

## **SHARED VALUES OF THE ENGLISH HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY\***

The Shared Values of the English High School community are the following:

- For staff and students to encourage and support one another to take responsibility for themselves, their learning, and the choices they make.
  - To have high expectations and high standards of academic excellence for *all* students.
  - To provide a high-quality curriculum and effective instruction to enable every student to have the opportunity to achieve to high levels.
  - To provide classrooms that are engaging, rigorous, and relatable so that students and teachers feel capable of learning and teaching.
  - To pay attention to each student's unique learning needs and to provide help to any student who may be having difficulty.
  - To appreciate diversity and approach our differences with an open mind.
  - To be part of a positive and safe environment in which students, teachers, and parents feel welcomed and respected.
- To promote professionalism and create better communication by building respectful relationships between staff, students, and parents.
  - To have a trusting and confidential environment in which students are able to develop appropriate levels of teacher/student communication.
  - For teachers, students, and parents to have a voice in the decisions made regarding the school community.
  - To strive and obtain the materials and technology required to keep our school competitive.
  - To keep the EHS community clean and attractive to reflect pride in our school and the surrounding environment.

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\* Proposed by English High School students (spring 2009).

## CIVILITY STANDARDS\*

At the English High School, we promote high standards of academic excellence, a climate of respect that recognizes the uniqueness of each individual within our diverse community, and a culture in which students, teachers, parents, and administrators communicate openly with one another and work together collaboratively. We strive to instill in our students a love of learning and to inspire them to become critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and confident, responsible, and successful adult citizens. In order to create an environment that fosters these goals, we recognize the need to establish clear guidelines for behavior within the school community. Our expectations for student behavior are guided by Massachusetts law, the Boston Public Schools' (BPS) Code of Discipline, and the English High School Civility Standards described below. These Civility Standards should be read together with the provisions of the BPS Code.

Because we value and respect our students and recognize that in today's world a high school diploma is essential for students to obtain post secondary education and higher paying jobs, our Civility Standards are grounded in the core belief that students should not be punished by denying them the opportunity to learn. ***Therefore, it is the policy of the English High School to avoid, whenever possible, the exclusion of students from their usual classroom instruction as a response to discipline problems and to promote, instead, the use of alternative approaches to discipline.*** This policy is consistent with Section 9.1.2 of the BPS Code, which states that before a student may be excluded from his/her regular or usual classroom instruction, non-exclusionary alternatives are to be tried or carefully considered. The alternative approaches to

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\* In spring 2009, students from the EHS Fifth Floor Student Government were invited by the headmaster to submit a proposal for revising the school's existing civility standards. What follows is the students' proposed draft, which represents major changes to the current standards.

discipline that are used at the English High School are described below. While we recognize that it may be necessary to temporarily remove a student from his/her regular class when a student's actions are causing and will continue to cause a substantial disruption to classroom activity, every effort should be made to address the behavior through intervention and prevention strategies within the classroom. Even when exclusion from the student's usual classroom instruction is necessary as a last resort, the negative impact of the exclusion on the student's learning should be minimized by limiting the length of the exclusion, by having the student remain in the school building whenever possible, and by continuing to provide the student with instruction so that s/he has the opportunity to make up any missed work, assignments, or tests and does not fall further behind. We follow Section 9.7 the BPS Code, which states that when a student is to be excluded, the school will provide an opportunity for the student "to maintain academic standing in school by assigning schoolwork." Similarly, under Section 15.1 of the BPS Code, a student who is excluded "shall be given a reasonable opportunity to make up all assignments and tests and shall receive academic credit for such work completed."

In administering disciplinary measures at the English High School, we strive to do so in a fair and equitable manner that protects the rights of all our students, while also encouraging the growth of personal standards within our student population. Students at the English High School shall be afforded the full due process protections outlined in the BPS Code. Students with disabilities must be disciplined in accordance with their rights under federal and state special education law, as described in Section 14 of the BPS Code.

## ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO DISCIPLINE USED AT THE ENGLISH HIGH SCHOOL

At the English High School, we make every effort to resolve discipline problems through non-exclusionary means. Such non-exclusionary methods as described below are to be considered, with adequate documentation, and an approach with a reasonable likelihood of improving student behavior is to be used. To the extent practical, the student and his/her parent or guardian will provide input in selecting an appropriate, alternative approach. The focus will be on student support, effective intervention, and prevention of recurring behavior. Some of the alternative approaches to discipline used at the English High School are taken from Section 5 of the BPS Code. Others have been identified by students, teachers, parents, and administrators at the English High School. Non-exclusionary alternatives to discipline that may be used at the English High School include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Behavioral Interventions** – Possible strategies to be used by teachers and staff in the classroom and in other parts of the school include: discussion with the student, use of positive reinforcement, redirection, de-escalation, problem-solving.
- **Student Support Services or Counseling** – A student may be referred to the school's student support services or counseling. Suggested supports include social skills training, behavioral interventions, or violence prevention strategies. The student's participation in such services shall be voluntary and shall include written parental approval and involvement, where appropriate.
- **Community Service** – A student may participate in service to the school or the broader community in which the school is located. Every effort will be made to connect the community service to the relevant Civility Standard. Community service options currently in place at the school as well as new opportunities available in the broader community may be considered.
- **Peer Mediation** – A student may participate in an informal conflict resolution process facilitated by his/her peers. In peer mediation, student mediators – with help from the Student Support Services Coordinator – apply problem-solving strategies to settle disputes between two students or a small group of students.
- **Youth Court** – A student may appear before a court of his/her peers, who conduct a fact-finding proceeding and disposition. The youth court can help the student understand how the alleged behavior has harmed other members of the school community. This alternative will be developed during the 09-10 school year.
- **Behavioral Contracting** – A student may be asked to sign an agreement that identifies behaviors, defines expectations, and describes consequences. The student will play a role in the development of the contract. The contract may involve other parties, including school staff, the student's parent, or other students, when appropriate.
- **Family Conferencing** – A student may participate in a conference with his/her parent or other family members to identify solutions to problematic behavior. If appropriate, a conference may also involve a discussion between two families.
- **Restitution** – If appropriate, a student may be asked to repair, restore, replace, or pay for damaged, vandalized, lost or stolen school property or the property of others. Payment may be required either in cash or by other agreed-upon services.
- **Detention** – After notice to the student and parent, a student may be required to remain after school, to arrive early before school, or to come to school on Saturday. Notice is to be provided within a reasonable time prior to the detention. During the detention, the student will be given the opportunity to complete classwork or assignments. Failure to show up for a detention will trigger further disciplinary action, including the use of other non-exclusionary approaches.
- **Loss of School Privileges** – After notice to the student and parent, a student may be denied specific school privileges, available to other students. A student may be denied school privileges for no

longer than one week at a time or a total of three weeks in a marking period.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR AT THE ENGLISH HIGH SCHOOL**

Because we have high standards for our students, we expect them to behave at all times in a manner in which they respect themselves, others, and the school. The following Civility Standards provide students, teachers, parents, and administrators with guidelines concerning our expectations for student behavior. Some of the standards have been set by Massachusetts law, others by BPS policy, and the remainder by the English High School community. The consequences for violations of expectations for behavior that are described below represent disciplinary action that may be taken as a last resort. As stated earlier, it is the policy of the English High School to make every effort to address inappropriate behavior through non-exclusionary means.

### **A. RESPECT FOR SELF**

#### **A.1. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING ATTENDANCE AND PREPAREDNESS**

EHS students will value their education by attending all classes with the appropriate materials and by arriving on time. There are two minutes between classes. EHS students will come to each class prepared to participate. The BPS attendance policy is discussed elsewhere in this handbook. At the English High School, we make every effort not to punish a student for being absent from school with further exclusion from the student's usual classroom instruction. However, we recognize that excessive absences will necessitate appropriate administrative action.

#### **A.2. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING TARDINESS**

EHS students will make every effort to arrive in class on time. Upon entering the building, students should report to their 1<sup>st</sup>

period class. Students arriving in class after 7:44 am must have a tardy pass obtained from the front desk. Students shall be notified in a timely manner of recorded tardiness and be provided with an opportunity to correct any discrepancies. At the English High School, we make every effort not to punish a student for tardiness with further exclusion from the student's usual classroom instruction. Excessive tardiness may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

#### **A.3. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING EARLY DISMISSAL**

EHS students will respect dismissal time. Early dismissal from school will be permitted only after written parental permission has been verified by the nurse, the Student Support Services Coordinator, or the SLC administrators. Students must show the approved note to the affected teachers and sign out in the main office. Students under the age of 16 years old must be picked up by a parent or guardian. Leaving the building without permission may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

#### **A.4. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Honesty is a core value of the English High School civility standards. EHS students will honor this value by completing their own work for every assignment. At the English High School, all students are encouraged to engage in independent research and writing; however, there is a clear expectation that they are not to represent another person's work as their own. Cheating will not be tolerated. A student who deliberately misrepresents another person's work as his/her own may receive a zero for the assignment.

#### **A.5. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING GAMBLING**

EHS students will demonstrate respect for themselves and the learning environment by avoiding all gambling. Gambling, including, but not limited to, cards or dice, is not allowed on school grounds. Any equipment that can be used for gambling will be

confiscated. Gambling on school grounds may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

#### **A.6. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING TOBACCO USE**

EHS students will demonstrate respect for their health and the health of others. Consistent with chapter 71, §2A of Massachusetts General Law, the use of any type of tobacco products, including smoking and chewing of tobacco, on school grounds during normal school hours is not permitted. The use of tobacco products on school grounds may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

#### **A.7. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

It is the goal of the English High School to maintain a safe and drug-free learning environment for all students and staff. The use of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances negatively impacts the functioning of the individual as well as that of the school community and is not allowed on school premises or at school-sponsored events. Consistent with chapter 71, § 37H of Mass. General Law, students who are found on school grounds or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance as defined in chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to suspension or expulsion by the headmaster. To the extent that exclusion is deemed necessary, every attempt will be made to minimize the negative impact of the exclusion on the student's learning. The student shall be afforded all due process protections specified in the BPS Code.

### **B. RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

#### **B.1. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE**

The English High School recognizes that in order to create an environment that is conducive to learning, students and staff need to treat all persons with respect. The use of foul, obscene or abusive

language toward anyone impedes the creation of a culture of mutual respect. The use of such language may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

#### **B.2. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING FIELD TRIPS AND SPORTING EVENTS**

EHS students represent the English High School community on field trips and at sporting events. When students are involved in a school-sponsored event in the building or off school grounds, they are expected to act appropriately and abide by the Civility Standards as set by the EHS community. Failure to do so will result in appropriate disciplinary action as well as restrictions on further attendance at such events.

#### **B.3. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING RESPECT FOR THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS**

All students at the English High School community are expected to demonstrate respect for the property of other students and staff. EHS students will not take or use the property of others without permission. The English High School views theft very seriously. Students in possession of the property of others without prior permission may be suspended or subject to non-exclusionary alternatives. To the extent that exclusion from school is deemed necessary as a last resort, every attempt will be made to minimize the negative impact of the exclusion on the student's learning. The student shall be afforded all due process protections specified in the BPS Code.

#### **B.4. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING PHYSICAL FIGHTS, BULLYING, OR INTIMIDATION**

At the English High School, all students are expected to treat other students with consideration, dignity, and respect. Physical fights, bullying, or intimidation for any reason are not tolerated. Students should try to resolve differences through constructive discussion. In dealing with such incidents, the English High School,

whenever possible, will help students resolve their differences within the school disciplinary system without resorting to involvement by law enforcement. Physical fights, bullying, or intimidation may result in suspension. To the extent that exclusion from school is deemed necessary as a last resort, every attempt will be made to minimize the negative impact of the exclusion on the student's learning. The student shall be afforded all due process protections specified in the BPS Code.

#### **B.5. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING ASSAULT OF SCHOOL STAFF**

Consistent with chapter 71, § 37H of Mass. General Law, students who assault school staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the headmaster. To the extent that exclusion is deemed necessary, every attempt will be made to minimize the negative impact of the exclusion on the student's learning. The student shall be afforded all due process protections specified in the BPS Code.

#### **B.6. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Consistent with BPS policy, the English High School is committed to providing all students with a safe and healthy learning environment that promotes dignity, equality, and respect. Comments or conduct of a sexual nature where such behavior creates an intimidating, humiliating or hostile learning environment, are prohibited. Such behavior is harmful to its victims and negatively impacts the school culture by creating an environment of fear, distrust and intolerance. Such behavior also constitutes sexual harassment and is against the law. Any student at the English High School who feels uncomfortable by virtue of unwanted sexual advances, offensive words, gestures, or actions by another student or staff member should report the incident to a guidance counselor or administrator.

#### **B.7. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING WEAPONS**

The English High School takes very seriously its obligation to ensure a safe learning environment for all students and staff. Consistent with chapter 71, § 37H of Mass. General Law, any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, may be subject to suspension or expulsion by the headmaster. To the extent that exclusion is deemed necessary, every attempt will be made to minimize the negative impact of the exclusion on the student's learning. The student shall be afforded all due process protections specified in the BPS Code.

#### **B.8. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING FELONY OR FELONY DELINQUENCY CHARGES OR CONVICTIONS**

*Felony Charge.* Consistent with chapter 71, § 37H ½(1) of Mass. General Law, when a student is charged with a felony or is the subject of a felony delinquency complaint (for a student under 18), the headmaster may suspend the student if the headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. To the extent that exclusion is deemed necessary, every attempt will be made to minimize the negative impact of the exclusion on the student's learning. The student shall be afforded all due process protections specified in the BPS Code.

*Felony Conviction.* Consistent with chapter 71, § 37H ½(2) of Mass. General Law, when a student is convicted of a felony (or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency), the headmaster may expel the student if the headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. To the extent that exclusion is deemed necessary, every attempt will be made to minimize the negative impact on the student's learning. The student shall be afforded all due process protections specified in the BPS Code.

## **C. RESPECT FOR THE SCHOOL**

### **C.1. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING ENTERING THE SCHOOL**

EHS students will assist teachers and administrators in ensuring that the building is safe and secure. Students will enter the English High School only through the main door on Williams Street. Entering the building other than through the appropriate door may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

### **C.2. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING STUDENT I.D. CARDS**

EHS students will have their I.D. card in their possession at all times to help keep the school safe. If requested by a school administrator, teacher, or any other personnel, a student will produce his/her I.D. card. Students who forget their I.D. will be given a warning. On the second offense, the student will be required to purchase a replacement at a cost of \$3.00.

### **C.3. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING PASSES AND THE PASS RESTRICTION LIST**

To help maintain a safe learning environment, passes allow students to go from a classroom to the destination listed on the pass. When leaving a classroom, students must fill out an official school pass. Passes must be visible and presented to any staff person upon request. If a pass is written by any staff member other than the classroom teacher assigned to a student during a given period, that teacher must approve and sign the pass. The person receiving the student should not accept a student unless the classroom teacher has approved the pass. No passes should be issued the first or last ten minutes of class. Students found in an area not on the direct route between the classroom and the destination designated on the pass, or found without a pass, will be considered to be in an unauthorized area. Students on the Pass Restriction List may not be given a pass for any reason. An administrator must escort such a student from class in case of emergencies. Students on pass restriction will meet

periodically with the SLC administrator to discuss the student's status. Being in an unauthorized area of the building may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

### **C.4. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING CLOTHING AND APPEARANCE**

All students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate to the learning environment. Hats, wave caps, and any other headgear, as well as sunglasses and goggles, may not be worn in school and must be kept out of sight. (Exceptions may be made for religious observance.) Students will not wear clothing that is see-through, excessively short, or displays profanity, drugs, sexually explicit, or violent material. Cutoff shirts and armless T-shirts are not allowed. Clothing that exposes the skin of the torso/midriff is not allowed. Students have the right to choose their own hair length, clothing, and other aspects of their appearance using the above guidelines. Hats and other items may be confiscated and returned at a later time and/or after meeting with a parent. Violations of these rules may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

### **C.5. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING FIRE DRILLS**

EHS students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the fire drill directions that appear at the front of every room. Under the direction of the teacher, students will exit the building according to this plan and maintain order. Students are not to go through any fire door (double doors in each hallway). Students may not go to their lockers during a fire drill. Students should go down the nearest stairway and out the nearest exit. Students must leave the building immediately, accompanied by their teacher, and remain in the area closest to the door from which they exited. Students are not to leave school grounds during a fire drill. Leaving school grounds may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

### **C.6. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING ELEVATOR USE**

Students will use the elevator only with permission for medical reasons approved by the nurse or when delivering school supplies under the direction of an administrator/teacher in which their responsibilities necessitate using the elevator. The elevator is never to be used during a fire drill.

#### **C.7. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING LOCKERS**

Each student will be assigned a locker, and will use a school lock. Locks are purchased for \$5.00. Students should understand that the school and the student own the locker jointly. Students should not share lockers with other students. To maintain a climate of safety, the school reserves the right to conduct periodic random searches of lockers.

#### **C.8. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING PREVENTING GRAFFITI/VANDALISM**

The English High School community takes pride in its school. Students will foster this pride by making sure the building is neat, attractive, and respectful. Graffiti and vandalism will not be tolerated. Students will obtain administrative authorization before posting advertisements, school announcements, posters, or flyers in the school building. If a student is found to have vandalized or defaced school property, his/her family will be notified and the student will be subject to disciplinary action, including cleaning the graffiti, community service, and detention. Serious vandalism may result in prosecution.

#### **C.9. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING EATING FOOD IN UNAUTHORIZED AREAS**

Students must go to only their assigned lunch. The second floor, excluding the library, is the only place where food or drink may be consumed during a student's assigned lunch period. Food or drink may not be taken behind the fire doors on the second floor. Eating and drinking is prohibited in the classrooms and corridors. Food and drink must be secured in a closed container out of sight

when not being consumed. A first offense will result in a warning. Second and subsequent offenses may result in detention, loss of privileges, or other non-exclusionary alternatives.

#### **C.10. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING COMPUTERS**

Computers play an important role in the learning process and are for academic purposes only. Students will use computers for proper learning activities. EHS students will not use computer technology to threaten or convey abusive language to anyone on email, chat, or any other computer application. Students who violate this rule may lose computer privileges.

#### **C.11. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

EHS students will respect the learning environment by recognizing that electronic devices can detract from others' ability to teach, learn, and participate at school. Therefore, EHS students will not possess a laser pointer, beeper, radio, cassette or C.D. player, or electronic game while in school. Students will make sure that walkmans, iPods, and MP3 players are not seen or heard in the building. If a student is found with any of these items, the item will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day. Beepers will be returned only to an adult.

#### **C.12. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING CELL PHONES**

The Boston Public Schools has adopted a specific district-wide cell phone policy designed to ensure that the use of cell phones does not interfere with teaching and learning during the school day. According to this policy, students are permitted to use cell phones only during the following times: before school hours; after school hours; at after-school or sports activities with the permission of the coach, instructor or program director; or at evening or weekend activities. The use of cell phones for any purpose – including telephone calls, text messaging and other functions – is not permitted at any other time on school grounds. Cell phones must not be visible during the school day and must be turned off completely (not simply

on silent or vibrate mode) during the school day. For a first offense, the student's cell phone will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day. For the second and subsequent offenses, the student's cell phone will be confiscated and returned to the student's parent or guardian. The student will be prohibited from bringing a cell phone to school for the remainder of the school year. Students committing repeated violations of the cell phone policy may be subject to additional disciplinary action. A copy of the BPS cell phone policy will be distributed to all students at the beginning of the school year.

Each year the Boston School Department publishes a Code of Discipline booklet, which students and parents must read, sign and return to the school. Please read carefully the English Civility Standards together with the summary of the BPS Code of Discipline that will have been sent home to you by way of your child in September.