

BRIDGEWATER ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Student/ Parent Handbook

2024-2025



“Soaring To New Heights In Excellence!”

191 River Landing Boulevard

Myrtle Beach, SC 29579

TEL. (843) 236-3689

FAX. (843) 236-4921

Welcome Students, Parents and Guardians!

Bridgewater Academy is the premiere award-winning charter school in Horry County, and we are making every effort to grow better every day! We are excited that you have chosen to have your child grow with us, and we sincerely appreciate you for the trust you have placed in our faculty and staff.

Our commitment to excellence continues to be providing the best possible educational experience for your child. This handbook provides information for parents/guardians and students regarding our school's goals and governing policies. The information in this book is consistent with Charter, District and State mandates. The policies outlined in this book should be regarded as management guidelines only, which may require modifications and updates from time to time.

The Administration of Bridgewater Academy, with the support of the Board of Directors, retains the right to make decisions involving the student's well-being, educational process, and academic success as needed. This handbook supersedes and replaces all prior handbooks, policies, procedures and practices of the Board.

We encourage every parent and guardian to take an active role in your child's education. You can achieve this by maintaining consistent communication with your child's teacher at all times, volunteering time and resources at the school in any way that you can and attending all meetings regarding the growth of our school. Parents who stay involved and keep education as a priority have children who are successful in school. We want you to be your child's strongest partner in education!

Commitment to Excellence

Bridgewater Academy Charter School strives for excellence in fostering an academically enriched environment. We want all of our students, parents and teachers who share our mission of academic excellence to make a commitment to help us grow better in every way. All students who enroll at Bridgewater Academy may continue to attend as long as truancy, discipline, character, and academic efforts are maintained at a high level.

Table of Contents

Mission, Vision and Beliefs Statements

I. General Information

- Administration, Faculty and Staff Directory
- 2024-2025 School/District Calendar
- 2024-2025 Event Calendar
- Title I and School Compacts

II. Student Expectations and Procedures

- After-School Program
- Arrival and Dismissal Procedures
- Attendance Policy:
 - A. Lawful and Unlawful Absences
 - B. Tardiness
 - C. Student Sign-Out Procedures
- Cell Phones/ Electronic Communication Devices
- Field Trips
- Inclement Weather
- Medication
- No Touch Policy
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- School Discipline Policy
- School Property
- Sexual Harassment
- Student Suspensions and Expulsion
- Uniform/Dress Code
- Visitor Procedures
- Volunteers

III. Academic Information

- 20/20 Literacy and Math Intervention
- Conferences
- Grading Scale
- Homework
- Report Cards
- Standardized Testing
- Textbooks

I. General Information

Title I and School Compacts

Title I is the largest federal education program supported through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Schools qualify for fiscal support from Title I through the participation of students in the subsidized lunch program. Regulations require that school staff and parents participate in determining how funds are best used to meet the needs of a school. Title I schools are accountable for student achievement, school improvement, staff qualifications and parent involvement.

Parents Right to Know

Parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of a student's classroom teachers, including:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Information on the level of achievement of the parent's child in each of the State academic assessments as required under this part.

School Compacts: Each Title I school jointly develops with parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students share the responsibility for improved achievement. School compacts ensure that each school will provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards. Parents are encouraged to observe or volunteer in their child's classroom and participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children and the positive use of extracurricular time. Communication between teachers and parents is ongoing at Title I schools and includes parent-teacher conferences during which the compact is discussed as it applies to each child's achievement. Frequent reports are made to parents on their children's progress and parents are offered reasonable access to staff. Parents will receive a copy of the district's parenting policy and the school's compact and may respond in writing should they not be able to attend school or district parenting meetings.

I. Student Expectations and Procedures

After-School Program

The After-School program operates from 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM Monday through Friday and is provided for all students at a fee of \$40.00 per week. **A one-time registration fee of \$20.00 is due upon enrollment. (On early dismissal days, there will be an additional \$10.00 charge for the hours of 12:00- 3:00PM.)**

The After-School program is optional and was established for students to complete homework assignments. Students left on campus after 3:30 PM will be sent to the After-School Program, and a daily fee of \$10.00 will be charged to the parents/guardian.

There is a late charge of **\$1.00 per minute** for all students being picked up from the after-school program after 6:00 PM.

In an effort to maintain security and protect personal property, we are asking all parents ***not*** to send cell phones to school with your children. The school telephones are available for emergency use to all students. A staff member will contact parents in case of an emergency. Students will be able to use school telephones to contact parents/ guardians ***only*** in the case of an emergency. No cell phones or electronic devices for communication are necessary for student personnel on our campus.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Our school day begins at 7:30 A.M. Students may enter the building **no earlier than 7:30 A.M.** Students are not to be dropped off before 7:30 A.M., as there will be no supervision for them in the building. Parents are asked NOT to leave students unattended in the front of the building before school opens due to safety hazards.

Breakfast is available for all students in the cafeteria from 7:30-8:05. All students wanting breakfast should report to the cafeteria upon arriving at school.

All students are expected to be in their homeroom class by 8:15 AM. Any students arriving in their homeroom class after 8:15 AM will be considered tardy. All tardy students ***must*** be signed in by a parent/guardian at the front office.

Daily dismissal for students will begin at 3:00 PM on a regular basis (at 11:30 AM on Early Dismissal days). For safety reasons, we ask all parents to please remain in their vehicles and drive slowly through our traffic circle so that the staff can carefully bring the students to the vehicle. We do **NOT** permit students to walk home by themselves, unescorted without adult supervision. Furthermore, it is a safety hazard to walk students across the traffic line during dismissal as the vehicles are constantly moving.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is a requirement mandated by the state Department of Education. Students need to be in class every day in order to maintain a regulated pace with their academics. It is the responsibility of the parents and guardians of our students to maintain regular attendance.

Attendance is defined as being present on days when school is in session for the full day, 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Schools may count students present only when they are actually at school, on homebound instruction, or present at a school sponsored activity. In the event any student is absent, students shall present a written excuse, signed by their parent or guardian and/or health care provider. Failure to provide a written excuse will result in an unlawful absence. Written excuses must be turned in within three days following an absence. Any written excuses turned in later than three days following the absence will not be accepted as a lawful absence. A valid written excuse must include the following information: date(s) of absence; date(s) of the excuse; reason for the absence; home or work telephone number; and signature of the parent or guardian.

A. **Lawful absences** may include, but are not limited to:

- A student's illness or a student whose attendance in school would endanger the health of other students;
- A student in whose immediate family there is a serious illness or death;
- A student who is participating in a recognized religious holiday associated with the student's faith;
- A student who is participating in a school sponsored event;
- A student who has a doctor or dentist appointment that could not be scheduled after school hours.
- A scheduled appearance in a court of law.

If a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, parents are asked to provide documentation verifying all scheduled physician visits, dental examinations, therapist's sessions, etc. in order to excuse the student absences. Bridgewater Academy will excuse up to three (3) parent-generated (*handwritten*) excuses for student absence due to illness. Failure to provide documentation verifying student absences will result in students being placed on an Attendance Intervention Plan (AIP).

Unlawful absences may include, but are not limited to:

- A student who willfully is absent from school without parental permission;
- A student who is absent without an acceptable cause with the knowledge of their parent or guardian.
- Family vacation.
- Non-school related activities (gymnastics, dance recitals, etc.)

Parents and guardians with students with excessive absences will be subject to an Attendance Intervention Plan. Failure to follow the guidelines outlined in this plan will result in consequences up to and including retention and/or visitation from law enforcement.

B. Tardiness (Late Arrivals)

To deter excessive tardiness, any student arriving at school in the morning after 8:15 A.M. will be deemed tardy. If a student should accumulate three (3) tardies, the student will receive a Parent Notification Form, stating that they are accumulating a high number of unexcused tardies for arriving late to school. Upon receiving a total of five (5) tardies, OR five (5) unexcused absences the student will be placed on an Attendance Intervention Plan (AIP), whereby a parent/ guardian will be required to attend a mandatory conference before the student can be reinstated to school.

Students that accumulate a total of ten (10) unexcused absences OR tardies are in danger of having to attend summer school and/ or retention of the grade level.

C. Student Sign-out Procedures

Should it be necessary that a student be signed out (i.e., medical or legal appointment, etc.), we ask that the parent/guardian provide a note. Please include the following information on the note:

- Student's name
- Name of the person signing the student out
- Reason for signing the student out
- Time and date of sign-out

The student should give this note to the homeroom teacher before 8:30 so that the Attendance Clerk can inform the student of the time to report to the main office to be signed out. Parents/ guardians signing students out must report to the front office of Bridgewater Academy and sign in. The administrative assistant will contact the appropriate party, and inform them that a student is being signed out. If your child misses a class, please allow 24 hours to collect any necessary make-up work.

Any student signed out before 2:50 pm, will be marked tardy. **The tardy will remain until provided with an excuse from a qualified healthcare professional upon the students return.**

Cell Phones/ Electronic Communication Devices

In an effort to maintain security and to protect personal property, we are asking all parents ***not*** to send cell phones to school with your children. The school telephones are available for emergency use to all students. A staff member will contact parents in case of an emergency. Students will be able to use school telephones to contact parents/ guardians ***only*** in the case of an emergency. No cell phones or electronic devices for communication are necessary for student use on our campus.

Field Trips

Field trips may be planned by the appropriate school personnel. All field trips must be approved in writing and be related to South Carolina College and Career Ready Standards or part of celebrations/recognitions. While on field trips, students must abide by school expectations and demonstrate good manners and behaviors. Parents are encouraged to volunteer as chaperones on field trips.

Students who are constant classroom distractions may be asked to have a parent accompany them on the field trip or may be denied the privilege of going. Students denied the privilege of attending the field trip with the class may not attend the scheduled event as an individual and must attend school as regularly scheduled.

Inclement Weather

Unless otherwise notified, Bridgewater Academy will adhere to Horry County announcement policies and procedures regarding inclement weather. If you have questions about school closings, we recommend that parents watch the television or listen to the radio to determine if schools will be closed.

Medication

School personnel may not supply any medication (including aspirin). Only medication brought to school in the original container will be given. Written permission must be given by the parent or guardian on a standard form provided by the school. If the medication is not in the original container and written permission has not been given, the medication will **not** be given at school. Students are not to have on their person any medicine (prescription or over-the-counter). **All medications must be kept in the Nurse's office**. This is for the safety and protection of the students.

No Touch Policy

Bridgewater Academy maintains a “No Touch” hands-off policy with all students. No student, at any time for any reason, is to touch (whether hands, feet, or any other body part), another student, staff or faculty member in any manner, even in jest. This will be considered an infraction, and may result in consequences, including suspension.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

The purpose of Bridgewater Academy’s Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) is to implement methods used to identify and support desired behaviors in the school setting. PBIS will be utilized to reduce and eliminate poor behavior school-wide through the encouragement of positive behaviors. Our goal is to teach and promote positive behaviors through redirection, reinforcement and recognition of students.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

The classroom teacher should address any Level I Behaviors that occur by utilizing their established Classroom Management Plan. Excessive Level I Behaviors may lead to a student being issued a discipline referral. Students that commit **Level II** and **Level III** offenses will receive a discipline referral form. Administration will determine appropriate reprimand up to and including suspension, with notification given to the teacher and the parent.

For Level II and III offenses, no prior warning is necessary, as all students are responsible for adhering to all classroom and school rules. The teacher should notify administration immediately.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR	STAFF RESPONSES
<p style="text-align: center;">LEVEL I</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Behaviors include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Violation of dress code ● Lying ● Disrespect ● Refusal to complete assignments ● Chewing gum/eating candy/eating in class without permission ● Unproductive use of time (sleeping, excessive talking, horseplaying, etc..) ● Interrupting the learning environment ● Violation of computer use policy ● Violation of cell phone policy 	<p>Teacher's Responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Warning ● Student conference ● Parent contact ● Lunch detention ● Recess detention ● Redirection ● PBIS strategy ● Classroom supports
<p style="text-align: center;">LEVEL II</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Behaviors include but are not limited to:)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cheating (Plagiarism, Forgery, Test, Quiz, etc.) ● Inappropriate gestures ● Excessive disrespect (implied or blatant) ● Excessive class disruption ● Defiance/ Refusing to follow directions ● Arguing (Verbally) ● Threatening or Bullying (<i>including online</i>) ● Possession of cell phone/electronic devices ● Vandalism ● Aggressive behavior toward students and/or staff ● Repeated Level I behaviors 	<p>Administrator's Responses:</p> <p>Responses include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Conference ● Automatic Parent Conference ● Suspension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Overnight suspension- A suspension that guarantees that a parent/guardian will conference with a school official by the beginning of the next school day B. Out of School Suspension

<p>LEVEL III</p> <p>(Offenses include but are not limited to:)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Threatening, Fighting, Hitting and /or any Physical/ Sexual assault towards a teacher and/ or student ● Verbally abusive language and/ or materials towards teacher/ student ● Theft (of any kind). ● Possession of weapon ● Hate Crimes/Hate speech ● Persistent disobedience/repeated Level 2 violations 	<p>Suspension</p> <p>A. Out of School Suspension- A suspension that may last for 1 to 5 days pending the behavior</p> <p>Possible Long -Term suspension or Expulsion Hearing</p>
---	--

***Warning: School staff members are not responsible for damage, theft, or other loss of any confiscated personal property, including but not limited to confiscated wireless communication devices. Any confiscated personal property not reclaimed by the parent by the end of the school year will be considered abandoned and will be disposed of by the Administration of the School.**

School Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of computers, books, supplies, uniforms, facilities and furniture supplied by the school. Students who disfigure or damage school property, break windows, or do other damage to school or personal property or equipment will be required to pay damages or replacement cost for the item, along with any incurring installation cost. The administration will take appropriate disciplinary action for the willful acts of damage or destruction to property according to District Policy, state and local laws up to and including expulsion.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Bridgewater Academy prohibits sexual harassment of any employee or student by any employee, supervisor or other student(s). The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the morality of our students. It is to assure that within the school, no student is subjected to any form of sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define what sexual harassment is, it does include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal harassment or abuse.
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity.
- Inappropriate or unwelcome touching.
- Intentional brushing against the body of a student or employee.
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual’s employment or educational status.
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment.

Anyone believing they are the victim of sexual harassment by student or employee of the district should report the alleged act(s) immediately. Students should report such complaints to the principal, a teacher, counselor, or staff member. A reporting form is available in the principal's office, but reports may also be verbal or by informal written note. Bridgewater Academy will investigate all complaints as quickly as possible. By most legal definitions, sexual harassment may exist in two forms:

1. **Direct overt sexual behavior** (unwelcome touching, unwanted advances, offensive comments, etc.) The most blatant examples involve the use of positional power by staff members (teachers and/or administrators) to gain sexual favors from students or other staff members.
2. **Presence of a "hostile environment"** (offensive displays of sexual materials, frequent repeating of sexually related stories or other anecdotes, etc.)

Consequences: Individuals who sexually harass either a student or staff member may be subject to civil or criminal litigation or both, as well as discipline by the school district, including possible suspension, expulsion, leave with or without pay, or termination. If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

Student Suspensions and Expulsion

Suspensions are the removal of a student from school for a specified amount of time based on the infraction committed as determined by the Principal. A mandatory parent conference *must* be conducted before any student can be readmitted to school after a suspension.

Expulsion is the removal of a student from a school for the remainder of the school year. Authority to expel students from school rests solely with the administration of the school and approval of the Board of Directors.

Uniform and Dress Code

All Bridgewater Academy students must adhere to the following student dress code **at all times**. The school uniform makes a specific statement of solidarity throughout the school and *unifies* everyone here in a professional manner. This dress code consists of a navy polo shirt with the school emblem on the left side and can be purchased at Bridgewater Academy. Khaki shorts*, slacks, skirts, jumpers or skorts are to be worn, and may be purchased from a variety of stores.

Official Bridgewater Academy Uniform Expectations

Tops

- Bridgewater PLAIN navy blue polo shirt (school emblem optional)
- Bridgewater PLAIN navy blue pullover/ sweatshirt (school emblem optional)
- Sweatshirts must be either **solid** navy blue (*without writing on them such as Adidas, etc*) or BWA sweatshirts.
- Bridgewater P.E. grey shirt (school emblem optional) and **solid** (*no stripes, polka dots, words, etc.*) dark/navy blue shorts or sweatpants **on P.E. days only! LEGGINGS ARE NOT PERMITTED**

Bottoms

- All bottoms should be khaki shorts, pants, skorts, and jumpers
- All shorts, skirts and dresses must not be shorter than 4 inches above the knee (fingertip length)
- Pants and shorts must be worn at an appropriate waist level **with a belt if necessary. Suspenders are not permitted.**

Footwear

- Athletic shoes or sneakers
- No open toe shoes on PE days

Accessories

- No sunglasses, hats, head-stockings, bandanas, or kerchiefs may be worn in the building with the exception of religious headwear.
- Solid dark blue or beige Stockings (*tights*) or leggings are permitted for girls under skirts.

The Bridgewater Academy uniform is to be always worn in a neat clean fashion without exception. No clothing with holes, stains or tears will be permitted here at school. Jewelry may be worn as long as it is in no way distracting to the educational environment. Watches are an acceptable form of jewelry at school. Expensive or oversized earrings, necklaces or rings are not recommended to decrease the chance of loss, theft or personal injury. All garments, (*including those worn on dress down days*), clothing with vulgar, obscene, and/ or derogatory symbols or language is not permitted. Failure to follow the dress code will result in disciplinary action up to and including scheduled after school detention and/or suspension. This includes all school-sponsored activities/events on and off campus.

Visitor Procedures

Parents are welcome to visit our school. However, for the protection of the children and to assure that teachers are **not** interrupted from teaching, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Upon arriving on campus, parents/ guardians **must** sign in at the reception desk and state what class they are planning to observe.
- A visitor pass must be issued and worn at all times while on campus.
- Visitors are welcomed to observe the class; however, they cannot interrupt instruction in any way.
- Visitors coming to eat breakfast or lunch with students is permitted. All visitation guidelines apply.

Volunteers

Bridgewater Academy is proud to welcome parents/guardians who are willing to use their talents in support of the efforts of the school. Volunteers are always needed and welcomed to assist teachers, monitor tests, read to students, and participate in special projects. All volunteers must pass a background check (SLED).

MEALS: Bridgewater Academy serves breakfast and lunch daily in accordance with all federal and state guidelines. MyPaymentsPlus can be used for all student fees and payments.

**** *Microwave ovens are for staff meal use only.***

II. Academic Information

Conferences

Parents are strongly encouraged to meet with their child’s teacher in order to ensure the students’ academic success. Parents may schedule a conference with a teacher by:

- Making a request in writing in the student’s agenda,
- Calling the office and scheduling a conference with the teacher at least 24 hours in advance,
- Emailing the teacher directly using the teacher’s school email address.

All scheduled conferences should be held either before 8:00 A.M., after 3:00 P.M., or on a scheduled appointment with the teacher on his/her planning period.

No conferences should be held during instructional time. If you wish to confer with a member of the staff and/ or administrative team, please call the main office to schedule an appointment.

Grading Scale

All records of a student's grades are confidential except to that particular student, his/ her parent/guardian(s), and teachers. A student’s grade is not to be reflective of his/her behavior, unless their behavior interferes with their performance in class. Bridgewater Academy uses the following grading scale for grades 3-8:

- A.....90 – 100 Excellent**
- B.....80 – 89 Above Average**
- C.....70 – 79 Average**
- D.....60 –69 Below Average**
- F.....60 (and below) Failing**

Report cards are based on a 9 week timeframe of student performance and are issued approximately every ten (10) weeks. Report cards are to be taken home, viewed and discussed with the parent/ guardian, signed by the parent and returned to the student’s teacher at school. Parents may monitor student progress daily by use of the Parent Portal in PowerSchool and may register for its usage through the main office.

Homework

Homework is defined as any preparation for class to be written, read or reviewed **outside** of class. Homework is the student’s responsibility to complete all homework by the assigned due date.

Report Cards

Interim Progress Reports are issued approximately every 4.5 weeks, while Report Cards are issued approximately every 10 weeks. Each report requires a parent signature and should be returned to school the following day.

Standardized Testing

Bridgewater Academy follows the district testing calendar and utilizes a number of assessments throughout the academic year in order to monitor student growth and learning.

Our regularly used assessments include, but are not limited to:

- **KRA** - Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- **MAP Reading Fluency**- Pre-screener
- **MAP Testing**- Measures Academic Progress (Math, Reading, and Language)
- **CogAT**- Cognitive Abilities Test for potential Gifted and Talented students
- **SCPASS**- Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (Science and Social Studies)
- **SC Ready**- College and Career Readiness Assessment

Textbooks

All basic textbooks are loaned to students for their use during the school year. They are to be kept clean and should be handled carefully. Students are required to pay for lost or damaged books. The textbook division of the State Department requires that we charge parents the full contract price for the state adopted textbooks. Therefore, students will be charged FULL PRICE or an adjusted price in accordance with state textbook regulations. If a student has lost or damaged a book, they will not be able to receive a replacement book until the first book is paid for in full. **South Carolina law prohibits a teacher or principal from issuing a textbook to a student who owes for a lost or damaged textbook. These debts must be paid before school begins or on the first day of school to enable a student to be issued books for the year.**

****BWA Is A 1:1 Device School. Students Will Follow District Policy And Pay A Rental Fee For A Device For The Year. Destruction/Damage To The Devices Are Broken Down As Follows And Will Be Paid By The Family To Repair The Device:**

ESTIMATED COSTS:

REPLACEMENT DEVICE- \$250

SCREEN/FRAME - \$50.00

KEYBOARD/TOUCHPAD - \$40.00

POWER CORD/CHARGER - \$20.00



Parent/Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form 2024-25

Dear Parents & Students,

It is important that you are aware of the school's policies, some of which are regulations pursuant to our license with the HCS system & SCDE. The school's policies can also be found in the Parent Handbook on our website. Please read and familiarize yourself with each page of this handbook and use them as reference as needed.

Please sign and return this form to your child's teacher by August 23, 2024. This is an attestation that you and your student have reviewed this handbook and acknowledge that you and your student will uphold the policies expectations therein.

ATTESTATION

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the BWA student/parent handbook as indicated below:

ATTENDANCE/AFTER-SCHOOL/LATE PICK-UP: _____ (student initials) _____ (parent initials)

DRESS CODE & DISCIPLINARY MATRIX: _____ (student initials) _____ (parent initials)

PROPERTY DAMAGE/ TECH REPAIR: _____ (student initials) _____ (parent initials)

WE HAVE READ & REVIEWED ALL SECTIONS OF THIS HANDBOOK.

Child's Name _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____

Classroom Teacher Name _____

Date _____

**THANK YOU!
WE LOOK FORWARD TO A GREAT SCHOOL YEAR!**