

Breakthrough Student Family Policies

Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia seeks to be a safe and productive learning environment for students and teachers. Additionally, Breakthrough holds students to high standards and expectations to help our students learn how to be successful in the best high schools in the country on their path to college success. To create and maintain this kind of environment, it is important that we all respect each other and follow the following guidelines.

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Guideline 1: Inclusion

Breakthrough Philadelphia prides itself on being an accepting and inclusive organization which aims to meet the needs of each individual student. As each student is a unique individual with a different perspective and background, it is of utmost importance that classrooms embrace diversity, recognizing that Breakthrough is an inclusive and respectful space where we strive to ensure that each student is safe and feels welcome and protected.

Breakthrough promotes learning, inclusion, and acceptance through the facilitation of mentoring relationships between students and teaching fellows through a fun and safe educational environment. Promoting tolerance for differences within a community will allow students to showcase their strengths, share their learning styles and work together with their peers. Team work will allow students to learn to engage with many different types of people and expose them to alternate perspectives that they will need to be able to navigate successfully on their path to and through college.

Breakthrough has a diverse team of people who serve the needs of students daily. Breakthrough is an Equal Opportunity Employer and considers applicants without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status. Our goal is for all members of our community to engage in learning, personal growth, and acceptance of others. Please know that students may be exposed to differences in thinking from those shared in your home. This exposure is meant to enhance our community and promote acceptance of all people and backgrounds.

Guideline 2: Attendance

Absences/Tardiness: Students are expected to attend class every day, arrive on time and be well prepared. If a student will not be attending program, for any reason, a parent/guardian must send a note in advance or contact the Breakthrough office by phone by 8:00 a.m. during summer program or 9:00 a.m. during school year program.

Tardiness: If a student will be arriving late to class for any reason, a parent/guardian must contact the Breakthrough office by phone **on the day of the tardy**. Students are marked tardy if they are not present during Affirmation. Students who arrive late must report to the Site Manager before going to class. Repeated lateness is not acceptable.

Unexcused Absences and Tardiness: Any absences/tardies that are **not** related to illness or a family emergency are considered unexcused absences and unexcused tardies. Absences due to doctor's appointments, after school activities, athletic games, etc., are all considered to be excused absences **only if** they are documented with a letter from the doctor or program leader on professional letterhead.

Early Dismissals

Although attendance at all Breakthrough program days is expected, we understand that sometimes parents or guardians must remove their child(ren) prior to the end of the program day. There are two ways in which this may be done:

Parent Pick Up: If you wish to pick up your child before the end of the program day, you may come to the program office at the site and sign out your child.

Student Sign Out: If your child needs to be dismissed early but you are unable to come to site, a signed note from the parent must be brought to the site office at the beginning of the program day. That notes must detail the date, time of dismissal, reason for dismissal, phone number of the parent/guardian, and travel direction of the student. A member of the Breakthrough staff will call and confirm the information in the note prior to dismissal.

Breakthrough documents attendance events to determine program eligibility. More than one attendance event in a semester may result in being placed on an attendance plan, restriction from special events and/or dismissal from the Breakthrough program.



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Guideline 3: Dress Code

Students are expected to be dressed simply and neatly in clothing appropriate to their ages and to all of the activities of the school day. Breakthrough is an academic, professional environment for students and our dress code reflects these expectations. The staff and administration reserve the right to use their discretion about the appropriateness of a student's attire. If a student is in violation of the dress code, s/he may be asked to change her/his clothing to something that fits within the Breakthrough guidelines of dress.

Shirts and dresses should cover the full torso without showing skin on the front or back of the torso. These items must have at least a two-inch strap across each shoulder. Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be no shorter than four inches above the knee.

Students *are not* permitted to wear the following:

- Sunglasses indoors
- Clothing with offensive slogans, vulgar language, or references to age-inappropriate items
- Clothing that exposes a students' undergarments (underwear, boxer waistbands, bra straps, undershirts, etc.) or would expose the areas of the body that would generally be covered by those undergarments.

Students dressed inappropriately may be asked to put on appropriate clothing that the office provides. Students for whom this is not a solution may be asked to return home to change with the absence counting as an unexcused absence or tardy.

Guideline 4: Discipline

Discipline at Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia is considered a part of the educational process and is normally an internal matter. However, conduct infractions by Breakthrough students may have consequences beyond the confines of program.

Breakthrough students

- Respect their peers and teachers (listen to each other, communicate openly and honestly); bullying is not tolerated and will result in consequences
- Refrain from using 'Breakthrough inappropriate' language or attitudes: name-calling, cursing, vulgar slang, put-downs, threatening words regardless of intent, etc)
- Do not run or shout inside a building
- Refrain from "Breakthrough inappropriate" physical contact (play-fighting, shoving, public displays of affection)
- Do not chew gum during Breakthrough program hours
- Do not cross the street without a Breakthrough staff member. All Breakthrough community members must cross the street at a cross walk when the walk light is on!
- Do not leave campus without permission
- Respect property by cleaning up without arguing over whose mess it is
- When riding in a Breakthrough car, van, or bus on field trips or during transportation to and from program, Breakthrough students behave in a respectful and safe manner, stay seated and face forward at all times (all other Breakthrough rules still apply when riding in vehicles)

Depending on the severity of the situation, immediate student consequences can range from a verbal warning to being suspended from Breakthrough. A student chewing gum will be reminded of our expectation, while a student who curses in class will receive more stringent consequences. For a typical classroom infraction, the student will receive one verbal warning. With the second incidents, their teacher will document their behavior in writing for Breakthrough's permanent records. If there is a third incident, the student will be sent to the Site Manager, and consequences will be determined according the Site Manager's discretion in conjunction with the Director of Academic Programs.



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For *multiple incidents* of one behavior (disrespect, disruptive behavior, inappropriate language, play-fighting, etc) The Site Manager and Director of Academic Programs will create a behavior plan during a conference with the student and parent. This plan will include a series of consequences which may include but are not exclusive to missing BOSS and ultimate dismissal from the program.

Once a contract has been created, the student will be dismissed from the program if they are unable to uphold the expectations set forth and agreed upon.

Guideline 4: Distracting Devices

Breakthrough seeks to create a safe, focused and respectful learning environment. Breakthrough students are welcome to use personal electronic devices for both academic and social purposes, including texting and email communication, before and after the program day. Personal electronic devices may be permitted for academic purposes during the program day at the discretion of the Director of Academic Programs. When personal devices are permitted, the following guidelines should be followed:

- 1) Headphones or earbuds should not be in use (except with Site Manager approval)
- 2) Talking on the phone is not permitted (except with Site Manager approval)
- 3) Devices must be kept in silent mode at all times (Vibrate should be off as well).
- 4) Devices may not be used during community gatherings without permission.
- 5) Use of devices in the classroom is at the discretion of the Site Manager and teacher.

Students may bring cell phones to Breakthrough but may not use the cell phone at any time without prior permission from a Site Manager. Parents who need to reach their student during program hours can call the Site Manager or Dean of Students. At no time are students permitted to make “personal” calls and/or send text messages (i.e. to friends during program time). *Breakthrough is not responsible for lost or stolen items.*

If a student is using a device when it is not permitted, the device will be confiscated from the student and returned back to him/her at the end of the day. If a second incident occurs, the parent or guardian will be contacted and must come to retrieve the item during program site hours or from the Breakthrough office with an appointment during normal business hours.

Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia encourages the use of technology to enhance and support student learning. Students need to exercise responsible behavior when using technology and understand that using any device on campus you are expected to adhere to our community values.

Breakthrough Students Should:

- during class time, use technology only for approved academic purposes
- be responsible for all work done on their account and device. Thus, sharing passwords and devices is strongly discouraged. (NOTE: sharing with parents/ guardians is encouraged!)
- be aware of copyright, trademark and fair use law
- only take pictures, video, and audio of community members after permission is granted

Breakthrough Students Should Not:

- attempt to harm, disable or remove data, devices or configurations
- impersonate another person online. This includes, but is not limited to: logging into an internet-based account as another person, posting material in the name of another person, or changing setting

Guideline 5: Fighting, stealing, harassment, cheating, graffiti, defacing property, playing "hooky"

Fighting, stealing, harassment, cheating, graffiti, defacing property, playing "hooky" will not be tolerated at any time.



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Students engaging in these activities will be sent to the Site Manager and will be placed in “In-Breakthrough Suspension” until parent/guardian can be reached by phone. A conference with the student, parent, Site Manager, and Director of Academic Programs will occur to discuss appropriate consequences including possible removal from the program. **For more severe incidents**, Breakthrough staff will make the determination to involve the appropriate campus security and local law enforcement.

Guideline 6: Use/possession of drugs, alcohol, and/or weapons

The use and/or possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and/or weapons will not be tolerated at anytime (including before and after program). Arriving at program with the odor of an illegal substance may be interpreted as use and/or possession at the discretion of Breakthrough staff for the purposes of this policy.

Students engaging in these activities will be sent to Site Manager who will contact a parent/guardian to pick up their student from the program. The student will be permanently dismissed from the program.

