



Bard High School Early College Parent Handbook 2011 – 2012

Updated October 1, 2011

Bard High School Early College Parent Handbook

Welcome to Bard High School Early College (BHSEC). This Parent Handbook is designed to help you become familiar with BHSEC and answer some of the questions that may arise during your child's transition to a high school/early college environment.

The Parent Handbook was developed by parents of BHSEC students to help fellow parents support their children's academic performance. While every BHSEC student receives a planner with important information about school policies and procedures, parents recognized the need for a supplemental handbook focused specifically on issues of particular interest to parents.

If you have additional questions you would like included in subsequent versions of the Parent Handbook, please contact BHSEC Parent Coordinator Carol Turitz.

We wish you and your student much success at this unique school.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

MISSION STATEMENT	1
HISTORY	2
CONTACT INFORMATION	3
BASIC INFORMATION	4
• ATTENDANCE	4
• HEALTH PROCEDURES	5
• EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	5
• FAMILY CONTACT INFORMATION – CHANGING ADDRESS	5
• METRO CARDS	6
• STUDENT ID'S	6
• SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH	6
• VISITOR POLICY	6
• BHSEC DAILY CLASS PERIODS	6
• 2011-2012 ACADEMIC CALENDAR	7
PARENT/STUDENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION	11
PARENT SUPPORT OF BHSEC'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY	13
ACADEMICS	14
ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES	16
GUIDANCE SERVICES	17
NON-ACADEMIC ISSUES	18
COLLEGE-RELATED MATTERS	19
PARENT ORGANIZATIONS, RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION	25
• PTA	25
• SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM	27
• PARENT COORDINATOR	28

Bard High School Early College Mission Statement

The mission of Bard High School Early College is to provide bright, highly motivated students of high school age the challenge of a rigorous course of study that emphasizes thinking through writing, discussion, and inquiry, enabling them to begin college upon completing the 9th and 10th grades.

The fundamental principles guiding Bard High School Early College are:

- that many motivated students, having had the benefit of a rigorous course of study in the 9th and 10th grade, are fully capable of beginning college work by the time they would normally reach the 11th grade;
- that meeting the particular needs of such students requires a faculty as committed to fostering adolescent development as they are to teaching and scholarship;
- that a strong general education in the liberal arts and sciences should be the foundation of the curriculum for these students;
- and that an early college based on these principles could provide a model for reforming the education of American high school students.

The academic program at Bard High School Early College is the intellectual embodiment of the early college's principles and mission. The program is designed to engage students in the life of the mind through an exploration of Western cultural heritage and modes of thought from other cultures.

At Bard High School Early College, students gain exposure to a broad spectrum of thought in the liberal arts and sciences, develop their intellectual curiosity, and work to satisfy this curiosity by thinking and learning independently.

Students are also encouraged to test theory through practice – in the laboratory, the studio, in rehearsal and performance, and outside of school. In addition, students at BHSEC develop a sense of themselves as thinkers and creators with individual voices and perspectives:

- understanding of the scientific method – its approaches to inquiry, its strengths and limitations as a mode of analysis, and a basic comprehension of the fundamental laws governing both physical phenomena and human behavior;
- gain an appreciation of several forms of artistic and literary expression, the creative process, and the disciplined use of imagination, formal structure, and aesthetic values;

- knowledge of some of the most influential works of Western culture and critical understanding of the values, assumptions, ideologies that they express;
- knowledge and appreciation of modes of thought of other cultures – including non-Western cultures, and groups or societies that exist as distinct subcultures within Western culture;
- a sense of history – ideas, movements, peoples, and events of the past – and an understanding of how our view of the past is shaped, and shapes our understanding of the present and future;
- sensitivity to the moral and ethical dimensions of thought and action, and developing the ability to make informed moral and ethical decisions.

BHSEC HISTORY

BHSEC was created through an unusual partnership between Bard College, an independent non-profit liberal arts college located in the Hudson Valley of New York, and the New York City Department of Education.

While considered a New York City public high school, BHSEC is unique in that Bard College oversees the academic program to ensure that the college course of studies in years three and four at BHSEC meets the requisite standards for Bard College academic credits.

Bard College awards an Associate in Arts degree to students who successfully complete the two year college program offered at BHSEC, and these 60 college credits are transferrable to a wide variety of public and private universities.

BHSEC students are thus students of a public high school and also students of Bard College, and upon their completion of the early college program are presented as degree candidates to the Bard College Board of Trustees. The BHSEC schools (BHSEC Manhattan and BHSEC Queens) are the only dual degree granting schools in the New York City school system

In its role overseeing the degree granting program at BHSEC, Bard College appoints the principal (subject to the approval and final appointment by the Chancellor) and oversees the college-credit bearing classes.

To ensure that the academic program meets Bard standards, Bard has also become a financial partner for BHSEC, raising approximately 25 – 30% of the total BHSEC operating budget each year, paying for the salaries of six full time teachers, college adjunct teachers and for student support staff including the college transfer office staff, the office of student activities, the learning center and our admissions program, as well as the College Deans, among other critical activities and supports at the school.

BHSEC OFFICE DIRECTORY

MAIN NUMBER	212.995.8479	EXTENSION
MICHAEL LERNER	PRINCIPAL	2282
CAMILLE SAWICK	ASST PRINCPL – ORGNZATION	2232
SARA HABERMAN	ASST PRINCPL – STUDENTS	4221
MARTHA OLSON	DEAN OF ADMINISTRATION	4073
TABETHA EWING	DEAN	4071
SISKA BRUTSAERT	DEAN OF STUDIES	4072
MARIA PASQUARIELLO	SCHOOL SECRETARY	2231
LIZZY STEMMER	ATTENDANCE	2221
CAROL TURITZ	PARENT COORDINATOR	2281
KRISTI POWELL	SPECIAL PROJECTS MGR.	2282
ANNA AZEGLIO	GUIDANCE – 10 th GR.& YR1	5261
LEAH GESOFF	GUIDANCE -- 9 TH GR. & YR2	3221
QUINCEE ROBINSON	DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS	2041
DWIGHT HODGSON	ADMISSIONS COORDINATOR	2043
WHITNEY BATES	STUDENT ACTIVITIES CO-ORDINATOR	4062
ANGELA BALL	HEALTH AIDE	2072
BETH CHEIKES	COLLEGE COORDINATOR	4061
PTA	VIA PARENT COORDINATOR	2281

E-MAIL: all BHSEC e-mail addresses take the following format: first name initial, first seven letters of last name @bhsec.bard.edu. For example, to address e-mail to Kristi Powell: kpowell@bhsec.bard.edu
If you don't get a response, have your student confirm the email contact is correct.

BARD HIGH SCHOOL EARLY COLLEGE DEPARTMENTS

ART AND ART HISTORY	Ext 2044
ENGLISH	Ext 5061
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	Ext 5081
MATH	Ext 3101
PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ATHLETICS	Ext 2301
SCIENCE	Ext 3081
SOCIAL SCIENCE	Ext 4081

BASIC INFORMATION

Attendance

First period begins at 9:00 AM. All students must be in the school building by 9:00 AM, even if they have no first period class. Late students MUST sign in with the attendance office. Ninth and tenth grade students must stay in the building until dismissal at 3:50 pm. We urge parents to work with us to ensure students arrive at BHSEC for class on time.

Ninth Grade students are required to remain in school for lunch during their first semester at BHSEC. After the first semester, Ninth Grade students will have the same lunch privileges as students in grades Ten, Year I, and Year II. BHSEC allows students in good academic standing to leave for their lunch periods with permission from their parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Year I and II students may also leave after their last scheduled class, but not during other times of the day. Students who are habitually late for their classes after lunch or who otherwise abuse their lunch privileges will lose these privileges.

Students must attend all classes. Classes immediately before and after vacations are as important as all other classes in the term. Students are expected to attend those classes and to limit their vacation to the days prescribed in the BHSEC calendar. The only excused absences are for observance of religious holidays. Students must inform their instructors ahead of time of such absences and make up any work missed. Similarly, if illness or emergency necessitates missing a class, the student should talk with the instructor about how to make up the work missed. Excused absences are limited to religious holidays or illnesses verified by a doctor's note.

Doctor's appointments and college visits are not officially excused. These absences will be recorded as official absences by the instructor and the BHSEC attendance office. Students should consult with individual course policies to understand the specific consequences of missing classes and not rely on a note from a parent to excuse them from missed work. Since up to 60% of a course grade can be based on class participation, any absence may jeopardize a student's ability to earn credit for a course.

Incorrectly Marked Absent

Students who do not have a class first period and arrive after attendance is taken, must check in with the attendance office (Lizzy Stemmer, Room 222).

Tardiness

When a student cuts a class or is frequently late to class, the missed class time will affect the student's course grade. Excessive cutting (3 cuts or more per class) or accumulated lateness (3 lates equals one cut) will result in a meeting with the student and his or her parents.

Attendance During Final Exams and Regents Week

Attendance for Final Exams and Regents Exams is critical. Students and parents should consult the school calendar for exact dates. Students should come in for all of their scheduled exam periods

during those weeks. Make-up exams are offered only for medically documented absences. Students are **not** in attendance on days when they have no exams scheduled.

Health Procedures

When a student is sick, s/he should go to the health office located in room 207A. **Students who are sick should not leave the building without consulting the health office.** The Health Aide will determine how to treat the illness. She will also inform the student's teachers and parents. If the student requires additional medical attention, the school, in consultation with the parent, will determine if EMS must be called.

If the parent cannot be located by phone, the school will consult the Emergency "blue" card for additional contact information. If a parent or emergency contact person cannot be reached by phone, a determination will be made by school officials as to the best course of action.

If the student is too ill to stay in school, a parent/legal guardian must pick the child up from school. In the event that the student is taken to the hospital by EMS, the Health Aide or other school official will accompany the student to the hospital and remain until the parent/guardian arrives.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of any emergency, our instructions come from the Superintendent's office. We are obligated (as is every school) to follow the DOE Standard Operating Procedures Manual, and to inform the Superintendent's office of any emergency in the building. Carefully read the following information regarding safety arrangements.

Unless we need to evacuate the building in an emergency, we will remain on-site in extended homeroom. **Here are the BHSEC phone numbers to use in the event of an emergency that affects the school: 212.995.8479 (main line); 347.563.5105 (Parent Coordinator).** In case of an emergency, which *necessitates keeping students in the building*, students will not be allowed to leave on their own.

The **NYC Dept. of Education website**, schools.nyc.gov, will have emergency information available in the "News and Information" section of the home page, as will the city's **311 Gov't. Services & Information** phone line. Local radio stations and TV news channels will have emergency response information.

In case of a **BHSEC emergency**, students will be evacuated to one or more off-site locations as per our Dept. of Education safety plan. Please make sure you and your children discuss and agree upon family emergency safety procedures, emergency contacts (other than parents) and alternate travel routes home.

Family Home Contact Information

It is imperative that we have correct contact information from you. If any of your emergency contact information – especially telephone numbers – changes during the school year, please make sure you provide Lizzy Stemmer (Rm. 222) and Parent Coordinator, Carol Turitz (Rm. 228) with

updated information and proper documentation. Ms. Turitz updates the Emergency “Blue Card” information. Ms. Stemmer updates official Dept. of Education address records. An electric/gas utility bill or a current lease are the only accepted proof of change of address.

MetroCards

MTA Student MetroCards are distributed to all eligible students at the beginning of the academic year. Any student who loses a Student MetroCard should see Blanca Encarnacion, Room 205, 8:00 a.m. to 3:40 p.m. for a replacement.

Student ID Cards

Students will be issued BHSEC ID cards at the beginning of the academic year from Kristi Powell. Students are expected to show their IDs upon entering the building each day. There is a \$5 replacement fee for lost ID cards, which can be requested from Kristi Powell.

School Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast is free to all students and served from 8:00 to 9:00 AM. Our cafeteria serves lunch each day from 3rd to 5th period. Free and Reduced lunch forms are distributed in the fall. Full price lunch costs \$1.25.

Visitor Policy

All visitors (including parents) should make an appointment with a faculty/staff member before visiting the building. Visitors must sign in with photo ID at the School Safety Agents’ desk.

BHSEC Daily Periods: Note: school day begins at 9:00 am and dismissal is at 3:50 pm

Period	time
0	8:05 – 8:55 am

1	9:00 – 9:50 am
2	9:55 – 10:45 am
3	10:50 – 11:40 am
4	11:45 – 12:35 pm
5	12:40 – 1:30 pm
6	1:35 – 2:25 pm
7*	2:30 – 3:20 pm
8	3:25 – 4:15 pm

2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

January 24, 2011

(Revised September 6, 2011*)

The School Year Calendar mandates that school sessions begin for all students on Thursday, September 8, 2011 and includes a Midwinter Recess (Monday, February 20 through Friday, February 24, 2012). It reflects that on Tuesday, November 8, 2011, and Thursday, June 7, 2012, students in all five boroughs will not be in attendance, but schools in all five boroughs will be scheduled for a Chancellor's Conference Day for staff development related to the Regents High Learning Standards and Assessments.

August	29,	Monday	The following staff report: Assistant Principals and school-based intermediate supervisors not designated to work an increased work year.
September	5,	Monday	Labor Day (schools closed)
September	6,	Tuesday	Classroom Teachers, Bilingual Teachers in School and Community Relations, Guidance Counselors, Attendance Teachers, Nurses, Therapists, Laboratory Specialists and Technicians, Educational Paraprofessionals report. School Secretaries, Psychologists and Social Workers report for a regular work day. Employees in titles not listed should consult the applicable collective bargaining agreement. For all UFT-represented employees who, pursuant to the June 22, 2009 agreement, report to school on the Tuesday following Labor Day, that Tuesday shall be utilized first and foremost for preparation of the classroom and

			for the arrival of students. If time permits, the remainder of the day may be utilized for professional development. Students will not be in attendance.
September	7,	Wednesday	Chancellor's Conference Day for staff development. Students will not be in attendance.
September	8,	Thursday	SCHOOL SESSIONS BEGIN FOR ALL STUDENTS Early dismissal for non-District 75 Kindergarten Students only Partial school time for Prekindergarten public school students.
September	9,	Friday	Early dismissal for non-District 75 Kindergarten Students only Partial school time for Prekindergarten public school students.
September	12,	Monday	First Full day for non-District 75 Kindergarten public school students. Partial school time for Prekindergarten public school students.
September	13,	Tuesday	First Full day for all Prekindergarten public school students.
September	29, 30,	Thursday and Friday	Rosh Hashanah (schools closed)
October	4,	Tuesday	Prekindergarten Non-Attendance Day
October	10,	Monday	Columbus Day Observed (schools closed)
November	8,	Tuesday	Election Day Chancellor's Conference Day for staff development related to the Regents High Learning

			Standards and Assessments. Students will not be in attendance.
November	11,	Friday	Veterans Day (schools closed)
November	24,	Thursday and	Thanksgiving Recess
November	25,	Friday	(schools closed)
December	26,	Monday	Winter Recess (including Christmas and New Year's Day)
		12/26/11 through	(schools closed –
January	2,	and including	students return to school on
2012		Monday 1/2/12	Tuesday, January 3, 2012).
January	16,	Monday	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (schools closed)
January	27,	Friday	Prekindergarten Non-Attendance Day
January	30,	Monday	Fall Term ends for high school students. No high school students will be in attendance. Chancellor's Conference Day for staff development in all high Schools. All other students will be in attendance. (See section 7 below for details on high school student attendance on January 30.)
January	31,	Tuesday	Spring Term begins for high school students.
February	20,	Monday through	Midwinter Recess
	24,	Friday	(including Washington's Birthday)
March	23,	Friday	(schools closed) Prekindergarten Non-Attendance Day
April	6,	Friday through	Spring Recess (including Good Friday, Easter and Passover)
April	13,	Friday	(schools closed) Students return to school on Monday, April 16).
May	28,	Monday	Memorial Day Observed (schools closed)
June	7,	Thursday	Chancellor's Conference Day for staff development related to the Regents High Learning

June	22,	Friday	<p>Standards and Assessments. School staff report to work if required by their collective bargaining agreement. Students in all five boroughs will not be in attendance. In non-District 75 high schools having to administer Regents Exams from June 13 through June 21, students in high school administering Regents exams will not be in attendance on Regents Rating Day, Friday, June 22.</p>
June	27,	Wednesday	<p>LAST DAY FOR ALL STUDENTS (all students report) An early dismissal of students is to be scheduled on Wednesday, June 27 under the guidelines outlined in Section 13 below. Last day for all Classroom Teachers, Bilingual Teachers in School and Community Relations, Attendance Teachers, Nurses, Therapists, Laboratory Specialists and Technicians, and last day for Paraprofessionals.</p>

There is also a BHSEC School Calendar accessible here:
<http://www.calendarwiz.com/calendars/calendar.php?crd=bhsec&&PHPSESSID=9a007746f7d59ef611d5130cbc2d41c8&jsenabled=1&winH=744>

PARENT/STUDENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Q: Can my child attend Parent/Teacher conferences?

A: Yes, in most cases, we recommend that your child attend Parent/Teacher conferences, especially in the 9th and 10th grade. It is not mandatory, but often helpful to have students present at conferences.

Q: When should a parent to contact a teacher?

A: At points in the year, you may wish to contact teachers for any number of reasons-- to share concerns about a student's overall performance and academic standing, to solicit recommendations to improve school performance, or to ask about academic support or referral to the guidance staff. Parents should also inform teachers about upcoming absences.

Q: How should a parent contact a teacher?

Email is the most convenient way to contact a member of the faculty. Teachers are generally accessible and will generally respond within a few days. Urgent matters can be directed to the parent coordinator.

Q: When is it inappropriate for a parent to contact a teacher because the issue is something a student should handle directly with a teacher?

A: It is the student's responsibility to get clarification from teachers about individual assignments and their due dates.

Q: What is a reasonable timeframe to hear back from a teacher?

A: 72 hours, excluding weekends and school breaks. If you do not get a response within a reasonable time, check to confirm you have used the correct email address.

Q: Under what circumstances will a teacher or guidance counselor contact a parent about his/her child?

A: Parents should expect to hear from teachers or a guidance counselor when the school recommends learning interventions, such as recitations for individual subjects and attendance at the Learning Center. In addition, per the school's new early notification system, teachers are asked to contact parents before the end of each marking period if there is concern about a student's performance because of absences, poor grades on tests or papers, and/or failure to complete assignments.

BHSEC has a policy of notifying parents in these cases:

- When any student receives an F or D on a major assignment / assessment.
- When any student misses a major exam / assessment.
- When any student misses 3 consecutive classes without notification from home.
- At the instructor's discretion in cases when a student has not turned in a number of assignments which creates a cause for concern.

In any of these cases, either the instructor or a guidance counselor will contact you by email. In order for this to work, please make sure you have up-to-date email addresses on file with Carol Turitz. We hope that reaching out to parents as early as possible in these cases will help keep our students on track.

Q: How can parents get information about their student's academic performance?

We encourage parents to have regular conversations with their students about their classes and academic work. Narrative reports are sent home four times a year and can be a basis for these conversations. If you have serious concerns about academic performance, or find you need more information, we recommend you reach out to specific teachers or to the guidance office.

9th Grade Guidance Counselor: Leah Gesoff (legesoff@bhsec.bard.edu); Ext. 3221
10th Grade Guidance Counselor: Anna Azeglio (aazeglio@bhsec.bard.edu); Ext. 5261
Year 1 Guidance Counselor: Anna Azeglio (aazeglio@bhsec.bard.edu); Ext. 5261
Year 2 Guidance Counselor: Leah Gesoff (legesoff@bhsec.bard.edu) Ext. 3221

Q: How can parents provide feedback on their experience at BHSEC?

A: We encourage parents to fill out the annual DOE Learning Environment Survey each Spring. The results are factored into the school's annual Progress Report and provide the school with valuable feedback. Parents may also contact PTA and SLT officers as well as Parent Coordinator Carol Turitz.

Q: How can I access my child's academic information on ARIS?

A: ARIS, the DOE's web-based Student Information System, provides access to student records, transcripts, and test scores. All parents can use ARIS to follow their child's academic progress. For ARIS access information, please contact AP Camille Sawick.

PARENT SUPPORT OF BHSEC'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

BHSEC's educational philosophy is based on the belief that students have the interest and capacity to do college-level work. The school's classes are small, the teachers are available outside the classroom to answer questions and provide guidance on assignments, the narratives that accompany grades twice a semester highlight areas of strength and areas for increased attention, and students are encouraged to learn from the feedback they receive from their teachers and peers.

One of the guiding principles of a BHSEC education, especially as your child moves into the college program, is that students should be their own advocates. This means that students should take the initiative to address questions and concerns with the faculty and administration, rather than ask or expect their parents to intervene, as is usually the case in middle and elementary school. Developing the skills to advocate for themselves now, will better prepare them to successfully negotiate the complexities of their post-secondary education.

When students have questions about an assignment, a grade, test or classroom policies, they should speak directly to the teacher and attempt to resolve or understand the issue on their own. Similarly, students who are struggling with a course or specific concept should seek help from the faculty member outside the classroom or set up an appointment with the Learning Center.

It is especially important that students take responsibility early to address areas of academic weakness or uncertainty, before the problem builds. As a first step, all students, whether "struggling" or not, should take advantage of faculty office hours and the Learning Center to solidify their grasp of course material. Going in for extra help is NOT viewed as a weakness at BHSEC; it is the smart thing to do and expected.

As our students learn to become more self reliant, as parents, we still want to be informed about their progress because there will be times when they need our help. Although BHSEC students are ready for the challenges of college level academic work, they are still in their early to middle teens, and not all are prepared for the organizational and time management challenges they face at BHSEC.

How do you decide when to get involved? Every case is different but here are a few general guidelines:

- 1) First, have your student address the issue or concern independently with the faculty or staff member. Sometimes it helps if you discuss a strategy or role play ahead of time. For many students, especially 9th graders, initiating a discussion with a faculty member can be intimidating.

- 2) Make sure you talk with your student before and after their discussion so you understand the facts and context of the situation.
- 3) If you or your child feels further discussion is required, your child can speak with a guidance counselor (see list below) or you should feel free to call or email the teacher directly. Please keep your initial calls and emails brief and to the point. The faculty have many demands on their time and teach about 60-80 students each semester. If you believe the situation requires an in person meeting, you can request this for a mutually convenient time.

If your concern is not resolved after speaking with the faculty member, you should contact your student's guidance counselor or the Parent Coordinator, Carol Turitz (cturitz@bhsec.bard.edu).

ACADEMICS

Q: How much homework should students expect at BHSEC?

A: Homework assignments and the time required to complete them can vary widely depending on the work habits of students and the level of the class. In 9th grade especially, assignments that take half an hour for one student may take an hour for another. We anticipate BHSEC students will have 3-4 hours of work a night. Rather than nightly assignments, students may have assignments that stretch over longer periods as well.

Q: How soon should students expect graded assignments back from a teacher?

A: The school administration asks teachers to return assignments to students in advance of the deadline for a subsequent assignment so students may integrate feedback.

Q: What should parents do when they have concerns about a class or teacher?

A: In any case when parents have concerns about a class or a teacher, they should contact the Principal

Q: What are the requirements for entering the early college program?

A: Students must maintain a GPA of 2.0 to be eligible for the BHSEC college program.

Q: What are the requirements for the Bard Associate of Arts Degree?

A: In addition to completing all New York State Regents Diploma requirements, in order to receive the Bard Associate of Arts Degree, students must maintain a 2.0 GPA, earn no less than 60 college credits during the two years in the college program, and fulfill the following distribution requirements:

- Four semesters of the Seminar sequence
- Two semesters of a year-long laboratory college sequence
- (NOTE: not every science course fulfills the laboratory requirement)
- Two semesters of college mathematics
- Two semesters of college foreign language, including one at the intermediate level
- Four semesters of Humanities courses, including at least one semester in history and at least one semester in English
- Three credits of music, theater, dance, and / or visual art while enrolled in the college program

Q: What opportunities do BHSEC students have to engage in Independent Studies and Tutorials?

A: Independent Studies are open to Year 2 students in good academic standing (3.0 GPA or above) who wish to pursue advanced work under the supervision of a BHSEC faculty member. In undertaking an independent study, students agree to carry out the project as described in the proposal; meet with the faculty supervisor a minimum of once a week; and present work in a BHSEC public forum. Students also agree to notify their faculty supervisor, dean's office, and registrar if they find it necessary to discontinue their independent study.

Students may take no more than one independent study per semester, and no more than two over the two years of the college program. In exceptional circumstances, a student may petition for a third independent study.

Q: What is the grading system used at BHSEC?

A. BHSEC uses the letter grade system given on the table below. Students at BHSEC earn two GPAs. The high school GPA for 9th and 10th grade classes is un-weighted. The college GPA is weighted according to the credit value of the course. (Note that some courses are graded on a Pass/No Credit basis and do not factor into the GPA. PE and advisory are not included in GPAs.)

A, A-	4.0, 3.7	excellent work	(100-93, 92-90)
B+, B, B-	3.3, 3.0, 2.7	work more than satisfactory	(89-87, 86-83, 82-80)
C+, C, C-	2.3, 2.0, 1.7	competent work	(79-77, 76-73, 72-70)
D	1.0	work poor but deserving of credit	(69-65)
F	0.0	failure to reach the standard required for credit	(64 and below)

Q: Which Regents will my child take and when?

A: BHSEC students are required to pass five Regents exams. After completing 9th grade coursework, BHSEC students take the Integrated Algebra and US History Regents. After completing 10th grade coursework, BHSEC students take the Chemistry, Global Studies, English Regents Exams. (As of 2011-12, Regents exams will no longer be offered in January.) Students who have already taken any of these exams will not need to retake them at BHSEC.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Q: When and where is tutoring is offered at BHSEC?

A: Informal tutoring is offered at BHSEC all day long. Faculty members post their schedules and are often available to meet with students in their offices during, before and after school. Small group tutoring is also provided by teachers every day from 3:20 to 3:50PM.

In addition, math and writing tutoring is provided in the Learning Center located in the library by appointment or on a drop-in basis. The Learning Center is open to all students. The schedule for tutoring is posted every Thursday morning and appointments are available before, during and after school.

The Writing Center is a useful resource for writers of all levels who benefit from discussing their work here. The Center is run by Katherine Randall and student tutors are available to help students with writing assignments. The Math Center provides tutoring for all levels of math classes.

Q: Does BHSEC offer any peer mentoring?

A: Yes, 9th and 10th grade students may be matched with peer mentors upon the recommendation of the guidance office. Mentors meet with students weekly and help them with homework, study skills, and social and academic support. Regular attendance to mentoring meetings is a requirement of the mentoring program. Mentoring updates are sent home on a weekly basis.

BHSEC offers the following **Academic Support Services** for students:

- 1) Bridge Program – Prior to entering BHSEC, all incoming 9th graders are invited to attend a weeklong introduction to Bard High School Early College. The program is held during the summer and its primary goal is to transition students into a new setting and ease any anxiety they may have about making new friends and engaging in early college work. Students take sample classes, learn study skills, become familiar with the neighborhood and collaborate in group activities that promote teambuilding.
- 2) Departmental Recitations – Many departments offer organized group recitations for students who in need of academic support. Students are placed in these sections, which are credit bearing, upon recommendation of the guidance office. Attendance is required.
- 3) Small Group Instruction – All members of the faculty offer individual or small group tutoring each day either after school hours.
- 4) Learning Center – The Center promotes college readiness by providing individual tutorial help in the critical areas of writing and math. It provides a common learning space for students to collaborate with each other through small group work and study groups. Research literacy instruction is embedded within the subject disciplines to assist students in crafting independent analytical papers and presentations.
- 5) Mentoring Program – 10th grade students who are identified by teachers and counselors as needing additional support are required to participate in a 10th grade study skills program that includes: Meeting with a year 2 mentor for 90 minutes per week and checking in with Ms. Gesoff, the 10th grade guidance counselor, on a weekly basis. Students are also required to use their planner on a daily basis and attend a weekly study hall after school on Tuesdays. Students will earn .25 credits if they fulfill the requirements of the program.

GUIDANCE SERVICES

The Guidance office can help with a range of social and personal issues, including depression, anxiety, bullying, and other teen concerns.

- 1) Academic Counseling - Students on academic probation with GPAs lower than a 2.0 are placed into the academic probation program where members of the counseling staff meet with the student and his/her family to help identify the reasons underlying the student's low performance. Then, based on the outcome

of the meeting, recommendations are made by the guidance staff and the student is expected to follow those recommendations.

Every 9th and 10th grader on academic probation meets weekly with a guidance counselor for counseling sessions. The counselors meet with students' parents at least two times per year to assess and then re-assess students' needs, strengths and limitations.

- 2) Attendance Outreach - The guidance department meets with the Attendance Coordinator weekly to discuss student absences, individual cases and cutting patterns. Stemming from these meetings, phone calls are made to parents or counselors follow-up with students.
- 3) Counseling- School counselors Anna Azeglio and Leah Gesoff provide personal, social and academic counseling and support to students individually and/or in group settings. Counselors collaborate with parents and faculty to ensure the academic, social and personal success and safety of students. When necessary, members of the Guidance Department make referrals to and collaborate with mental health professionals.
- 4) Referral Services- Members of the guidance staff may help refer families to appropriate service providers if they are looking for clinicians, psychologists, alternative schooling options, vocational programs, legal aid etc.

9th Grade Guidance Counselor: Leah Gesoff (legesoff@bhsec.bard.edu); Ext. 3221

10th Grade Guidance Counselor: Anna Azeglio (aazeglio@bhsec.bard.edu); Ext. 5261

Year 1 Guidance Counselor: Anna Azeglio (aazeglio@bhsec.bard.edu); Ext. 5261

Year 2 Guidance Counselor: Leah Gesoff (legesoff@bhsec.bard.edu) Ext. 3221

NON-ACADEMIC ISSUES

Q: What is the BHSEC Advisory program?

A: Each student at BHSEC is assigned an advisor. Advisory groups of 16-18 students meet once a week. The 9th and 10th grade advisory is focused on transition to BHSEC and social and academic well-being, community building, and giving students a space to unwind. Year 1 and Year 2 advisory is focused on the transition to college at BHSEC and beyond.

Q: What opportunities do BHSEC students have for study abroad?

A: BHSEC World

Information about our exchange programs in China, Spain and Turkey as well as links to recommended travel programs can be found through BHSEC World, our International Studies Program. Visit BHSEC World at: <http://bhsecworld.edublogs.org/>

Each semester information on opportunities are available from Whitney Bates, Student Activities and International Program Coordinator.

Q: What opportunities do students have to engage in community service?

BHSEC students are strongly encouraged to engage in service inside and outside of school. It is not required of students, but many students take advantage service opportunities organized through the school. Students may take 1 credit courses that combine service and academic work, or they may engage in other service activities that are not credit bearing. Service credit courses are listed in the course guide. Other service opportunities can be arranged through Whitney Bates, Student Activities Director.

Q: What after school clubs are available for BHSEC?

A: BHSEC students in good academic standing (GPA 2.0) are encouraged to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities, e.g., school clubs, volunteer work, or internships. These are organized through the Office of Student Activities (OSA).

Information about events happening around the school and in the community as well as listings of clubs and links to useful websites can be found at the OSA blog. Year 2 students can also use the site to be updated on important information regarding graduation and commencement.

Visit the OSA blog at: <http://bhsecstudentactivities.edublogs.org/>

Students interested in starting clubs should contact Whitney Bates, Student Activities and International Programs Coordinator at bates@bard.edu, or 212.995.8479, ext. 4062. All club proposals need to be approved by the Office of Student Activities and are subject to change in order to fulfill the Department of Education and BHSEC requirements.

COLLEGE RELATED MATTERS

Q: What is the College Transfer Office?

A: The College Transfer Office (CTO) is one of BHSEC's signature programs. The College Transfer Office (CTO) was established in 2003 to assist BHSEC students in the college transfer application process. A fundamental goal of the CTO is to encourage students to be well-informed, confident, and ambitious when considering their transition from BHSEC to four-year colleges.

Q: What are BHSEC “College Notes”?

A: The CTO publishes College Notes that are distributed in weekly Year 1 and Year 2 CTO advisories and include information about scholarships, upcoming deadlines, college overnight and diversity programs, college fairs, and more.

Q: Where can I find out more information about the college transfer process?

A: The CTO maintains an extensive website that can answer many questions for parents and students about the college application process, including a calendar of college visits, the advising process, college selection and admission, standardized testing, financial aid and scholarships, timelines and important dates, and other topics. The site can be reached at: www.bard.edu/bhsec/college-transfer/.

Q: Do college admissions offices recognize the rigor of the school. How do we know?

A: The College Transfer Office (CTO) consistently emphasizes BHSEC’s unique and rigorous program in its dealings with college admissions representatives in the U.S. and abroad. CTO staff highlights the selective admissions process, advanced level of work required, the fact that students graduate with an Associate’s degree from Bard College, and the policy of not ranking students. In addition, teachers always incorporate BHSEC students’ demanding educational experience in their letters of recommendation.

Colleges also witness first-hand the rigor of BHSEC’s curriculum by reading students’ applications. Over the years, BHSEC students have been submitting stronger applications with personal essays that demonstrate not only their high quality writing but also the level of preparation they have received at BHSEC. There has been more than one occasion when an admissions officer has called the CTO to comment on an outstanding essay that a BHSEC student wrote.

Last fall (2010), BHSEC Manhattan hosted over 90 college visits and BHSEC Queens over 50. During these visits, college admissions representatives give information sessions to interested Year 1 and Year 2 students, and also meet with the CTO staff to discuss BHSEC and its unique program.

Most traditional public high schools do not receive any visits from colleges, and even the most selective public and private high schools usually do not have as many visits. (The schedule of visits is listed on BHSEC’s calendar.)

BHSEC’s CTO staff also attends the National Association of College Admission Counseling conference each fall. This multi-day conference is attended by several thousand college admissions officers and high school counselors from the U.S. and abroad, and provides a wonderful opportunity for networking and getting the word out about BHSEC. In the

spring, the CTO hosts a presentation where BHSEC students and faculty speak to a group of admissions officers about their experiences teaching and studying at BHSEC.

Although BHSEC students have been accepted to outstanding colleges and universities, the national college admissions process has grown increasingly competitive over the years.

Most colleges continue to weigh students' grades/GPA most heavily in admissions decisions, even as some colleges are no longer requiring the SAT/ACT or subject tests. Therefore, it is important to help ensure that your student performs well in all subjects at BHSEC. And while the CTO makes strong efforts to communicate the rigor of the school, the CTO cannot ultimately control the decisions colleges make about whether to accept our students. It is also important to note that BHSEC is still a young school (its first class graduated in 2003) without a long track record.

Once BHSEC students are enrolled in college, many inform the CTO that they feel more confident and better prepared than their peers in college and, in some cases, find the workload easier.

Q: What academic records does BHSEC send to colleges?

A: BHSEC sends two separate transcripts, with two distinct GPAs, to colleges:

1. A New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) transcript for students' high school work in the 9th and 10th grade. The high school GPA is on a 100-point scale, with 96 as the highest possible grade since BHSEC does not award A+ grades. NYCDOE transcript also includes students' regents grades.
2. A Bard College transcript for students' college work in Year 1 and Year 2. The college GPA is on a 4.0 scale.

Q: What colleges accept BHSEC's two years of college credits?

A: SUNY and CUNY schools have awarded between one and two years of credit, often awarding students the full 60 credits or even beyond. Usually, out-of-state public institutions have also awarded between one and two years of credit, including Arizona State University in Phoenix, Temple University (this is not a private college as many people think), University of Massachusetts at Amherst, University of Vermont and University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Typically, colleges and universities' Registrar's office handle the credit transfer, not the admissions office, although in a few schools, such as SUNY Binghamton, the admissions office handles the credit transfer.

In terms of private colleges that accept BHSEC credits, there is no guarantee, but we have heard that Allegheny College, Boston University, Clark University, Knox College, Oberlin College, Rochester Institute of Technology and Syracuse University have accepted at least one year of credit.

It's important to note that accepting BHSEC credits does not exempt students from some colleges' residency requirements. For example, colleges may require students to fulfill a minimum number of credits at their school (i.e., paying their tuition) in order to receive a degree from that college.

Likewise, even if a college accepts BHSEC credits, the student may need to have a separate discussion with academic departments about waiving prerequisite courses and opting out of introductory courses.

The CTO encourages students to save syllabi from all their Year 1 and Year 2 courses throughout their college years to help with discussions about credit transfer. Therefore, parents should make copies of these syllabi at the beginning of each of these four semesters. It is also wise to make copies of all Year 1 and Year 2 major papers and final exams since these may help influence colleges' decisions about transferring credits.

Q: What are the school's recommendations for college admissions testing?

A: The CTO recommends that BHSEC students prepare to take the following tests in Year 1:

1. Either the March SAT or the April ACT. Although the CTO recommends that students take the March/April SAT/ACT because it does not interfere with studying for final exams, the May SAT is a fine alternative. Many students re-take the SAT/ACT in Year 2. Most colleges accept test results through December or January of Year 2.

(Please see below for differences between the ACT and SAT. Colleges will accept either test.)

2. Two SAT subject tests in June of Year 1. Students can take ANY two subject tests unless they are applying to engineering programs, in which case they will need to take math and science. Many BHSEC students take the Literature exam since it is fairly similar to the Critical Reasoning section of the SAT and does not require extensive additional preparation.

9th & 10th grade subject test alert – although the CTO recommends that students take two subjects tests in June of Year 1, 9th grade students who are very strong in U.S. History should consider taking the U.S. History exam at the end of 9th grade, and 10th grade students who are very strong in Global

Studies should consider taking the World History subject test at the end of 10th grade.

However, you should be aware that your child's score on these tests will be determined by his or her performance relative to all other students taking the test on that day. Most students take these tests in their junior and senior years and in many schools students are required to take two years of Global and/or US History. Therefore, your student will need to weigh the advantage of taking a test upon completion of the relevant BHSEC course in 9th or 10th grade versus additional electives in Year 1 and 2 which often provide a review of the material covered in the introductory survey courses.

Q: What is the difference between the SAT and ACT and which test is recommended for what type of student?

A: The CTO will give a presentation to 9th and 10th graders about the differences between the SAT and ACT and will coordinate a practice test for each so students can make a decision about which test they prefer. Although the SAT is better known on the East coast, the ACT is a great alternative and is accepted by every college. It is also more likely that students who take the ACT will not have to take subject tests because the ACT is content-focused as opposed to the SAT which emphasizes reasoning.

Q: To what extent do BHSEC courses prepare students for the SAT/ACT and Subject Tests? Where are there gaps?

A: BHSEC does not "teach to the test". The CTO recommends that students take free sample tests which are posted online by the College Board and purchase test books to prepare. While the SAT math section tests skills only up through 8th grade math, the reading involved in the math problems requires preparation.

Regarding Subject Tests, it is important to note that only about 40 colleges that accept the Common Application (400+ total) require Subject Tests and fewer than half of these require Subject Tests if you take the ACT.

<https://www.commonapp.org/CommonApp/MemberRequirements.aspx>

Faculty recommend that students who opt to take a Math or Science subject test do so after Year 1.

Q: What does the school recommend in terms of test prep? What resources does the school provide?

A: The CTO does not endorse any test prep program/provider and recommends that students pursue whatever is most convenient. BHSEC always offers a paid course on site and students can apply for financial aid. There are also free courses offered

locally at Henry Street Settlement and the Educational Alliance. If your child is the first in the family to go to college or if the parents went to college in another country, you may want to consider a more general college prep course, such as the one offered by the Edgies Teen Center at the Educational Alliance.

Q: When does the school recommend that a student apply “Early Decision” or “Early Action”?

A: Students learn about Early Action and Early Decision in Year 1 CTO advisory, and they can discuss the pros and cons of these options on an individual basis with their CTO advisor.

Q: When do students begin meeting with a counselor about college admissions?

A: While the formal college transfer process begins in Year 1, preparation for college admissions begins much earlier. Decisions made throughout all four years at BHSEC can determine the strength of a college application. Families are advised to keep informed about this important process by visiting the BHSEC College Transfer Office website at <http://www.bard.edu/bhsec/college-transfer/>.

Students start working with their CTO advisor in the spring of Year 1, meeting once a week in group advisories and then on an individual basis as scheduled. Students need to decide whether to apply Early Decision by October of Year 2. Early Action is not a binding decision and so many students choose to submit a few early applications. Students need to communicate their intentions to their CTO advisor at least one month prior to the early deadline.

Q: Can parents meet with their student’s college transfer advisor?

A: Yes, parents can meet once with their student’s CTO advisor, either in the Spring of Year 1 or early Fall of Year 2.

Q: What guidance, if any, does the CTO provide in terms of applying for financial aid?

A: In December the CTO invites a college advisor to give a financial aid presentation to Year 2 families. All financial aid forms are due January 15th. The CTO does not provide help with completing financial aid forms but parents can contact the FAFSA hotline and college admissions office for assistance.

During college advisory, there is discussion about financial aid packages, including subsidized vs. unsubsidized loans and the importance of considering financial aid in college decisions.

Q: Can students look at admission stats for BHSEC graduates?

A: Year 1 students receive a password that enables them to review BHSEC students' college admission results which are categorized by GPA and SAT/ACT score.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES

As a parent, you have specific rights and responsibilities outlined in the Department of Education's policies. A copy of the NYC DOE's Parents' Bill of Rights is attached for your reference. You may also access it at <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/B48085B8-030F-4D6C-8E11-53D04F4650CD/0/ParentsBillOfRights3.pdf>.

BHSEC PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

PTA Website: www.bhsec1pta.org

Email: bhsecpta@gmail.com

All families and teachers are automatically members of the Parent Teacher Association. Successful NYC Public Schools are distinguished by an active, involved, and unified PTA. Our goal is to enhance and supplement our children's BHSEC experience through a variety of enrichment programs and to facilitate and strengthen the communication of your opinions and ideas. Monthly speakers and programs at PTA meetings provide a forum to address parent concerns and share information on a broad range of topics. We have a number of committees to support our programs. Please join one!

The PTA has an active fundraising program throughout the school year. The money we raise is used to support a wide variety of student and school needs, including text books, teacher and library supplies, the music and dance programs, student activities and clubs, scholarships for student trips, computer software, and other specific school needs. It also funds capital improvement projects such as the recent cafeteria renovation. Fundraising targets and the programs we support are approved by parents annually at a general PTA membership meeting.

PTA meetings are usually on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 pm at the school, but check the school calendar to confirm.

2011-2012 PTA Executive Board

President

Abe Suleiman - abe.suleiman@gmail.com

First Vice Presidents

Becky Plattus – JamesALP@aol.com

Fabiana Carbo-Chavez – FabiCarbo@msn.com

College Vice Presidents

Carol Shuchman - carol.shuchman@gmail.com
Michael Duddy – MDuddy@mda-designgroup.com

High School Vice Presidents

Judy Cohen – butelinc@gmail.com
Sherri Levine – jaslny@yahoo.com

Treasurers

Annie Leung – annie123@gmail.com
Jean Chan – jean.chan@alliancebernstein.com

Recording Secretaries

Angela Murphy – murphmer@gmail.com
Colleen Tannis – coxbrookL@aol.com

Corresponding Secretaries

Corresponding@bhsec1pta.org
Amy Metroka – ametroka@health.nyc.gov
Ronda Zawel – rzawel@yahoo.com

How to receive information from the PTA:

The PTA uses email to distribute notices, PTA meeting times and agendas and other items of interest to parents. In addition to email distributions the PTA has a website: <http://bhsec1pta.org> where one can make a donation to the PTA, view recent and archived announcements, find helpful information on issues of concern to parents (homework, stress, speakers, etc), consult the PTA calendar, find contact information for teachers and staff, view recent and archived PTA and SLT meeting minutes, and use other interesting features. You can also purchase **Bardware** (tee shirts, totes, mugs, etc) from our school store.

Please make sure we have your email so that we can keep you up to date. You can send your contact info to bhsecpta@gmail.com, along with your child's name and grade. If you do not have email access, please give your contact information to Carol Turitz, BHSEC's parent coordinator (212-995-8479 x2281).

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)

Mandated by the state, School Leadership Teams represent the key stake holders in the education of our students - administration, parents, teachers, school staff and students. Teams are elected or selected by their constituency group and their purpose is to provide a vehicle for collaborative school-based decision-making. They follow a consensus-based decision making process and are responsible for writing the Comprehensive Education Plan and ensuring resources are aligned to implement these policies.

The SLT meet monthly throughout the school year, generally on the second Monday of the month at 5pm. All meetings are open to the public, although only elected representatives may speak. Nominations and elections for the 9th grade parent representative are held at the September and October PTA meetings and in May and June for the other grades.

If you have a question/concern you would like the SLT to address, please contact your elected representative:

SLT Parent Representatives 2011-2012

Name	Email	
9 th Grade Rep	To be elected at first PTA meeting	
9 th Grade Alternate	To be elected at first PTA meeting	
10 th Grade Rep	Betsy Krebs	betsykrebs@gmail.com
10 th Grade Alternate	John Rubino	rubinobklyn@gmail.com
Year 1 Rep	Maria Schneider	mariaschneider@verizon.net
Year 1 Alternate	Lauren Block	lauren.block@baruch.cuny.edu
Year 2 Rep	Kim Landsman	kjlandsman@pbwt.com
Year 2 Alternate	position open	

BHSEC PARENT COORDINATOR

Carol Turitz

Room 228

cturitz@bhsec.bard.edu

cturitz@schools.nyc.gov

212-995-8479 x2281

347-563-5105 (cell)

Carol is your “go-to” person if you are not sure where to direct your question, concern or suggestion. She is BHSEC’s primary liaison with parents and meets regularly with the PTA and SLT to facilitate communication and coordination with the school. She is responsible for aggregating and communicating parent concerns to Principal Lerner and assisting your interaction with BHSEC faculty and staff.

STUDENT PLANNER

Each year every student is provided with a planner which outlines school policies, procedures, expectations and other general information about BHSEC. While the content is directed towards students, many parents find the planner an important source of information. Much of what is relevant for parents has been incorporated in this handbook, but you may find it helpful to look through your student’s copy. You may purchase your own copy of the planner through Carol Turitz, the Parent Coordinator, for a minimal charge.