



Burch Charter School of Excellence Student Handbook

“The mission of the Burch Charter School of Excellence is to develop critical thinkers that evolve into digital, life-long learners in a blended learning environment that enhances positive character traits that will ensure they become productive 21st century world citizens.”

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Burch Charter School of Excellence. This Student-Parent/Guardian Handbook is developed to acquaint you with the Burch Charter School of Excellence. The policies and guidelines within this handbook will ensure that our school environment is consistent with the mission of our school. We are committed to the academic growth of our students in an environment that fosters respect for oneself and others.

This handbook will ensure effective communication and cooperation among teachers, students, parents/guardians and administration. It establishes behavioral guidelines for our students and the expectations of the school.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to discuss the contents of the handbook with their child(ren). Parental/Guardian support is critical to ensuring a child's academic and social success in school. Cooperation in following these guidelines will develop a strong relationship between the home and school.

The Burch Charter School of Excellence thanks you for selecting our school for your child(ren) and we look forward to an exciting and successful school year.

Please feel free to contact the school with any comments or concerns.

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***We require Excellence!***

*Educationally yours,*

***Theodore E. Boler***  
*Principal*

## **OUR MISSION**

The Burch Charter School of Excellence (BCSE) was founded in September, 2008. Our primal mission is to enable students to reach their intellectual and personal potential. We strive to instill integrity and respect in our students' in partnership with families and the community. We maintain a blended learning environment that enhances positive character traits that ensures our students become productive 21<sup>st</sup> century world citizens.

The Burch Charter School of Excellence, a public school, is committed to providing best practices for educating our students in an environment that enables them to develop into critical thinkers that evolve into digital, life-long learners. Our curriculum emphasizes literacy and mathematics infused with technology.

## **OUR HISTORY**

The Leaguers Incorporated was founded in 1943, by Mary B. Burch and incorporated in 1948. The agency's mission for over 55 years is to enhance the quality of life for children and families through diverse programming that fosters self-growth, pride in one's community, personal empowerment and the attainment of self-sufficiency. We believe in opportunity through education. Our goals include: assisting our youth to obtain self-realization by allowing them to express their hobbies and talents, developing civic responsibility and establishing a sense of economic self-sufficiency.

## **OUR CORE VALUES**

We incorporate seven core values into our educational philosophy. Through our curricula, school climate, and emphasize on service, our students are encouraged to apply the lessons of the classroom to the world around them. Our seven core values are:

- \*Honesty**
- \*Respect**
- \*Responsibility**
- \*Caring**
- \*Self-Discipline**
- \*Perseverance**
- \*Giving**

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees is the primary governing body of the school incorporating a varied range of skills and expertise to the governance of the school, including educational, accounting, personnel, legal and business. The Board is responsible for the establishment of policy, the appointment of the School Administrator and the preservation of the school's mission, finances, facilities and educational program.

Regular Board meetings are open to the public and are held at 6:00 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at the school.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

The School Administrator, appointed by the Board of Trustees is responsible for the daily operation of the school and the implementation of the school's mission and policies.

### **FACULTY AND STAFF**

The Faculty and staff work collaboratively with Administration to fulfill the school's mission. Faculty and staff can be contacted by calling the main office: **973-373-3223**.

### **PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION**

The PTA of the Burch Charter School of Excellence will be an active and supportive association. The PTA welcomes all to join a group of parents, guardians and teachers who support the Burch Charter School of Excellence in the education of our students.

## VISITORS

We welcome visitors, but to ensure the safety of our faculty, staff and students, we require that they observe the following rules:

- **Parents/guardians and visitors must sign in at the Security Desk to receive a visitors badge/pass and sign out when exiting the building.**
- Parents/guardians and visitors must report to the main office after receiving a visitor's pass and sign out when exiting the building.
- Parents/guardians must obtain permission from the main office to walk their child(ren) to class.
- Unauthorized classroom visitations and interruptions to learning are in violation of school policy and will be considered trespassing.
- Parents/guardians are always welcome to visit our school and can make appointments for classroom visits or teacher conferences.

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICIES

### SCHOOL HOURS

|                        |                                                |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Monday-Friday          |                                                |
| 7: 45 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. | Student arrival                                |
| 8:00 a.m.              | (Breakfast served in class, ends at 8:15 a.m.) |
| 3:30 p.m.              | Dismissal                                      |
| <b>5:00 p.m.</b>       | <b>School Building closes daily</b>            |

### ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be present on all days that the Burch Charter School of Excellence is in session. The Burch Charter School of Excellence is required to comply with New Jersey policy NJSA 18:38:26, which requires regular attendance if a student is to receive full credit for any course.

Students must be present for instruction from 8:00 a.m. - 3:30p.m. School is dismissed promptly at 3:30 p.m. Students are marked tardy if they arrive to school after 8:00 a.m.

## **ABSENTEEISM**

There are two general categories of absences:

**Excused Absences** - Examples of excused absences are illness, religious observance and family emergencies. If an absence is excused, the student is permitted to make up class work assignments, including quizzes and tests.

**Unexcused Absences** - When a student misses school for family vacation or other reasons that do not fit in the above categories the student is marked absent. Upon the student's return to school, parents must provide proof of excused absence. (ie.; doctor's note, obituary, etc.)

If a student is going to be absent from school, the parent/guardian must notify the school by 9:00 a.m. To report an absence, parents must call the main office at **(973) 373-3223**. The Social Services Department/Attendance Clerk will investigate all absences of three (3) or more consecutive days.

***The student is at risk of being retained after 18 absences.***

### **TARDY**

The instructional day starts promptly at 8:00 a.m., any students arriving after 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy. Students who are tardy must be accompanied by a parent to the main office to sign in and receive a late pass.

Excessive tardiness will result in:

- a. Three (3) or more days of tardiness, in a cycle, will result in a letter being sent home by the Attendance Clerk.
- b. Five (5) days of tardiness is equivalent to one day of absenteeism.
- c. Continued infractions will result in additional consequences, including possible referral to the Irvington Municipal Court System.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

The school day ends at 3:30 p.m. and students are expected to remain in school all day while school is in session. However, we understand that circumstances arise that may make it necessary for a student to be dismissed early. No student shall be permitted to leave the school before the close of the school day unless he/she is accompanied and met in the school office by his/her parent/guardian or a person authorized in writing by the parent/guardian to act on his/her behalf.

- An early dismissal shall be considered unexcused unless for the following reasons:
  - Medical or dental appointments which cannot be scheduled outside of school hours documented by a doctor/dentist note
  - Medical disability documented by a doctor's note
  - Family emergency documented by a parent's note
  - Court appearance documented by a court subpoena
- Requests for excused early dismissals for any other reason must be submitted to the School Administrator or his/her designee for approval prior to the student's dismissal from school.
- Early dismissals for reasons not listed above or early dismissals that are not accompanied by the required documentation prior to the student's dismissal from school are considered unexcused.
- **Three (3) unexcused early dismissals will be equivalent to one (1) unexcused absence and may put the student at risk of retention.**

## SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event of an emergency or hazardous weather conditions, school may be dismissed. On mornings in question, the local radio and television stations will announce the decision as early as possible. The Burch Charter School of Excellence follows the Irvington Board of Education's protocol when school is closed due to inclement weather conditions. When the Irvington Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather the Irvington Fire Department will sound an alarm at 6:30 a.m. and again at 7:00 a.m. This notifies the township that the school district is closed for the day.

School closing will also be posted on the school websites: [www.burchcharterschool.org](http://www.burchcharterschool.org) and [www.irvington.k12.nj.us](http://www.irvington.k12.nj.us) and on local television stations:

### Closing Information Stations

WNBC TV – Channel 4  
 WABC TV – Channel 7  
 CABLE TV – Channel 36

FOX 5 WNYW – Channel 5  
 NEWS 12 NJ – Channel 12

If for any reason, the Burch Charter School of Excellence has an emergency closing during the school day (e.g. snowstorm, power outage, etc.), the school staff will contact the parents/guardians.

## HEALTH

The purpose of the health office is to maintain, improve and promote the health of the children.

### School Nurse

The School Nurse will give emergency treatment to those children injured on the playground, in the classroom or in the school building. If students need to visit the Nurse because they feel ill, they first must get a pass from their classroom teacher. If the nurse determines that the student is too ill to remain in school the nurse will contact the parent/guardian to pick them up. Students who are sent home from the nurse's office may not participate in after school activities that day.

**The Burch Charter School of Excellence mandates that all parents/guardians refrain from bringing any/all food into our school for classroom parties/celebrations.**

### Immunization

The state of New Jersey requires all children in public school to be immunized against certain vaccine-preventable diseases. Parents are required to provide a Doctor's certificate stating the month, day and year each immunization was administered.

Students who do not have the required immunizations may be granted a 30 day provisional admittance by the school nurse in compliance with regulations set forth in NJAC 8:57-4.10. This admission is granted with the understanding that the parents/guardians fully intend to continue with the immunization series until all State required immunizations have been received.

### Medication/prescriptions

All medications given during school hours require prescriptive authority and parent/guardian signed permission. This is required for both over-the-counter and prescription drugs. Any medications given at Burch Charter School must be administered through the nurse's office.

Medication will be supplied by the parent and will be administered with the completion of the required paperwork.

- a. Medication must be in original container with the student's name.
- b. Any change to the medication will require a new orders.
- c. Parent/guardian is responsible for checking their child's medicine in and out of school.
- d. Only prescribed medications will be administered during specific school hours.
- e. Medication administration forms will be updated at the beginning of each school year or as needed.

## **Inhalers**

Students with the diagnoses of asthma who require the use of inhalers must keep an inhaler in the health office. Inhalers must be kept in their original prescription box. An asthma action plan/permit must be completed and signed by the parent. Qualified students will be allowed to carry their inhalers with the appropriate documentation signed by the parent and physician.

## **Illness**

If a child has any of the following symptoms, he/she should not attend school. If the student has these symptoms, they will be removed from the classroom and the parent/guardian will be contacted:

- Constant runny nose
- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea
- Acute vomiting
- Elevated oral temperature of 101.5F
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- Blood in urine
- Red eyes with discharge
- Skin rashes lasting more than 24 hours
- Swollen joints

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

When a child is absent from school due to a communicable disease, the parent should call the office with that information. This is particularly important if the child has chicken pox, measles, strep throat, influenza, impetigo, pink eye, ringworm, etc. A written excuse should accompany your child when he/she returns to school.

***Your child will not be re-admitted into school without a doctor's note.*** Please stop into the nurse's office when returning your child that has been sick.

**\*\*If a child has limitations to participate in school activities, it is necessary to submit a written notice to the nurse to be excused. Continued limitations will require a medical doctor's written excuse to be kept on file.**

## **LUNCH/ BREAKFAST PROGRAMS**

Breakfast is served each morning between 8:00 a.m. until 8:15 a.m. in the classroom. No breakfast will be served after this time. The regular cost of breakfast is \$1.20 and the regular cost of lunch is \$2.30. Free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch are available for those who qualify. The reduced-price for breakfast is \$.30 and \$.40 for lunch.

For students who do not receive free meals, payment must be made to the main office. All parents will be given receipts. Parents are responsible for keeping records of all receipts and payments for any possible disputes or discrepancies.

Monthly bills will be sent out to each parent stating current balances and credits. All balances must be paid promptly. If balances are not paid, the student will not be served a hot lunch until all balances are satisfied. Instead a cold lunch will be provided.

A completed application must be on file before your child can participate in the breakfast or lunch program. Students who do not participate in the lunch program may bring lunch from home. No glass containers or bottles. Please pack nutritious food for your child.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

Information on the educational progress of your child will be reported to parents on a regular basis.

1. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled twice per school year; however, conferences may be arranged at any time a need arises.
2. Communication will also be made on a regular basis regarding possible student retention.
3. Report cards will be issued four times a school year.

|                      |                     |          |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------|
| <b>GRADING SCALE</b> | <b>90-100</b>       | <b>A</b> |
|                      | <b>80-89</b>        | <b>B</b> |
|                      | <b>70-79</b>        | <b>C</b> |
|                      | <b>60-69</b>        | <b>D</b> |
|                      | <b>59 and below</b> | <b>F</b> |

Awards will be given to students who have achieved academic success. The awards that will be given are the Principal's Honor, Honor Roll, and Perfect Attendance Awards.

## STUDENT PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are advised not to bring valuables or large amounts of money to school. Students, not the school, are responsible for their own personal property. Articles of clothing and personal belongings should be marked with the student's name.

Toys or electronic devices used as toys must not be brought to school unless they are to be used in a class activity. Such items should be taken to the teacher's room and left there until the end of the day. They are not to be used outside the classroom at anytime.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY\*\*

The Burch Charter School of Excellence is a community of active learners, our children learn about the personal value of positive behavior that benefits the child and community. Students are taught the rules and responsibilities of the community and learn that following these rules and carrying out their responsibilities is a way to gain the approval and respect of the community.

**\*\*What is included under Discipline Policy is only a summary of the School's Code of Conduct. The full code will be available in September once school has started.**

## STUDENT CONDUCT

Positive behavior expected of students include:

- Mental and physical preparation for the process of learning
- Respect for people and property
- Using time and other resources responsibly
- Sharing responsibility when working as members of a group

The Burch Charter School of Excellence expects students to take responsibility for their behavior in school. They must recognize the rights of other students and teachers in the school to be physically safe, emotionally secure, and able to pursue learning and work without interference. The School will work closely with any student having difficulty conforming to the rules of the school and will communicate concerns to parents/guardians before negative behavior becomes a serious problem. We expect and appreciate the support of parents/guardians in reinforcing the positive environment of our School.

Any student who does not comply with the school policies/rules or who exhibits disruptive or particularly dangerous behavior will be subject to disciplinary action, suspension and/or expulsion from School. Discipline policies 5131 and 5114 can be requested for additional information.

Students can expect disciplinary action for negative behavior, including but not limited to the following:

- Failure to show respect to those authorized to be responsible for the student.
- Failure to respect school property.
- Failure to respect the school community through disruptive school/classroom conduct.
- Failure to respect others through the use of unkind, disrespectful, obscene or profane language.
- Assault or threatening to assault or abuse any student or school employee
- Fighting and failure to respect others in a way that endangers their own or the well being of others.
- Harassment, intimidation or bullying.
- Failure to act responsibly and safely during bus transportation.
- Cheating or other forms of academic dishonesty.
- Possession, use or distribution of drugs, dangerous substances or weapons at school, on class trips or school buses
- Possession of electronic devices such as cell phones, beepers, chirpers, CD players, MP3 players and other musical devices.
- Stealing.
- Throwing food in the cafeteria.
- Failure to wear school uniform.
- Playing cards/gambling in school.
- Willful disobedience.

Consequences of inappropriate behavior:

- Conference between the teacher, the student, and/or the parent/guardian
- Loss of privileges
- Referral to building administrator
- Referral to out-of-school personnel (physician, psychologist, law enforcement personnel, etc.)
- Detention
- **In-School Suspension**
- Other alternative placement
- Expulsion

### **SUSPENSION**

- Out of school
- **In school**

## TELEPHONES

The school telephone is for business use only. Children are not called to the telephone except in cases of emergency. Please make advance arrangements for your child(ren) in the event of an unexpected early closing of school. If you wish to speak to your child's teacher, leave your name and number, and he/she will return your call as soon as possible. The nurse will contact the parents when a child needs to go home because of illness. If it is necessary for your child to have a cell phone at school, the cell phone must be turned off and remain in the backpack from the time the child arrives at school until he/she leaves the campus at the end of the day. **The school is not responsible for damaged and/or lost cell phones.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

The Burch Charter School of Excellence  
100 Linden Avenue  
Irvington, NJ 07111  
Office: (973) 373-3223  
Fax: (973) 373-3228  
Web site: [www.burchcharterschool.org](http://www.burchcharterschool.org)

## WEAPONS

Weapons are not allowed on school grounds, school events, or on school property. Suspension is mandatory when a student possesses, uses, displays, transmits, or handles a weapon on school grounds. This includes, but is not limited to destructive devices, explosive devices, BB guns, knives, etc. Look-a-like guns of any type are prohibited. Burch Charter School of Excellence has a no-tolerance policy regarding dangerous weapons. Safety of our school population is a priority.

## ADMISSION

The Burch Charter School of Excellence is a public school in the Irvington School District and is regulated by the State of New Jersey. There is no charge to attend. Waiting lists are maintained. Preference is given to students with siblings already attending the school. Pre-registration forms are available in the school office. Prior to a child's admission to the Burch Charter School of Excellence, the parent or guardian must provide the school with the following documents:

- 1.) Indication of the child's age with one of the following:
  - a. Birth Certificate or copy of a birth certificate
  - b. A passport
  - c. An affidavit of the date and place of birth by the child's parents or guardians
- 2.) Current immunization record
- 3.) Proof of residency
- 4.) Transfer from an Irvington Public School

## **DRESS CODE**

The Burch Charter School of Excellence has a student uniform policy. Students who arrive at school not wearing the proper uniform, will be sent to the Vice-Principal's office and the appropriate procedure will be followed. All students are expected to come to school wearing their uniform and well groomed.

The Burch Charter School of Excellence basic uniform for students consists of:

### **BOYS AND GIRLS:**

- Light Blue Jersey-long or short-sleeved with Burch Charter School of Excellence label/logo (from approved vendor).
- Khaki Pull-On Pants.
- Navy Vest Sweater with Burch Charter School of Excellence label/logo.
- Khaki Cotton Crew Socks or Khaki Orlon Crew Socks.
- Closed navy blue, black or brown shoes (no sandals, cleats, clogs or slides).  
Appropriate footwear is to be worn at all times. For safety, closed toe shoes must be worn.

### **GIRLS:**

- Khaki jumper with Burch Charter School of Excellence label/logo.

### **Physical Education**

Students may wear only light blue tee shirt (with Burch Charter School of Excellence label/logo, navy blue mesh shorts or sweatshirts/sweatpants with Burch Charter School of Excellence label/logo (from approved vendor). All other colors will not be considered appropriate. Black sneakers should be worn on gym days.

**Apparel that is not listed is unacceptable. Exercise and sweat clothing is not appropriate dress except during Physical Education. Any concerns, questions, or requests for exemptions should be directed to the School Administrator.**

## **FIELD TRIPS**

The Burch Charter School of Excellence anticipates providing one field trip each marking period. All parents will be notified and will receive a permission slip from the school for field trips. Parents will also be notified of any costs that need to be covered for the field trip. Students are permitted to bring spending money. The Burch Charter School of Excellence will not be responsible for any lost or damaged property.

Students are subject to the same school rules of conduct while traveling. Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken against students who violate the conduct rules.

***Any student that does not have a permission slip signed by a parent/guardian will not be permitted to attend Field Trips. Any student that is on suspension at the time of the Field trip cannot attend.***



## PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSE FORM

I have enrolled my child in the Burch Charter School of Excellence for the school year beginning Wednesday, September 6, 2017.

I have read and reviewed the Student Handbook with my child and we understand the information that it contains and we agree to abide by its regulations/procedures.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out the bottom portion and return to the Burch Charter School main office.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN (PRINT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME OF STUDENT (PRINT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
GRADE



## **Student Conduct**

To ensure the safety of students and their families, teachers, staff, volunteers and visitors, as well as to foster a safe and healthy learning community, the school prohibits all acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Students are expected to act in a positive manner that demonstrates respect for others' and their property. They are expected to take responsibility for individual behavior and learning, to treat others with consideration and to be truthful and honest. They are expected to follow instructions, obey all school rules and remember that they have come to school to learn. Burch Charter School of Excellence students are expected to work cooperatively with others and to engage in nonviolent resolution of conflict. Students must understand that our school facility, equipment and instructional materials are costly. Therefore, they will not deface, destroy, or waste that which has been provided for their benefit. Students who act inappropriately are subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with school policy.



## **2017 – 18 Student, Parent and Teacher Agreement**

**As a student I, \_\_\_\_\_ will**

- Do my best in completing my work.
- Display good behavior in school.
- Work cooperatively with my classmates.
- Show respect for myself, my school, and others.
- Take pride in my school.
- Come to school prepared with my homework and supplies.

**As a Parent/Guardian, I \_\_\_\_\_ will**

- See that my child attends school regularly and on time.
- Provide a home environment that encourages my child to learn.
- See that all homework assignments are completed.
- Communicate regularly with my child's teachers.
- Support the school in developing positive behaviors.
- Talk with my child about his/her school activities.
- Encourage my child to read at home.
- Support the educational program of the school.

**As a teacher I \_\_\_\_\_ will**

- Show respect for each child and his/her family.
- Provide parents with frequent reports on their child's progress.
- Provide an environment conducive to learning and academic success.
- Help each child grow to his/her potential.
- Provide high quality curricula and instruction to assist students in meeting and exceeding the NJ Student Learning Standards.
- Enforce school and classroom rules fairly and consistently.
- Maintain open lines of communication with each student and his/her family through parent teacher conferences.
- Suggest ways to involve parents in the school program.
- Demonstrate professional behavior and a positive attitude.

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HR Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_