

Parents or students may request that assigned work be sent home after a student's absence of three or more days by contacting the student's guidance counselor.

Homework assignments are generally not assigned over school breaks. Long-term assignments occurring over the course of school vacations shall be assigned no later than one week prior to the vacation or due no earlier than one week after the vacation. In the case of short-term assignments, the assignment shall provide the number of days before or after the vacation equal to the length of days expected to be needed to complete the assignment. Long term assignments and tests should be coordinated among departments, whenever possible.

Students with long-term or extended excused absences shall be given the same number of days to

make up the work. In extenuating circumstances, additional time may be granted. Parents who anticipate an extended excused absence are expected to communicate with their child's teacher about the assignments that may be required during the absence. Excused absences are those absences attributable to:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Sickness | Dental and medical appointments |
| Sickness or death in family | Required attendance in court |
| Religious holidays | School related activities |

All other absences are unexcused. Teachers are not obligated to provide make-up tests or accept homework or other assignments from students who have missed class due to an unexcused absence.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Retention/Summer School Policy

The Blind Brook Middle School faculty believes it is impossible for students to succeed in sequential courses without first mastering the beginning levels. This belief is supported by the New York State Learning Standards that require a solid foundation in basic skills and a comprehensive understanding of subject matter prior to graduation from high school. Every attempt will be made by the middle school staff to prevent student failure. However, failure occasionally occurs. It is the preference of the middle school for any student who may fail to make up the course(s) during summer school or by individual tutoring so that those students may remain on a par with their classmates.

More specifically, a student who, in a given year, fails a course required by State law or commissioner's regulation must exercise one of the three following options:

- Attend and successfully pass an equivalent course in a Blind Brook approved summer school.
- Receive 30 hours of tutoring during the summer by a teacher certified in the subject being taught and approved by Blind Brook (with the district syllabus), and pass a final examination prepared by or approved by the school. The teacher will provide documentation for all the work done in the course.
- Families are financially responsible for expenses incurred for summer school or tutoring.
- Repeat the course during the following year although this may limit the student's choices of other courses.

When circumstances warrant and scheduling options permit, the student will be scheduled as well in the next class in the sequence. If the student is successful in this next course, at the end of the first semester and upon the recommendation of its teacher, the student will be released from attendance at the lower level course.

A student who, in a given year, fails two courses required by State law or commissioner's regulation must exercise one of the three following options:

- Attend and successfully pass an equivalent course in an approved summer school
- Receive 30 hours of tutoring during the summer by a teacher certified in the subject being taught and approved by Blind Brook (with the district syllabus), and pass a final examination prepared by or approved by the school. The teacher will provide documentation for all the work done in the course.

- Families are financially responsible for expenses incurred for summer school or tutoring.
- Repeat the two courses failed during the following year, which will limit the student's choices of other courses. When circumstances warrant and scheduling options permit, the student will be scheduled as well in the next class in the sequence. If the student is successful in this course, at the end of the first semester and upon the recommendation of its teacher, the student will be released from attendance at the lower level course. The principal has the option of waiving a non-academic course so the two levels of the same course can be accommodated for one semester.

A student who fails summer school or the tutoring experience must repeat the course.

A student who fails three or more such courses will be retained in grade. This decision may be appealed to the principal in writing by the student or his/her parents within ten working days of notification of the failure. Such an appeal must state the reasons for not retaining the student. The principal, after consultation with appropriate school personnel (teacher, counselor, department coordinator, CSE chairperson), will render a final determination within ten working days of receipt of the appeal. Student records will reflect both summer school grades and grades earned during the year.

Middle School Math Placement Policy

Seventh grade students have been placed in their Math 7 courses based on the results of the Math 6 placement criteria. These criteria include the results of the end of year placement test, the final course grade in Math 6, a Math 6 student behaviors rubric, and New York State Test results.

The progress of all students in the accelerated program will be monitored carefully. The teacher, math coordinator, and school counselor will review student grades at the end of each marking period. If a student is not performing up to accelerated math standards by achieving at least a B-, the principal, teacher, coordinator, and counselor will meet with the student and a parent(s). At that point the staff may recommend that the student transfer from the accelerated to the regular math class. However, it will be the family's decision to have the student transfer or stay in the accelerated class. A copy of the math department's recommendation will be placed in the student's file.

The progress of all students in the regular program will also be monitored carefully by the mathematics department. Any seventh grade student who satisfies the following criteria may be recommended for transfer into the accelerated math program on a trial basis and given assistance in catching up to the class. This will be done at the end of the first and second quarters, and again in June, at the end of seventh grade.

- A course grade of A for each marking period
- A standardized test score history that indicates strong math aptitude
- Demonstration of the proper work habits needed for success in the accelerated program, including coming to class prepared, participating in class discussions and activities, being able to work cooperatively with classmates, and respecting classmates' right to learn in a positive environment
- The recommendation of the Math 7 teacher
- A student who wishes to transfer into 8th Grade Accelerated Math from Math 7 must take a Blind Brook designed exam during the intervening summer that covers the accelerated math 7 curriculum. The student must score of at least 83% on this exam.

Students will not be transferred from regular Math 8 to accelerated Math 8 once the school year has begun. Accelerated Math 8 students will take the Integrated Algebra Regents at the end of the year.

No student will be moved into an accelerated class if the class is already at maximum capacity.

Academic Intervention Services (AIS)

AIS has been mandated by the State [100.1(g)] to help students achieve the State learning standards. The services include additional instruction that supplements the general curriculum and provides students with the skills they need to be successful in school. The intensity of such services will vary depending on the needs of the individual student. The services should be designed to respond to student needs as indicated through the results on State assessments and/or the District approved criteria at each grade level. At Blind Brook Middle School additional instruction means the provision of extra time for focused instruction and, for some students, increased student-teacher instructional contact time designed to help students achieve State learning standards. Academic Intervention Services shall be made available to students with disabilities on the same basis as non-disabled students, provided however, that such services shall be made available to the extent consistent with students' individualized education plans.

- Academic Intervention in English Language Arts: this is provided for many students in addition to those who need the support in Writing Workshop at each grade level. Writing Workshop is a place where students can bring writing assignments they are working on in any subject area class and get help on the assignment and writing instruction from an ELA teacher.
- Academic Intervention in Mathematics: a section of AIS math, taught by one of our math teachers, is offered at each grade level. Students who need extra help in math get additional support with the day's work in class and additional instruction on math concepts.

ESL/ELL

English as a New Language (ENL) is a specially designed program for students who have limited English proficiency (LEP). Any student whose first language is not English and who has not yet developed the English language proficiency needed for social and academic success in our school is eligible for the program. Proficiency is determined by an evaluative process approved by the State Education Department.

Reporting Student Progress

Blind Brook Middle School employs a variety of methods to inform students and parents of student progress in a class. The school recognizes that reporting of a simple letter-grade on a quarterly basis is inadequate if the goal is to provide helpful information that will lead to improvement of student performance. For this reason, the school supplements Quarterly Report Cards with Progress Reports, parent conferences, and teacher contact and communication via phone or email. Effective and timely home school communication is most important in your child's success in school. If you have any questions about your child's progress, please contact his/her teacher or school counselor.

Report Cards

A report card is issued at the end of each quarter, i.e., every ten weeks. Grades are simply reported as:

A+	=	97-100	-	4.00	(for 8th Grade Regents classes only)
A	=	93-100	-	4.00	
A -	=	90-92	-	3.67	
B+	=	87-89	-	3.33	
B	=	83-86	-	3.00	

B-	=	80-82	-	2.67
C+	=	77-79	-	2.33
C	=	73-76	-	2.00
C-	=	70-72	-	1.50
D	=	65-69	-	1.00
F	=	55-64		

Progress Reports

The Progress Report is an important part of the school's reporting to parents, as it is an evaluation of the student's learning style and ability in such varied categories as writing skills, vocabulary, critical analysis, classroom participation, depth of understanding, homework, and participation. A careful reading of this report can be helpful in assessing the student's overall strengths and areas in need of improvement.

Progress Reports are issued for all students at the midpoint of each marking period. Progress reports are posted on the Parent Portal and mailed only upon parental request.

Standardized Testing

As part of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal legislation, Blind Brook participates in the comprehensive New York State testing program.

1. The English Language Arts Assessment is administered to grades 6-8.
2. The Mathematics Assessment is administered to grades 6-8.
3. The NYS Science Test is administered to some students in 8th grade.

The results of these tests are important to individual students and may determine placement in AIS. Data is also used to analyze the effectiveness of the district's programs in meeting State learning standards.

Homebound Instruction

Tutors shall be employed, as determined by the Superintendent, on an hourly basis, upon certification by a physician that a student will be absent for an extended period of time. Where, in the District's judgment, a student shall be eligible for homebound instruction, middle school students (6-8) will receive ten hours of instruction per week.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Peer Tutoring Program

Middle School students are able to receive extra help in their course work from high school student tutors who volunteer to tutor a student at least once a week, usually during Activity Period. A student may be referred for a peer tutor by his/her teacher or counselor, or the student may request a tutor. For information, contact Elise Sosnow at x 3132.

School Meetings/Assemblies

Occasionally, the entire middle school faculty and student body gathers for class meetings, special programs, or assemblies. These are an important part of students' educational experience. All students are required to be present at these meetings.

Instructional Media Center (IMC)/Library

Hours of Operation

7:30am-3:30pm school days, Monday through Friday except when reserved for testing and other special events.

Facility Use

The Instructional Media Center provides a quiet place for research, reading and small-group work. The following expectations are in place:

- Students will work quietly and productively;
- Students will respect the right of others to work undisturbed'
- No food is permitted in the library;
- Only water in tightly closable containers is permitted (no cups and no cans);
- Ipods may be used quietly;
- Cell phones must be off and out of sight.

Students who do not behave appropriately will not be permitted in the library except when accompanied by a teacher during class time.

Circulation of Library Materials

Fiction and nonfiction books can be checked out for a three-week period and renewed once for an additional three weeks. Reference books do not circulate outside the library. Check-out may be restricted for books and other materials that are used for a project for multiple classes. For example:

- At a teacher's request, a group of books must remain in the library at all times.
- At a teacher's request, a group of books may be restricted to overnight check-out.

Lost or Damaged Library Materials

Students must reimburse the school district for lost or damaged library materials. Students who do not clear their library account jeopardize the receipt of their final report card.

Computer Use

Students, teachers, staff and administration must abide by the district's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) at all times. Computers are to be used for educational purposes. Students whose teacher has reserved the library for research have priority in using computers as the class requires. As available, computers are open to students for drop-in use.

Writing Center

The MS/HS Writing Center is located in the Library. Students who enjoy writing or who need some extra help with writing assignments may go to the Writing Center during Triple A, Activity Period or other times of the day as schedules permit.

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM

Interscholastic Athletics

The Athletic Program is an important part of the overall education program for young men and women. All students are encouraged to take advantage of this very exciting aspect of our school. All students, whether participating or enjoying the activity as a spectator, should always be mindful of the rules of good sportsmanship.

Blind Brook is a member of the Lower Hudson Athletic Council Conference IV and participates in League C for all inter-scholastic sports on the J.V. and Varsity levels. Before an athlete is permitted to participate in a practice or a game, he/she must have a physical examination by the school physician. Students must also turn in a parental consent form, which may be obtained at the nurse's office. Upon completion of the necessary paperwork, students will be issued a blue card to present to their coach. Physical exams are conducted prior to each sports season; the dates will be publicized. Students who fulfill these requirements will be eligible to tryout for the various teams.

As per New York State law, students are not eligible to participate in the interscholastic athletic program until they enter the 7th grade. Middle school students may play on Varsity or J.V. teams only if they pass the State mandated Selective Classification Program and if their skill level indicates they will be able to have significant playing time.

This year there will be only one girls' team and one boys' team (7th and 8th graders together) in each sport with the exception of cross-country and track.

The following sports are offered for middle school students:

Fall Sports

(Starting the first week of September; ending early November)

Modified Soccer: (separate teams for girls and boys)

Modified Cross-Country: (for boys and girls)

Modified Volleyball: (for girls)

Modified Tennis: (for girls)

Modified Football: (for boys)

Winter Sports

(Starting late-November; ending mid-February)

Modified Basketball: (separate teams for boys and girls)

Spring Sports

(Beginning early March; ending first week of June)

Modified Baseball: (for boys)

Modified Softball: (for girls)

Modified Tennis: (for boys)

Modified Spring Track: (for boys and girls)

Lacrosse: (separate teams for boys and girls)

Clubs

All students are encouraged to participate in the Middle School clubs that are offered. Clubs meet after school from 2:40-3:15pm. Clubs offered will vary each year. Clubs may include:

Art Club
Destination Imagination
Digital Media Club
Drama Club
Green Club
Guitar Club
International Club
Jazz Ensemble (by audition)
Minecraft Club
Newspaper
Select Band (by audition)
Select Chorus (by audition)
Stock Market Club
Yearbook Club

Activity Period (2:20-2:40pm)

The primary purpose of this period is to receive extra help from teachers, but will also serve to provide students with regular advisory periods for discussions and activities related to Character Education. Extra help is also available during lunch periods (Triple A).

Student Government

The Blind Brook Middle School Student Government is comprised of elected students who are eager to organize various school events as well as fund-raising events to help different community groups. All grade levels are represented and will have a chance to develop important leadership skills.

Student Fundraising Activities

Fund raising projects in which students sell merchandise, provide services, or in other ways solicit money for school activities may be sponsored by school organizations with the express approval of the Building Principal. Any such plan shall have a clearly defined purpose and, in general, shall contribute to the educational experience of students and shall not conflict with instructional programs or state mandates. Fund raising activities away from school property shall be held to a minimum. All participation shall be voluntary.

Door to door sales projects undertaken by any organization using the Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District name shall require previous approval of the Board of Education. Profits shall be used to enhance school programs by providing money for expenditures not normally funded by the District.

Employees are cautioned against giving the impression to students that the purpose of selling items (e.g., "scratch off" cards, holiday wrappings, etc.) or paying a fee is to defray a portion of the District's educational program. At no time should a student's participation in an educational activity include such sales or fees. In addition, it is imperative that employees not deposit the proceeds of any legitimate sales activity in their own personal accounts. These activities may jeopardize a student's right to participate in the educational program on a tuition and/or fee-free basis. Further, employees engaged in such activities may be held personally liable.

Adoption Date: 10/20/2008
New York State Constitution, Article 8, Section 1
Education Law Section 414
8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Section 19.6

Special Education

The Board of Education of the Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District (the District), as a part of a long standing commitment to excellence in education for all students, supports the provision of special education and related services for students with disabilities, offered in the least restrictive placement appropriate, to meet the needs of its students under the auspices of the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education.

In support of State and Federal laws pertaining to students with disabilities, the Board of Education supports a full continuum of services in the District to enable it to meet, within District, the needs of the majority of its identified students.

These programs and services are designed

To afford each student with the appropriate level of support necessary to meet New York State Standards

To provide each student with those special educational services necessary to enable the student to meet his/her annual goals

To afford each identified student with the opportunity to participate to the greatest extent appropriate in all programs and activities offered by the district

To give each identified student genuine opportunities to develop those skills and make those connections necessary to meet post -secondary goals.

(Blind Brook-Rye UFSD Special Education Plan 2016-2018)

For further specific information on Blind Brook Special Education procedures and programming please refer to The Blind Brook-Rye Committee on Special Education and Section 504 Handbook at: <https://www.blindbrook.org/cms/lib/NYO1913277/Centricity/Domain/62/CSE%20504%20Handbook%20-%20BB%20School%20District%20-%202017%20-%202018.pdf>

Child Find Notice

“Child Find” requires all public school districts to have in place a system to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities who reside in the district, including children who are homeless or in foster care, and students whose parents choose to enroll them in nonpublic schools located within the district. In order to meet our Child Find obligations, our District pursues multiple avenues, including publication on our website regarding the referral process and ongoing training for staff regarding our obligations.

If a parent or guardian suspects that his/her child may have a disability that adversely affects the student’s education or access to school, the parent or guardian may initiate a referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or the §504 Committee by sending a letter requesting an evaluation either to the child’s building principal or to the Director of Pupil Services.

School professionals, in cooperation with the building level Instructional Support Team (IST), also refer students suspected of having a disability to the CSE or §504 Committee, as applicable. Building principals and chairpersons of both the CSE and the §504 Team are authorized to initiate such referrals directly. In addition, school personnel, a child's physician and judicial officers may request a referral to the CSE. In cases where a request is denied, the CSE must notify the child's parent, in writing, of the right to initiate a referral directly.

Regardless of the source of a referral, a parent must provide written consent to enable the District to conduct an initial evaluation. Upon receipt of the parents' written consent, the District has 60 calendar days to complete the evaluation process and to convene a meeting of the CSE or the §504 Team, where applicable.

The CSE has 60 school days from the date of written consent to conduct an evaluation to implement an IEP, in those cases where the CSE recommends that the student be classified as a child with a disability and recommends placement in the public schools.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parent Teacher Association

The Blind Brook Parent Association encourages the involvement of all parents with students in grades K-12. Meetings of the PTA are held monthly and are listed on the district calendar. The PTA provides a wide variety of services to the schools, including funds to support various educational programs, a periodic newsletter, and an after school supervision program for younger students, special programs for parents, and other worthwhile activities. The fund-raising efforts of the PTA provide important curricular enrichment activities, seed money for new programs, and equipment that enhances the educational program for all students.

Middle School Parent Conversations

The Principal meets with parents of students in grades 6-8 to explore issues of mutual interest in the operation of the school with the aim to improve the overall quality of education. All parents are welcome to attend. Please consult the District Calendar for actual dates.

Athletic Advisory Committee

The Director of Athletics meets monthly with parents to explore a variety of issues related to the athletic program. Meetings are normally held monthly on Thursdays at 7:30 pm. For more information, please contact DJ Goldman, Director of Athletics.

Committee on Special Education

The CSE/CPSE Chairperson, Harry Burg, is responsible for chairing the Committee on Special Education, which determines a student's need for special services and the nature of the services provided. The Committee has parent representation. Parents interested in serving on this important committee should contact the Chairperson at ext. 3033.

Shared Decision Making Team

The Shared Decision Making Team works in an advisory capacity to monitor implementation of school and district goals. In doing so, the SDMT may identify issues, suggest strategies, recommend procedures, and evaluate feasibility to implement programs that enhance the educational performance of students in the Blind Brook Schools.

Open House

The annual Blind Brook Middle School Open House is held in the fall. The date is listed on the District calendar. This event provides an opportunity for parents to learn about their child's academic program and to meet his/her teachers. Details and schedules are mailed out in mid-September.

Parent Orientation

A special orientation evening meeting is held in the spring for parents of incoming sixth grade students. This meeting provides an overview of the academic and co-curricular programs in the Middle School, as well as the behavioral expectations for students. The date is listed on the District calendar. There will be an orientation for the incoming sixth grade students as well. This student orientation will take place during the school day; the date is listed on the District calendar.

BLIND BROOK ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL COMPREHENSIVE ATTENDANCE POLICY

The School District believes that maintaining adequate student records is critical to its educational mission. Accordingly, the District adopts this policy to ensure that effective strategies are in place to maximize student attendance at all scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities, so that the District's students have the greatest opportunity to succeed at meeting the State learning standards. In furtherance of this goal, the District will strive to identify patterns of absence, tardiness and early departures from school, and, upon identifying patterns indicating the existence of an attendance problem or potential problem, to intervene in a manner that will encourage student attendance and discourage unexcused absences. Regular attendance is important because it is directly related to academic and ultimately career success. To support this philosophy, and in accordance with Education Law, Section 3205; the following Attendance Policy has been developed:

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, the term "absence" shall refer generically to any and all of the following circumstances:

- (1) a student's failure to attend any or all of his/her scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities for the full duration of said period(s) of instruction or activity;
- (2) a student's late arrival to one or more of his/her any of his or her scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities during the course of a school day; and/or
- (3) a student's departure from and failure to return to any of his/her scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised study activities prior to the official dismissal of said period of instruction or activity.

Classifying Absences

Excused and Unexcused Absences: student absences, late arrivals, and early departures shall be classified as either excused or unexcused.

Excused absences are those absences attributable to:

- Sickness
- Dental and medical appointments
- Sickness or death in family
- Religious holidays
- Required attendance in court
- Quarantine

Supporting documentation must be presented for each excused absence, e.g., letter from a physician, etc. All other absences are unexcused. Teachers are not obligated to provide make-up tests or accept homework or other assignments from students who have missed class due to an unexcused absence.

The number of times a student is late to his/her individual classes will also affect the student's attendance; every three latenesses will count as one absence, which will be counted toward the total absentee count. If the three latenesses are unexcused without a note from a parent or teacher, the student will be required to attend detention (Middle and High School).

Reporting School Absences

If a student is going to be absent from school, his/her parents or guardians are required to notify the school by calling 937-3600 x 3145 before 10:00am.

When returning to school after an absence, students are expected to bring a note signed by their parents explaining the absence, and should report to the Attendance Office to hand in the note and to receive a pass to class. If the parent does not notify the school within 24 hours, the absence will be considered unexcused, and the student will be required to attend detention.

If the absence is excused, the students will be given an opportunity to make up tests, homework or other missing assignments. Teachers may require students to make up missed work. Students are responsible for meeting with their teacher and setting an acceptable schedule for completing the assignments. Normally, teachers will allow one day to make up assignments for every day that a student is out. However, teachers are flexible in considering the circumstances and the nature of the assignments.

If it is known before the student comes to school that he/she will need to leave early or miss a class period that day, he/she should bring a note from parents or guardians giving the reason for and the exact time of the desired early dismissal. These excuses must be submitted to the Middle School Office at the beginning of the school day the student wishes to be excused. Students who are excused from school during the day (for medical, dental or other appointments) must sign in and sign out in the Middle School Office. If a student does not return to school after an appointment, etc., the student's parents or guardian are required to contact the school before 2:50 PM; otherwise, the student is considered to be illegally absent.

If a student feels ill or wishes to be excused, he or she must report to the Nurse's office for permission to leave school. If the Nurse is not in the office, students should report to the Principal's Office. If for any other reason a student wishes to leave the school building, he or she must go to the Principal's office for permission.

Parents are asked if possible to please try to schedule all appointments outside the school day so students do not miss instructional time.

Coding System

The following is a description of the codes used in the District's attendance register to identify the reason for a pupil's absence:

UNV- Unverified; EXC- Excused; DET- Detention; EXT Exc. Tardy; FLD- Field Trip; GUI- Guidance
HBI-Home Inst.; REL – Religious; LEG – Court Dates; MED – Medical; NUR – Nurse’ OTH- Other
CUT- Cut Class; D-T- Detention Tdy; SUS- Suspended; TDY- Tardy; INH – In-House Suspension;
VAC- Vacation; EXC- Excused; ACT- Activity

Intervention Strategies

In an effort to identify those students who are chronically absent or those who have the potential to have poor attendance, teams consisting of teachers, support staff and administrators will convene to determine appropriate strategies.

Late Policy

When students are late to school in the morning, they must first report to the Attendance Office for a late pass or have parents sign them in at the front desk. Students are expected to bring a note from their parents explaining the lateness. Students who oversleep and are late for classes are considered unexcused late. Students will serve one detention for each set of three lates. Students who are more than ten minutes late to a class will be considered as absent. Students who are detained by a teacher and therefore late for the next class should secure from the dismissing teacher a late pass that will admit them to their next class.

Class Cutting Policy

Good attendance is essential to success in school, therefore, cutting class cannot be tolerated. Class cutting is defined as missing an entire class for an unexcused reason, leaving class early without authorization, or leaving class in the middle of class to go to the bathroom, get water, etc. and staying out for more than ten minutes. Classes that are “cut” will be considered as unexcused absences and detention will be assigned.

Attendance Policy for Resource Room

Attendance in the Resource Room will be handled in the same manner as all other classes. In addition, if a student in grades 7-11 accumulates five unexcused absences for the Resource Room, a parent and student conference with the Resource Room teacher, the Director of Special Education and the Assistant Principal will be required. If further unexcused absences occur, a subcommittee of the CSE will convene to review the case and make recommendations.

Eligibility for Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Students must be in attendance at school for the entire school day and attend all scheduled classes to be eligible to participate in that day’s co-curricular program, including clubs, class activities, sports, and evening events such as dances and rehearsals. Exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the school administration.

Student Participation in Off-Campus Learning Activities

Student participation in all school-sponsored off campus learning activities such as multi-day class trips, outdoor education programs, trips abroad, and classroom learning activities such as field trips is a privilege which must be earned through satisfactory behavior and adherence to school rules and regulations. Students who fail to fulfill their routine commitments at school or on school-sponsored trips and/or who compile a record of continuing misbehavior and irresponsibility will be denied the opportunity to participate on such trips.

Normally, denial or participation will be reserved for trips that are clearly enrichment activities and are not considered an integral part of the academic program. In certain instances, a student may be

denied participation in the latter as well, if a review of his or her records and discussion with appropriate faculty or staff suggest that such participation will have an adverse effect on other students, or the reputation of the school. Students may be referred for exclusion from a trip by any member of the administration, faculty or staff. Students who have been excluded from a trip are expected to attend school where they will participate in alternative instruction which will be designed to parallel the learning activities and goals of the field trip.

Causes for denial may include, but are not limited to, excessive tardiness and/or absences, class cutting, insubordination, disrespect for others or school property, cheating or plagiarism, and misbehavior on prior off-campus learning activities. Parents may request a meeting with the Principal to discuss this decision.

BLIND BROOK-RYE UFSD CODE OF CONDUCT

Please use the link below to access the District Code of Conduct.

[District Code of Conduct](#)