Brooklyn Emerging Leaders Academy

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I believe. I can. I will.
## STRENGTH

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## SERVICE

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BELA Mission, Values and Culture

Our Mission

BELA’s mission is to empower each young woman to be the best version of herself. Through a rigorous college preparatory program, service learning initiatives and a commitment to cultivating a sense of ownership within each young woman, BELA students will attend and graduate from college.

Core Values

BELA’s core values define who we are as a school community. Our core values give meaning to the work of our leadership, teachers, students and families. We are a community that believes each individual will embody the core values stated below by the end of their journey at BELA.

SISTERHOOD
At BELA, we are a community of young women who uplift, encourage, empower, and challenge each other to well beyond their time at BELA serving as eternal lifelines.

SCHOLARSHIP
At BELA, we are a stimulating learning environment that promotes academic achievement, intellectual confidence, innovation and exploration, and life-long learning.

STRENGTH
At BELA, we believe in taking care of ourselves emotionally, spiritually, and physically to build the strength and resiliency needed to achieve our goals.

SERVICE
At BELA, we believe in the power of our personal responsibility to engage and invest in strengthening our local and global community.
The BELA school day is 8:45am- 5pm Monday- Thursday; and 8:45am-2:30pm on Friday. Students are expected to arrive to school on time and to leave promptly at the end of the school day. Breakfast is served daily in FOOD (Room 212/214) from 8:15am-8:40am.

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Brooklyn Emerging Leaders Academy 2017-2018 Academic Calendar

July 2017

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30 31

August 2017

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

September 2017

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

October 2017

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30 31

November 2017

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

December 2017

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

January 2018

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30 31

February 2018

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

March 2018

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

April 2018

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

May 2018

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

June 2018

M T W Th F S 
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
8  9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30

Observed Holidays
Sept 4: Labor Day
Nov 20-24: Thanksgiving Break
Dec 10-Jan 1: Holiday Break
Jan 15: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Apr 2-6: Spring Recess
May 28: Memorial Day

CULTURE AND POLICIES HANDBOOK

At BELA, we expect our community of young women, staff, and families to display our core values in their actions and speech, both in and outside of school. BELA is an environment where our values of sisterhood, scholarship, strength, and service guide us to our highest levels of growth and learning. We are preparing students not only for college, but for life. The following policies are in place to ensure our students recognize their potential and achieve their personal goals for success.

I believe. I can. I will.
At BELA, we believe in a community of young women who uplift, encourage, empower, and challenge each other to well beyond their time at BELA serving as eternal lifelines.

We chose to be an all-girls school because we know young women are powerful and limitless—especially when working together to support each other through connection and collaboration. There is no doubt, young women—learning with and from each other—will be poised to become strong, skillful leaders and transform the world, one block, one neighborhood, and one community at a time. History proves that when women unite and support each other, communities thrive.

BELA is an environment where young women will engage in healthy competition, while developing the communication and diplomacy skills to reduce conflict, build bridges, and encourage each other through words and actions. Through this journey, our intention is that BELA young women feel a deep, personal sense of accomplishment and harness that empowerment to take care of themselves, their community, and pursue their goals with confidence. By graduation, each young woman will step into the larger world knowing she is a powerful force with a formidable voice to make change happen—and when she needs to, she will call upon a tribe of women to help.

**Appearance and Guidelines**

As a college and career readiness school, BELA believes in presenting ourselves as professional learners at all times. Students, staff and families are asked to be dressed and groomed neatly and respectfully at school and while representing BELA in the community.

BELA is a uniform school because we want to maximize student focus on their scholarship, and nurture their personal and professional strengths. Our uniform signifies that BELA students are a sisterhood of learners. Students are expected to dress in school uniform during school days and at designated times outside of school, including field trips, site visits and other school-related activities, unless otherwise informed by staff.

**BELA’s SCHOOL UNIFORM includes:**
- An official BELA navy blazer with logo
- A white collared uniform blouse
- Grey uniform pant or skirt
Navy or white socks
Black, closed toe shoes, including no heels are permitted.

*Please be advised that leggings, skirts, skorts, shorts or pants of “jean” or cargo material are prohibited.*

**BELA’s WELLNESS UNIFORM are worn on the entire day that a student has wellness class. This uniform includes:**

- BELA sweat pants
- Any BELA t-shirt
- BELA sweatshirt

Uniforms can be ordered from Student Styles by Smith. They can be contacted online at www.yourstudentstyles.com or by phone at 646.869.8846

While students should appropriately dress for the weather on their way to school, they are not allowed to wear non-BELA outerwear inside the school building.

BELA staff may ask students to remove any item that may distract from the learning process or are not perceived as safe, professional or respectful.

**All students must be in uniform by 8:45 am. Students who are missing a uniform item will report to the Leadership team, where a member of the leadership team may have uniform items to loan to students to avoid lost learning time. A parent/guardian will be called if a student does not come to school in uniform. All loaned uniform items must be washed and returned within one week or the family will be billed for item.**

**Sisterhood Circle**

Sisterhood Circle is the official start of the school day and begins promptly at 8:45am. Staff, students, and administrators gather together for 10 minutes for a purposeful meeting that reflects our school’s values. Our goal is to center, inspire, and prepare for the day within a supportive community. School-wide activities and events will be announced. The community will celebrate each other’s academic and social/emotional achievements—while sharing a quiet moment to reflect and prepare for a rigorous day of learning. Sisterhood Circle will be led by administrators, and eventually BELA students, who have been trained to lead the Circle.
Nutrition

Genuine Foods Partnership
Breakfast, lunch, and supper at BELA will be provided by Genuine Foods, an experienced leader in school nutrition, health, and wellness. The philosophy of Genuine Foods is to offer “nourishing food environments through great tasting and healthful meals made from genuine ingredients.”

BELA recognizes the research-backed role of nutrition and healthy foods to foster healthy behaviors and well-being, which in turn boosts academic performance and social development. Further, the partnership with Genuine Foods and BELA’s focus on wellness aims to reduce instances of illness and absences related to a poor diet; provide a nutrient rich meal; and teach students the lifelong importance of healthy eating. With this in mind, each student will be offered healthy, great-tasting and high-quality meals for lunch.

Community Lunch
At BELA, we are committed to building a sisterhood where students and staff learn together, laugh together, and share together. We understand that this happens inside and outside of the classroom walls. We are excited to provide Community Lunch at BELA, where students and staff are offered a well-balanced lunch, daily and at no cost. This is an opportunity for us to sit together to encourage conversation with new people and foster engagement among students and staff.

Lunch will be served in FOOD (Room 214), and students can sit and enjoy their meal in community with peers and staff in FOOD (Room 212 or 214). Food is only permitted in the Food Room or designated eating areas.

In order to take responsibility for our community space, Leadership Academy groups will be asked to clean up their tables and the surrounding area. This includes, cleaning up after yourself and picking up any miscellaneous trash laying around. On a rotating basis, Leadership Academy groups will take responsibility for ensuring the cleanliness of Food at the end of lunch.

Hydration
We believe in a connection to healthy bodies and healthy minds, and understand the value of hydration throughout the day. Students are permitted to bring in a clear bottle of water to drink throughout the day. Water is the only beverage permitted in classrooms, as long as it does not serve as a distraction to learning. No soda is permitted at school. No glass bottles will be permitted.
Chewing Gum
Students and staff are permitted to chew gum or eat hard candy. Other types of candy are prohibited. At all times, students and staff are expected to treat our school environment as a professional institution. Gum or hard candy (i.e. mints) must not serve as a distraction at any time during the day. If this becomes the case, administration reserves the right to revise this policy. Additionally, all gum and candy must be disposed of in the trash. Any gum or candy found on any furniture may also initiate a review and possible revocation of this policy for the entire school. This is our school—and it everyone’s responsibility to keep our learning environment clean and professional.

Leadership Academy
According to the Youth Development Institute, young people need three things in order to thrive: a sense of connectedness; the skills necessary to be prepared; and opportunities for authentic participation. To this end, and in alignment with our four core values, each student will be assigned to a Leadership Academy group that she will remain with for the duration of her time at BELA. This is a group that she will grow with socially and emotionally. Leadership Academy teachers are mentors who assist each young woman in achieving her academic and personal goals.

Leadership Academy is a comprehensive approach to holistic learning that promotes the growth each young women’s social-emotional competencies, provides comprehensive health and wellness information, offers study skills and academic support, and connects the school to the Bedford Stuyvesant community through service learning. This approach is replicated after the evidence-based Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Model, which uses a “waist up” technique whereby teenage students learn to identify their strengths and value.

Leadership Academy meets 4 times per week, offering students an integrated learning experience through the following programs:

- **Power Group:** This group is a weekly socialization session facilitated by a trained social worker that uses group work activities and theme-based content to enhance self-esteem, build upon students’ coping skills, reduce isolation, and remove obstacles to learning.
• **B-PACT:** (BELA’s Philanthropic Action and Community Transformation) program is a community action service project where 9th grade students will conduct a needs assessment, identify a need, partner with a local non-profit, and have the opportunity to raise money to implement their community action service learning project.

• **Financial Literacy and College Readiness:**
  Led by their Mentor teachers who follow a comprehensive curriculum, students will build upon their knowledge of budgeting, micro and macro economics, college preparedness, money, cash and credit cards, student debt and financial skills needed in all communities.

• **Community Circle:**
  is a weekly group led by Mentor Teachers where students will have the opportunity to meet individually with their mentor teacher, discuss issues of importance to students, and set academic goals.

### Go GROW
At BELA, Go GROW clubs and activities are offered as a part of the school day and are an opportunity for students to be creative, explore interests, develop talents, and build leadership skills. Go GROW clubs are driven by student interest and meet twice a week at the end of the school day. Each incoming BELA student has been given an activities interest form, so they could describe what activities they enjoy. From this feedback, we learned students are interested in music, art, student government, dance, cooking/baking, and DJ-ing. It is also our hope that students’ passions will inevitably lead to career and/or possibly entrepreneurial opportunities to supplement collegiate and lifelong endeavors.

### Search and Seizure
To ensure the safety of all students and staff within our community, BELA maintains the right to search students and their property. If BELA administrators, teachers, or staff suspect a student or group of students violate school policy or has violated state or federal law, administrators have the right to search the property of any student involved. To that end, school administrators may search students’ storage-area, coats and blazers, backpacks, computers or other personal belongings. Classrooms and supply rooms are the property of BELA and no student shall store any belongings in these locations without expressed consent from a BELA staff person. Storage of personal items in BELA property does not guarantee or provide any expectation of privacy.
Scholarship

At BELA, we believe in a stimulating learning environment that promotes academic achievement, intellectual confidence, innovation and exploration, and life-long learning.

All BELA students receive a rigorous college preparatory curriculum that includes access and exposure to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) Pathways, specializing in Biomedical Science, Engineering, or Media and Technology.

BELA is an environment where young women will engage in healthy competition, while developing the communication and diplomacy skills to reduce conflict, build bridges, and encourage each other through words and actions. Through this journey, our intention is that BELA young women feel a deep, personal sense of accomplishment and harness that empowerment to take care of themselves, their community, and pursue their goals with confidence. By graduation, each young woman will step into the larger world knowing she is a powerful force with a formidable voice to make change happen—and when she needs to, she will call upon a tribe of women to help.

At BELA, we emphasize collaboration, communication, and thinking critically and creatively inside and outside of the classroom. Small class sizes ensure that all student’s needs are addressed. At the same time, we acknowledge great learning comes from great teachers, and we ensure appropriate training and support, arming teachers with learning tools that best meet their educational goals, and social-emotional coaching to enhance their ability to focus on their academic portfolio.

Additionally, BELA is proud to offer International Baccalaureate Advanced Studies Program for all students, beginning the 11th grade—enabling students to earn college credits while at BELA High School.

Academic Integrity Policy

The BELA community believes strongly in academic integrity, and that all students are responsible for the authenticity of their work. Furthermore, all members of this community—students, teachers, administrators, staff, and families—take ownership of written, visual, or audio compositions and its originality. We expect explicit notation when referencing or building upon the work of another academic or artist.

BELA encourages students to be inquisitive, critical and creative thinkers and to present their
thinking in a variety of ways. BELA views personal integrity as a fair and principled representation of one’s abilities and skills. As such, academic integrity is the heart of student achievement and authentic performance. Lapses in judgment or premeditated choices to misrepresent one’s abilities or skills constitutes academic misconduct and may result in action taken by BELA staff.

**ALMA**

All families will have access to BELA's integrated Student Information and Learning Management System, ALMA, where they can log on and see their student’s progress towards grade level mastery. Students will access their assignments and will receive grades in this portal. In addition, BELA's “Families” section of the website has important information and is regularly updated.

**Assessments at BELA**

BELA believes there are multiple ways to demonstrate mastery of content and skills. As such, our assessment cycle is a reflection of this belief and our core values—including a commitment to social emotional learning. However, we balance this core belief with the recognition that our students must demonstrate proficiency on New York State Regents and college entrance exams to meet our mission of all students attending and graduating from college. *Please refer to the chart on the next page.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Assessment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEWA MAP</td>
<td>3 times per year</td>
<td>To diagnose and assess growth on state and grade level proficiency standards for math, reading and language use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESSA</td>
<td>3 times per year (baseline, midline, endline)</td>
<td>To diagnose social and emotional competencies and growth compared to national norms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formative assessments such as writing prompts, exit tickets, or oral checks for understanding</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>To make curricular or instructional adjustments to meet student needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance based, unit or interim assessments</td>
<td>Every 4-6 weeks (at the end of each unit)</td>
<td>To assess understanding of content gained in a unit of study, and to make curricular modifications for the next unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Action Service Projects</td>
<td>At the conclusion of Year 9 and 10 Leadership Academy course</td>
<td>To determine if BELA students have met the service learning components of the Leadership Academy curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capstone</td>
<td>At the conclusion of Year 12</td>
<td>To determine if knowledge and skills gained from previous courses and professional skills can be applied to positively impact issues within their community, and for college and career success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regents</td>
<td>At the conclusion of each Regents bearing course</td>
<td>To determine if the School is meeting academic goals, assess college readiness of students, and adapt curriculum and instruction, as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSAT</td>
<td>Fall of Year 10 and 11</td>
<td>To assess college readiness skills in math and reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT or ACT</td>
<td>Spring of Year 11 and Fall of Year 12</td>
<td>To assess college readiness skills in math</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BELA’s Bathroom Policy

Students are expected to be in class for the first and last 10 minutes of each class; therefore bathrooms will be locked during these times. Teachers will individualize their bathroom policy for each class. Students will not have access to bathrooms until 9:10am daily and bathrooms are closed for the day at 4:50pm Monday - Thursday, and 2:20pm on Fridays.

BELA’s Classroom Environment

BELA’s physical spaces are reflective of the diverse needs of our students. These spaces allow for a myriad of learning configurations and access to resources, within the classroom, that provide opportunities for collaboration, critical thinking, and communication.

We expect that all students and staff take responsibility for keeping this learning environment clean and orderly. Respect and responsibility is to be extended to our physical spaces.

Grade Level Promotions

Our goal is for students to graduate within four years of first entry into high school. At BELA, there are no hurdles between grades that induce a sense of failure, instead the entire community is relentlessly focused on the ultimate goal of graduation from both high school and college. A BELA student must maintain a minimum 70% average across the three trimesters of the school year to pass a core subject course (English, Social Studies, Math, Science). In order to be promoted to the next grade, students must accumulate 10 credits: this must include Math, Science, English, and Social Studies as well as one other subject. Students with 20 or more absences or 5 or more days of suspension may be eligible for retention.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation requirements for students at BELA are more rigorous than the standards set by New York State, given our commitment to college completion. A student who spends four years at BELA will have acquired at least, and likely more than, the number of credits required under state law (see chart on the next page).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject-area courses</th>
<th>Grade 9</th>
<th>Grade 10</th>
<th>Grade 11</th>
<th>Grade 12</th>
<th>Total Courses Required at BELA</th>
<th>Years Courses for Graduation by NYS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social studies</td>
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<td>Math</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Science</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOTE</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>PE</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective courses</td>
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<td>STEAM</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Theory of Knowledge</td>
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<td>Total:</td>
<td>30</td>
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</table>

All BELA students will complete five Regents exams that are required for a Regents Diploma by the end of Grade 10:
- English Language Arts (ELA)
- Any mathematics exam (CC Algebra, CC Geometry, or Algebra II/Trigonometry)
- Any social studies exam (Global History and Geography or U.S. History and Government)
- Any science exam (Living Environment, Chemistry, Earth Science, or Physics)
- Any additional Regents exam or assessment approved by the New York State for this purpose
International Baccalaureate (IB) Program

At BELA, we envision our students becoming global citizens and leaders and are proud to offer the International Baccalaureate Program (IB). The IB program is a globally respected approach to international education that develops the intellectual, personal, emotional, and social skills necessary for students to live, learn, and work in a rapidly globalizing world. The IB program closely aligns itself with BELA’s mission to offer a holistic educational program to students, while allowing each student to obtain college credits during her high school career.

Student Led Conferences

BELA students will participate in student-led Family Conferences each trimester. With the support of their Mentor teachers, students will prepare a presentation of their learning experiences; review and demonstrate progress; and reflect on accomplishments, and set short and long-term academic goals.

Family Conferences will be held annually in October, February, and June (one for each trimester). Please see the school calendar for exact dates for this year’s SLC schedule.

STEAM Pathway

In partnership with FUSE, The Biotechnology Center of Excellence, and Project Lead the Way, BELA students will complete a four-year sequence of STEAM courses in one of three pathways: Engineering, Biomedical Science, or Media and Technology.

FUSE challenges provide a new way to explore STEAM in an equitable learning environment. In grade 9, students will explore each of these three pathways using the FUSE platform, and will work collaboratively with their peers on various projects. The ‘A’ in STEAM is engaged through the design process, which allows BELA students to explore and develop their creativity.

After grade 9, every student will choose a path to further explore in the upper grades. Project Lead the Way offers an activity, project, and problem-based curriculum that will deepen students’ understanding of one of the three STEAM pathways. In grade 12, students from the various pathways will work as a team and use their knowledge and skills to collaborate and address an issue presented by a client within their community. Whether a student chooses to pursue a career in a STEAM field is ultimately her decision; our mission is to provide the opportunity to explore.
Technology

*Laptop Guidelines*

When students receive their laptops, it is their personal device for the duration of the school year. As laptops are sensitive and expensive devices, we trust that students will be diligent in maintaining their computers and treating this essential learning tool with the highest regard. The laptop assigned to you at the beginning of the year will be the primary source for receiving and completing assignments, and it is your responsibility to take care of it.

To keep student laptops in optimal running condition, we ask that each student adhere to the following guidelines for laptop care.

- Charge your computer daily and come to school with a fully charged battery.
- Put your computer in sleep mode when not in use, instead of closing down the screen.
- Restart your computer 1 time each week (on a weekend).
- Always keep your computer stored in a cool environment (away from the sun, and off of window sills where it will be exposed to direct sun).
- Clean your computer with computer cleaning wipes regularly.
- Keep food and drink away from computers to prevent any damage.

*Information Technology Use Policy*

We are proud to be a 1:1 technology school, where each student is responsible for her own laptop. With this privilege comes great responsibility. BELA values technology and encourages its use in creative ways to support student learning in a safe learning environment. This policy is a guide to establish the appropriate and responsible use of technology and to maintain the safety of all community members. Please review and sign Appendix 3: Computer Use Agreement.

BELA firewalls restrict certain types of sites (streaming services, pandora, spotify, netflix, pornography, and gambling). BELA administrators will consistently monitor the use of each laptop. Students and families will not have access to sites which are restricted; each laptop is programmed to grant permission strictly to designated areas.
Acceptable Use of Technology

✓ Educational use of the network and computer resources takes precedence. Students are permitted to use their devices in the following manner:
  ✓ Research
  ✓ Note-taking (Google Docs, Mac Notes, Evernote)
  ✓ Completing classwork and homework assignments (ie, Google Classroom)
  ✓ Performing assessments (NWEA)
  ✓ Tutoring and homework assistance (ie, Khan Academy)
  ✓ Class projects and presentations (Google slides, Prezi, Slidely)

✓ Communicating online is similar to communicating verbally, in-person. You must be respectful of others at all times.

✓ All personal files must be saved on your hard drive or cloud space.

✓ At the end of each school year, student laptops will be collected for maintenance and all items will be deleted. Please make sure that all of your personal homework, assignments and projects are saved on a cloud storage or an external USB drive.

✓ Please maintain your computer daily and weekly (See Laptop Maintenance for more information).

Inappropriate Use of Technology

✗ Do not eat or drink on or near the computer.

✗ Unless invited by the owner, do not touch or explore data on another person’s laptop/device.

✗ Do not load any game, video, or music file on your machine that conflicts with copyright laws.

✗ Unless approved by your teacher or school leadership, playing non-educational games on your laptop is strictly prohibited.

✗ Unless given permission by your teacher, do not engage in any online chat sessions.

✗ Do not take pictures or post pictures of others without asking for their permission.

✗ Be mindful of bandwidth. Please do not overload bandwidth by leaving unnecessary browsers open and accessing multiple “heavy bandwidth” sites.

✗ Do not load any applications on your device unless given permission by your teacher or an administrator.

✗ Do not download any illegal materials or intellectual property that was not purchased by you.

✗ Peer to peer file sharing is strictly prohibited and monitored.

✗ Do not plagiarize. For more information see BELA’s Academic Integrity Policy

✗ Do not forward or send any content not directly associated with your learning.

✗ Do not deliberately or negligently spread viruses, malware, or spyware.
Threatening or intimidating another student via technology (or otherwise) is STRICTLY PROHIBITED and violations of this policy will be referred directly to BELA administration.

Do not post or send any message/picture/sound/video that is obscene, rude, harassing, or insulting to anyone.

Do not access social media sites unless it is explicitly pertaining to class assignment.

**Technical Support**

Our goal is to better help you, your cohort and teachers, understand and utilize your technology at BELA. If you have a technical problem with your computer, it is important to notify your teacher as well as inform the Dean of Operations, Ms. Dionna, of your problem. If the teacher is unable to troubleshoot the issue, they should submit a ticket to the IT service center and, if needed, a request for a loaner computer from the Ms. Dionna.

If you’re having problems with technology outside of the classroom, send an email to your Mentor Teacher and Ms. Dionna. It is helpful if you:

- Be as specific as possible about the problem you are having. If there is an error message, please copy and paste the exact message into the email.
- Also, include the specific program or application where experiencing difficulty and your full name.

**Damage, Lost or Theft**

While we expect all students to be responsible for the protection and care of their laptops, we understand that things can happen, including computers being damaged, lost or stolen. Any need for outside repair of a student computer must be brought to the immediate attention of Ms. Dionna. It is important to protect your Computer from any physical damages, loss or theft as repairs and replacements can be quite costly. Students will be responsible for damage to, or loss of, the Computer or any associated equipment or property, when the damage or loss:

- is caused by Student’s negligent use or misuse;
- is intentional;
- goes beyond normal wear and tear; or
- results from a violation of this Agreement.

If your computer is lost or stolen, it is the responsibility of the student’s family to pay for the insurance to obtain a new/refurbished laptop. The cost of insurance for replacement of a Computer is $400.
**Trimesters**

At BELA, our academic year is divided into three trimesters

- Trimester 1: August – November
- Trimester 2: November – March
- Trimester 3: March – June

During the middle of each trimester, Mentor teachers will send home progress reports outlining each student’s academic progress. At the end of each trimester, students and families will receive a report card detailing final grades in each course.
**Strength**

At BELA, we believe in taking care of ourselves emotionally, spiritually and physically to build the strength and resiliency needed to achieve our goals.

Growth begins from within. We are committed to seeing each young woman reach her fullest potential. Our young women come into BELA with a diverse range of skills and talents. We hope to build on this skill-set, and offer a range of new tools—with the goal that upon graduation, students have a solid toolbox to draw from during challenging times. As identified in our mission, we are committed to enabling young women to create, to be empowered, and to venture into healthy risk-taking, and to have the ability to make wise choices—during successes and setbacks. The following policies offer students the opportunity to display responsibility and professionalism.

**Attendance Policy**

School begins Monday - Friday promptly at 8:45am. Consistent, punctual school and class attendance is essential to a student’s educational success and to our community’s cohesion. Unless a student is excused, attendance is required every day.

Excused absences include: personal illness, appointments with a health professional that could not be scheduled outside of school, observance of a religious holiday, a family emergency, or a planned absence for a personal or educational purpose that has been approved in advance by the school. If you anticipate an absence, please contact Ms. Cynthia by 8am.

Upon returning to school after an absence, a student is required to provide a note signed by a parent or guardian that explains the reason for the absence. A doctor’s note is requested when the reason for absence includes an appointment. Without a note, the absence is marked as “UNEXCUSED.”

Students who are late to morning meeting will be responsible for developing plans with their mentor teacher that effectively restores their commitment to the school community.

As a college preparatory school, please remember that each student’s permanent transcript indicates the number of absences and latenesses per school year, and this record is sent with college, post-secondary program, and employment applications.
In the case of all absences, students are encouraged to stay current on their school-work using ALMA and Google Classroom to receive assignments and take part in classes.

Please meet with your mentor teacher or a member of the Student Life Team if you need further support in attending school on time regularly.

**College Success and Guidance at BELA:**
All students will participate in BELA’s College Success Program. Students and families will learn how to be successful in high school and will develop the ability to choose from a wide range of post-secondary options. The college department will work closely with the mental health team to ensure that students are making informed decisions for their post-secondary placement.

The goals of the **College Success Program** are:
- Students will develop the academic and social-emotional skills to be successful in high school and to prepare them for post-secondary education.
- Individual self-discovery and exploration will allow students to identify and cultivate their passion, strengths, and values—enabling them to feel confident, informed, and prepared to choose a post-secondary pathway.
- Students will demonstrate that they have the skills to make post-secondary choices in relation to their knowledge of self-interests, and the requirements of college.

The College Success team is committed to seeing BELA students into and through college. There will be an alumni coordinator encouraging BELA alumnae year-round, supporting their goal to graduate college. While academic credentials are important, the alumni coordinator will help ensure the new graduate is connected to a strong community of friends, family, and current and former BELA students.

**Counseling and Personal Well Being**
At BELA, we are fully invested in providing the comprehensive supports needed for our young women to be successful in a holistic way. Through Leadership Academy, each student will have access to caring adults and peers as a support network. Additionally, at BELA, we employ social workers and host social work interns to provide one-on-one counseling for students.

*Counseling*
Counseling can be helpful for students experiencing depression, anxiety, loss, or difficulty
adjusting to transitions and change. Students may request counseling, or may be referred to counseling as needed. All counseling referrals will be sent to the Dean of Student Life, Ms. Camile, who will then refer to one of the school’s social work staff members. There may be times when the student’s need for comprehensive mental health services surpasses the capacity of the staff. At these times, school social workers will work with families to secure appropriate community counseling services.

Families who are also in crisis and need additional support can reach out to your student’s advisor or to the Dean of Student Life.

Ethics laws ensure that counseling is always confidential. If a student is deemed a threat to herself or others, or a clinician recognizes additional risks of safety, a counselor is legally obligated to involve additional parties. Counselors will include parents and guardians when necessary and appropriate. Parents and guardians may also receive referrals to counseling.

**Incident Reporting**

At BELA, safety is a major priority. BELA staff will contact the parent or guardian as soon as possible if a student has an accident at school. Further the incident will be documented, and reviewed by administration. In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be reached, a report will be sent home with the student. In emergencies, BELA staff will notify the people indicated on the student’s Emergency Contact form, as well as law enforcement, or emergency medical personnel, as necessary, or in the best judgment of BELA staff and administration.

In any emergency, BELA’s first priority will be to deal with the emergency and ensure the health and safety of all students involved in the incident. We will then secure the surrounding area to address any unsafe conditions, and once secure, contact parents, guardians, and/or emergency contacts.

**Threats to Self**

At BELA, we take threats of violence or harm very seriously. If a student threatens her own life, or if a staff member is concerned about a student’s perceived threat to harm herself, this will be brought immediately to the attention of the BELA Leadership team. If the Leadership Team feels that the student is in imminent danger, the parent will be contacted and a psychological evaluation will be required before the student can return to school. When a student exhibits potentially suicidal behavior and the parent refuses to cooperate with the school or to take alternative preventive measures, the licensed social worker must report this information immediately to the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) for the student’s safety.
**Mandated Reporting of Abuse**

In accordance with state law, all staff at BELA are Mandated Reporters. If a member of the staff suspects that a student is being abused or neglected, or that abuse is about to occur, she/he is required to report the suspicion to the Administration For Children’s Services (ACS). Signs of abuse or neglect can include, but are not limited to:

- Patterns of lateness to school and absence from school
- Students appearing consistently unkempt or dirty
- Any sign of physical abuse, such as bruises, cuts, or apparent fear of innocuous interpersonal contact
- A parent or guardian knowingly allows someone else to inflict harm
- Untreated need for glasses, dental care, or other medical attention

Should a Mandated Reporter at BELA be required to make a report to ACS, one of BELA’S social workers will be available to provide supportive services to the family and student.

**Lateness Policy**

Students who arrive after school begins at 8:45am are considered late for school and Community Circle. If a student arrives later than 9:01am, they must sign in with Ms. Jahqueena or at Welcome Center in Room 205 with Ms. Cynthia, where they will be given a late pass before going to their first period class—they will be considered present, but tardy. Parents will be informed of student lateness and absences by the Assistant Dean, Ms. Jahqueena. Additionally, advisors will be informed of any lateness and/or unexcused absences; and students will be asked to check in with Mentor Teachers by the end of the day and come up with a corrective action plan to prevent future tardiness. Latenesses will also be marked in ALMA, our permanent student record portal.
If a student is tardy more than 3 times during the trimester, families will be asked to come in for a conference with student and the Assistant Dean in order to create a more comprehensive action plan for timeliness.

School Nurse
In collaboration with the Department of Education, the school nurse is available to students during the school day. Students may request to visit the nurse in the school’s health office (Room 104) if they become ill during the school day, injure themselves, or have a health-related question. Students requiring a visit to the nurse must be escorted by Dean of Student Life or Assistant Dean.

Dispensing of Medication
Any student who requires medication during the school day must provide an up-to-date, completed Medical Administration Form (MAF). This form must be completed by a doctor and returned to BELA at the beginning of the year. Without this form, students may not take medicine while in school. This form may be obtained at: http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Health/School-HealthForms/default.htm. Only the school nurse or other authorized personnel may dispense over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (i.e., Tylenol), or ibuprofen (i.e., Advil), and only if there is an up-to-date MAF on file. In such cases, the school nurse will only distribute medicine to students with updated MAFs as called for by the MAFs submitted by/for those students.

The school does not stock any cold remedies such as cough drops or vitamins. No student is permitted to carry any over-the-counter or prescription medications on their person or in their school bag during the school day. Prescription inhalers for asthma and an injection of epinephrine for anaphylaxis are the exceptions to this rule; only students who are medically required to carry medicines and who have an up-to-date, complete MAF may carry these medicines with them during the school day. The school nurse may store extra emergency medication for any student who requires such medicine during the school day. To store this medicine, the school requires an up-to-date, completed MAF on file. Parents/guardians should contact the school prior to arrival on the first day if they have any specific medical questions or their children have a condition that requires management at school. If a student requires prescription medication during the school day, such medication must be supplied by the student or her/his family, and will be dispensed by the school nurse.

Medical Dismissal
The school nurse or staff may recommend that a student be dismissed if she is too ill to take part
in her coursework. When such a recommendation is made, the student’s parent/guardian will be contacted directly by phone. Parents/guardians must respond promptly when called to pick up a student for medical reasons. To ensure students’ health and safety, sick or injured students are not permitted to depart school on their own; they must be accompanied by their parent/guardian or someone whom the parent/guardian delegates this authority. Only individuals listed on enrollment forms as emergency contact persons may remove students from school with a valid state issued identification. If BELA staff cannot reach a student’s parents/guardian, and the student is unable to travel safely alone, BELA staff may contact emergency medical personnel.

**Personal Electronic Devices**

At BELA, we want all students to be focused and free from distractions in the learning environment. We also understand that parents/guardians may need to contact a student about travel arrangements to and from school. BELA students are permitted to bring electronic devices onto school grounds. These devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, media players, tablets, and similar devices. However, students will be required to give electronic devices to their Mentor Teacher when they arrive. Cell phones will be labeled and placed in a designated and locked space, according to their Leadership Academy. Electronic devices will be returned to students at dismissal.

Any electronic devices that are not stored away and are seen or heard during the school day, will be confiscated. School leadership will hold the device until it is collected in person by a parent/guardian. Please note that parents and/or guardians may always call BELA’s main office to relay important information to a student. BELA’s main office number is 347.473.8831.

**Public Transportation to and from BELA**

Students are offered MetroCards to travel to and from school. MetroCards are provided by the NYC Department of Education, Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) for use by students on city buses and subways. MetroCards are assigned by the OPT based on the distance a student lives from school. Metrocards are assigned in the following way:

- Students who live less than ½ mile from the school are Not Eligible
- Students who live ½ mile or more from school, but less than 1 mile are eligible for half-fare MetroCard (to be used on buses only)
- Students who live 1 mile or more from the school are eligible for Full-Fare Metrocard (these MetroCards may be used for all buses and trains)
As per OPT regulations, MetroCards can only be used by students. If a student allows anyone else to use it, a police officer or transit personnel will take away their card. If they alter or damage the card on purpose or use it in any other way than intended, it may be confiscated, and the individual responsible for misuse may be fined or arrested.

MetroCard eligibility will be assigned by the OPT after July 15th each year (not all students are eligible for MetroCards). To determine your eligibility, visit: http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Transportation/ServicesandEligibility/BusTransportation/default.htm.

You can find the approximate distance from your home to the school by using Google walking maps (https://maps.google.com/maps).

BELA is accessible via the following bus lines: B15, B38, B43, B46, B47, B52, B54, Q24 and the following Subway lines: J to Kosciusko St OR M, Z to Myrtle Ave, J to Kosciusko St.

If you have any questions or concerns about your student’s commute school, please contact our main office. It is our goal to ensure that all students can get to school safely and efficiently, and we will work with you to address any questions or concerns.

You may also visit schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Transportation for general information relating to city-wide school transportation. Alternatively, you may call (718) 392-8855. Finally, if your child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that requires busing, we will work with the OPT to accommodate your child.

Note: students may receive two replacements for lost or damaged MetroCards, per school year. Students should contact Ms. Cynthia in the main office to complete a form for a replacement. There is a one-week waiting period for processing between the time of completing the form and then receiving a replacement card. Families should make arrangements to provide/pay for transportation during this time.

Wellness Class at BELA

While most schools traditionally offer physical education, BELA uses a comprehensive Wellness Program designed to educate students about holistic health, wellness, self-care, and the importance of physical activities reflective of passion and self-knowledge—while emphasizing each student’s personal responsibility for their own health and well-being.
Family Life and Sex Education

Students will meet with a trained and experienced Wellness teacher, to help our young women learn about themselves and their bodies in an age and stage appropriate manner, building upon the knowledge our students enter with and continue through their Senior Year. Classroom discussions and coursework covers healthy relationships and communication skills, body image and self-esteem, reproductive health and anatomy, personal values, peer pressure and decision making, sexually, HIV, sexually transmitted infections and safety planning as well as understanding that wellness is both physical and emotional well-being.

Weather and Emergencies

In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the NYC Department of Education (DOE) school closing policy. In the event that NYC DOE schools are not in session, BELA’s closing will be announced by e-mail and an automated phone call and/or text. The decision to cancel or delay school due to inclement weather will ordinarily be made before 6:00am.

Should a weather-related or other type of emergency arise after school is in session, it may be necessary to dismiss students early. In this situation, parents/guardians will be notified via e-mail and an automated phone call.
Service

At BELA, we believe in the power of our personal responsibility to engage and invest in strengthening our local and global community.

Being a part of a community is what makes us stronger. BELA was founded with tremendous support from important and invested members of the Bedford Stuyvesant community—a place with a rich historical legacy. It is our intention to become an integral part of this community and contribute to its bright future. BELA students will have ample opportunities to learn from the people living and working in Bedford Stuyvesant—whether they are young, old, a 4th generation resident, or a newcomer. Partnering together we hope to identify concrete and meaningful ways BELA students can engage, collaborate, and contribute to this historic place.

Student Community Service Requirements

BELA was founded on a core value of service—understanding that the act of serving benefits our students, their families, and our community. Service is a pathway for our young women to engage in the world around them, while learning about and listening to the unmet needs of their community. BELA students have a unique opportunity to help, and our intention is that through the giving process they get a sense of accomplishment and pride.

Additionally, colleges and universities consider engagement in service to be one of the factors in making students well-rounded. It is for these reasons and because of our strong belief in the power of service, that students are expected to complete 100 hours of community service as a requirement for graduation at BELA.

- All students will participate in B-PACT, a community service learning action project during their first year, where there will acquire their first 25 hours of service with their advisory group.
- There will also be community service events and opportunities that BELA will participate in as a school. These will be announced as they become available.

Neighborhood Trips and Community Events

Experiences outside the classroom are important parts of our educational model, and there will be many opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning. BELA field trips are defined as trips that classes of students take that are not within walking distance of the school and involve more than one class period. For all field trips that require transportation, either
on bus or subway, parents and guardians will be required to sign a written permission slip. Students who do not return a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian by the date specified on the slip will not be allowed to go on the trip.

Neighborhood trips, on the other hand, include trips within walking distance of the school that typically last one class period. All Parents/Guardians signed a form during enrollment authorizing their child’s participation in neighborhood trips during the school year. Therefore, permission slips will not be provided or required.

Because field trips and neighborhood trips are a critical part of our educational model, we expect all students to attend. An absence from a field trip will be treated the same way as an absence from a regular school day.

Family and Community Involvement and Service
BELA families are a vital part of our community. Families are encouraged to be involved in their student’s life and the BELA community, formally and informally. For example:

Family University
Family Toolboxes
Being a part of the BELA family extends learning beyond our students. We know that in order for our students to grow, families grow alongside. BELA offers Family Toolboxes one night per month, where parents meet with BELA social work staff to cover a wide range of holistic learning topics, including college preparation and readiness, adolescent development, and to provide resources for parents. We welcome any topics that families are interested in, especially in coping with normal adolescent challenges and learning new strategies to deal with family dynamics. Please contact the Dean of Student Life or Dean of Advancement with any thoughts or questions. Meetings will be held the 2nd Tuesday of the month, from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM.

Family Community Service
To model our values, BELA staff and families are asked to participate in at least one community service event during the school year. One member of the household (other than the BELA student) is encouraged to participate. This contribution is required for the BELA Family University Certificate. We request participation because we value adult modeling and mentorship—and understand the powerful bonds that form when students, families, and staff volunteer and serve together. Furthermore, family and staff engagement is a critical component of student success, in school and beyond.
BELA Family Association
BELA Family Association serves as the voice of our parent community. The Family Association is created by families, for families, to work together and enhance the BELA experience. The Family Association may coordinate volunteer events, appreciation events, and are encouraged to create a new project or tradition. If interested in joining the Family Association, please contact the Dean of Advancement, Ms. Shannon. Meetings will be held the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 5:30PM to 6:15 PM.

School/Classroom Visit
BELA's doors are open to family and community visitors to observe the high quality and professional environment that we established. When a visitor arrives, they must sign in with security and go directly to the Welcome Center to receive a visitor's pass. All students and staff are asked to be ambassadors of our school community. Students are encouraged to introduce themselves to all visitors, share information about our school, and answer questions. Whenever possible, a panel of student ambassadors will be available to introduce key elements of the school and provide information. They will also accompany visitors on classroom tours and provide context for project work. All visitors will be asked to complete the following Visitor Observation Rubric and return it to the Main Office at the end of the visit:
**Visitor Observation Rubric**

Name of Visitor: ____________________________

I would best identify myself as:

- Family Member of Current Student
- Prospective Student
- Community Partner
- Middle School Guidance Counselor
- Board Member
- Prospective Partner
- Other: ____________________________

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<th>Proficient (3 points)</th>
<th>Emerging (2 points)</th>
<th>Beginning (1 point)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student Learning and Teacher</td>
<td>90% of students were on task and engaged in the learning assignment.</td>
<td>60% of students were on task and engaged in the learning assignment.</td>
<td>30% of students were on task and engaged in the learning assignment.</td>
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<td>Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Ambassador Greeting</td>
<td>A student greeted me and informed me of what the class was doing.</td>
<td>A student greeted me but did not inform me of what the class was doing; or a student did not greet me appropriately but informed me of what the class was doing.</td>
<td>Students noticed me but did not inform me of what was going on in the class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A culture of caring, respect, and</td>
<td>Students and staff were supportive of each other, evidenced by using respectful language, friendly gestures, and had a physical environment that reflects respect and positive learning.</td>
<td>There was some physical displays of positive learning (evidenced by high expectations of students, clear class structure, and respectful communication).</td>
<td>There were no physical displays of positive learning, (no evidence of high expectations of students, no clear class structure, and disrespectful communication).</td>
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<td>professionalism was evident</td>
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<td>throughout the visit.</td>
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Any additional feedback:
Appendix A: BELA EmpowerMEnt Guide

BELA's mission is to empower each young woman to be the best version of herself. Through a rigorous college preparatory program, service learning initiatives and a commitment to cultivating a sense of ownership within each young woman, BELA students will attend and graduate from college.

Philosophy

School culture and climate are often determining factors for young women successfully completing high school. BELA is committed to ensuring the safety and support of each student that enters our doors, with the goal being high school completion and college graduation. Our culture and behavioral guide aims to teach our young women the life long skills necessary to become self advocates, negotiate healthy relationships and boundaries, and seek ways to repair and restore discord in their relationships and communities.

Our school has chosen to utilize a restorative justice framework for our disciplinary policy. Restorative Justice (RJ) focuses on agreement and mediation rather than other more punitive measures. Adapted from the model laid out by Ron and Roxanne Claassen in *Discipline that Restores*, we have created a comprehensive approach to student growth and development. In alignment with BELA’s core values, RJ is a pioneering program based on respect, responsibility, relationship-building and relationship-repairing. We believe this approach will keep our young women in school, create a safe environment where learning can flourish, and build successful students of life. The main components include:

- Sisterhood: Relationship building is developing mutual connections that provide reciprocal benefit to all parties involved.
- Scholarship: Relationship repair means you are willing to do something in order to make things better.
- Strength: Responsibility is the ability to act independently and take accountability for one’s emotions, thoughts and actions in a given circumstance.
- Service: Respect means holding oneself, others, and the learning community in the highest regard.

BELA’s EmpowerMEnt system reflects a holistic approach to working with our young women. EmpowerMEnt recognizes the influence/impact of adolescent development, trauma, and institutional racism. Thus, our approach is individualized and inclusive of the young women we serve.
Features of BELA EmpowerMENT:

- Seeks to Answer: What happened? How was everyone involved impacted by it? What are the needs of everyone involved? How can we make it right? What can we do to prevent it from happening in the future?
- Establishes regular, predictable, and positive learning and teaching environment.
- Allows for collaborative decision-making process between school, family and students.
- Encourages accountability and responsibility through personal reflection.
- Seeks to understand the harm an action may cause and to develop empathy for everyone involved.
- Creates systems for providing regular positive feedback.
- Improves social competency skills, including advocacy, communication, conflict resolution and critical thinking skills.
- Develops environments that support student centered academic and personal success.
- Implements collaborative restoration methods that are fair and respectful to all.
- Values conflict as a part of the learning process, and an opportunity for growth,
- Provides opportunities for students to be celebrated, and connections to deepen.
- Offers individualized approaches to conflict.
- Validates the experiences and needs of everyone within the community.
- Acknowledges that real safety comes from fostering and maintaining caring relationships.
- Allows everyone involved to have a commitment to being constructive.
- All parties share in a commitment to being constructive and will have an opportunity to voice their concerns and be heard in an appropriate time and place.

EmpowerMENT Guide

At BELA, the cornerstone of the EmpowerMENT system is for all parties to participate in a learning environment that fosters academic and social-emotional growth. Therefore, all members of the BELA community commit to engaging in constructive communication that contributes to clarity and respect for all.

- All conflict provides a teaching opportunity

We believe that all students want to reach their full potential and we want to give them the tools to accomplish this. When conflict presents, BELA EmpowerMENT uses these moments as an opportunity to teach life skills and conflict resolution skills.

- Students will have ample opportunity to make decisions that will improve outcomes in any
circumstance and will be celebrated for this.

Students will be repeatedly offered opportunities to self correct any off task behavior through verbal and nonverbal reminders. Students will be celebrated for making conscious decisions to be on task.
STEP 1 - Preparation: All students and staff will commit to coming to BELA prepared to being constructive, and an active participant in teaching and learning.

Students and teachers collaborate to create Respect Agreements at the beginning of the school year, signed by all and will include the following:

- Student Respecting Student
- Student Respecting Teacher
- Teacher Respecting Student
- All Respecting Equipment and School Environment

Teachers create a positive classroom culture where appropriate and acceptable behavior is modeled. When we teach the students what is expected from them, we must model the behavior and provide feedback. This may be done in a few ways:

- **IHUM** - Interact, Heads-Up (scan the students or area) Move (in the classroom, everywhere on campus, when you are on duty)
- **MIS** - Movement among the students in different settings, High quality Interaction with the students and using a 5 to 1 ratio (5 positive statements to 1 negative statement), Scanning the students in different settings.
- **Be present and visible during transition time and state expectations.** Greet the students and be sure your expectations are known as they travel to class and begin the day. Have your Do Now ready, and teach the students to get started when they enter the room.

Students create a positive classroom culture by coming to each classroom on time and prepared to learn. This can be displayed in the following ways:

- Students completing a learning goal in the beginning of each trimester
- Students focusing on their do now assignment as soon as they enter the classroom
- Speaking in a respectful tone to all staff and students.
- Contributing to and adhering to classroom Respect Agreements
- Being a collaborative problem solver with students and peers
**Step 2- Addressing Conflict:** We recognize that conflict is inevitable and is an opportunity to teach, learn and grow from our conflict. Conflict is always addressed within our school community, as unresolved conflict leads to escalated problems.

BELA has created a list of common conflicts that arise in many school settings. Our goal is always to have as minimal conflict, and obstacles to learning as possible. However, we do take seriously any infractions that interrupt our learning environment.

Additionally, we have established a variety of interventions to resolve conflict in our school community. At every level, students will be given the opportunity to consider how to make things right and restore trust, safety and the well being of the learning community.

**Level 1: Uncooperative or Noncompliant Behavior**

*Interventions include:*

**Offering Usual Constructive Reminders:** Small personal and respectful reminders are verbal and non-verbal cues to students (individually and class wide) to return to task.

- Nonverbal cues include making eye contact with student, walking near and standing close by a student who requires attention, slightly shaking your head at the student, walking next to the class Respect Agreement and nod in the direction of it.

- Direct Verbal cues include saying to the entire class (rather than singling out any student), “You will want to take notes on this important topic” “It is important to listen carefully to this next part.” “You will have an opportunity to discuss what I am teaching shortly, but for now I want to make everyone is listening”, privately reminding students of their educational goals

**Respect Agreement**

- When agreements are made and kept, trust grows

- In addition to BELA school wide agreements, each classroom will have their own individual respect agreement that students come up with and sign at the beginning of the year. This will be posted in the classroom. It can be used in a few ways:
  - Review every class for the first two weeks of school
  - Ask students to consider whether or not any off task behavior is part of the
respect agreement they signed
• Ask student if they are planning to keep their agreement
• Invite student to return to their respect agreement

Active Listening and/or I-Message
• When students have been reminded to redirect their focus back to the task, and the student has not responded, teachers can use the following Communication Tools.
• These tools can be conducted in private or respectfully in front of whole class
• The intention is to always be constructive, not to embarrass
  • Active Listening Skills: One of the things most people in conflict want is to truly be heard. They want to know that their concerns are being listened to.
  • Effective active listening looks like this:
    • Decide that you want to hear what the other has to say.
    • Don’t judge immediately. Try to understand what the person is saying from his or her point of view.
    • Use nonverbal ways to let the person know you are open to hearing his or her thoughts or feelings. (body language, eye contact)
    • Check to see if you have understood by summarizing or restating the other person’s most important thoughts and feelings.
    • Don’t advise, judge, analyze, bring up similar feelings, or ask questions.
      • I-Messages: These are assertive statements conveying a strong concern that the speaker takes responsibility for and invites the listener to consider both parties’ perspectives and to problem solve
        • Structured in the following way:
          • My purpose is… (state constructive hope, goal, etc.)
          • I feel and/or think…(state feelings and/or thoughts when the problem activity occurs)
          • ...when... (describe the problem activity)
          • ...because... (describe the reason that the activity is a problem for you)
          • And, my preferences would be...(state one or two options that you think might resolve the problem activity; one option could be to invite the other to do some mutual problem solving with you)
          • Ex. “ My purpose in talking with you is to clarify and improve our relationship. I am confused and feel disappointed when you violate our class agreement (describe
specific behavior) and ignore my reminder, because I thought we had an agreement to keep our Respect Agreement. I would prefer that you keep it without my reminding you and that if you forget you respond positively when I remind you.”

- **Four Options:** This is a conflict resolution tool that allows students to decide how they would like to address escalating conflict.
- This is used during a conference that takes place to resolve conflict and the Four Options model can be used as a guide:
- Below is a visual explanation of the model, followed by an explanation.

![Options for Handling Conflict](image-url)
In this model, the I’s represent the people (two as pictured but each I could represent any number of people) in conflict, the X’s represent outside involvement, such as a mediator, and the circles or ovals represent power or the ability to make a decision.

- In Option #1, there is no outside involvement and one of the parties has the ability to decide the outcome.
- In Option #2, an outside authority makes a decision to resolve conflict for the I’s.
- In Option #3 the role of X (mediator) is to help those inside the circle come to a decision.
- In #4, the I’s share the power and all I’s must agree. If one does not agree, then it is really a #1, not a #4.

**Level 2: Disruptive or Disorderly Behavior**

- **Interventions Include:**
  - **Student Teacher Conference**
    Student Teacher Conferences are an essential tool to use when an issue involves more than just an informal conversation. Student Teacher Conferences are a reliable process to help the student and teacher recognize presenting issues or concerns, make things right between you, and for you both to create a plan for a better future outcome. Student teacher conferences can involve the student and the teacher; or the student, teacher and Mentor teacher as a support. All student teacher conferences end with a written agreement that makes it clear what is being done to solve the and a follow-up meeting time. (See appendix 1 for a Student Teacher Conference Form). The following is included in all STCs:
    - Both student and teacher commit to being constructive
    - Recognize and acknowledge the issue or concern and the impact it is having
    - Restore healthy communication and a healthy learning environment
    - Clarify Future Intentions
    - Follow-up and Accountability

    **Follow Up Meetings** are a time to keep inviting cooperation and to keep valuing each other as problems are encountered and addressed.
    - Brings the focus back to support, responsibility and accountability.

    **Inform Families of Conflict and Resolution so they can support resolution agreement**

**Keys to a Successful Student Teacher Conference:**

- Establish Ground Rules
  - Listening without interrupting
  - Be willing to summarize

Evaluate the chosen options: are they respectful, reasonable and restorative for all parties?

Adjust if necessary and then sign.

Celebrate the resolution and agreement!

**Referral to Thinkery**

While we anticipate this being a rare occurrence, we recognize that during moments of conflict escalation, sometimes students involved need a cool off period and time to reflect. If a student
is refusing to cooperate, after multiple invitations by teachers or staff to cooperate, the goal of the thinkery is to encourage students to reflect and decide to cooperate. The Thinkery is a space for a student to “think” about her refusal to cooperate with the support of another adult. An adult (trained social work staff) discusses with student what she has been doing and experiencing, along with the impact it is having of the teacher and other students. It offers an opportunity for the student to reconsider her decision to refuse invitations to cooperate. The thinkery will be used in the following ways:

- The student has refused to resolve the problem cooperatively
- A school agreement has been violated, the agreement is identified and its purpose is explained. The student will be invited to summarize.
- The student is asked to think about what happened by writing or talking about what happened. The adult in the Thinkery listens to and summarizes the student’s concerns.
- The student is invited to reconsider working cooperatively with the teacher.
- The student is asked to think and write a plan to present to the teacher in a student/teacher meeting.
- If the student remains uncooperative, a Family Conference will be scheduled.
- When student is ready to return to class, she will be escorted by the adult in the Thinkery she has been working with.

**Family Conference**

At BELA, our families are essential in supporting our students to make this right and in upholding the values of the school community. Family conferences are used when the teacher has exhausted all opportunities to gain a student’s cooperation and the student continues to refuse to engage. We want our families to be a constructively support to the student and work to invite cooperation in a way that enhances the learning community. Family conferences happen on two levels: Level one conferences include parents, student and teacher. Level two conferences include parents, student, teacher and a Leadership Team administrator. At all times it is intended to be a constructive support to getting students back on task and resolving any underlying conflict.

- Level 1 Family Conference (Parents, Student, Teacher, and Mentor teacher or counselor)
  - Parent is contacted by teacher and asked to help their child consider resolving the problem cooperatively at a family conference or returning to a student/teacher meeting.
● If the student does not want to return to the student/teacher meeting, a family conference is scheduled, including the family, student, teacher and student Mentor teacher or counselor.
● Meeting is led by the teacher or a social worker using a mediation process.
● The group agrees to an effective solution.
● The group writes and signs the agreements made to resolve the issue.
● Follow-up meetings are held to assess if the agreement is working, make modifications where necessary, schedule another follow up meeting, and/or celebrate.
● If agreements are repeatedly not being kept or if issues have escalated, a Family Conference Level 2 will be coordinated.

Level 2 Family Conference (Parents, Student, Teacher, and Mentor teacher or counselor, School Administrator)

● Teacher meets with administration to inform them of the attempts to gain cooperation, the refusal or agreements not kept, and the need for Family Conference
● Parents are contacted by administration, and invited to help their child resolve the problem cooperatively
● The group reviews the history, starting with attempts to gain cooperation, a review of any problematic behavior, and/or school violation
● Interventions discussed
● The group seeks to arrive at a cooperative agreement that restores a healthy learning environment and clarifies future intentions.
● The group writes and signs agreements made to resolve the problem.
● Follow-up meetings are held to assess if the agreement is working, make modifications where necessary, schedule another follow up meeting, and/or celebrate.
● If the conference does not arrive at a cooperative agreement, the administrator will inform the student that school administrator will decide the outcome (Option #2). This is not intended to punish, but to encourage the student to cooperate, or resolve the issue. Before the student returns to class, she will have to come to an agreement with the teacher.
Level 3: Safety Risks and/or Violations

Interventions: **Immediate Referral to BELA Leadership Team.** Due to our priority for all students to feel safe in this learning environment, administration takes any breach of safety seriously and address the matter accordingly.

- Students will always have the opportunity to have a Restorative Circle where she will meet with everyone involved in the incident, along with family members, a peer advocate, school social worker, and school administration to discuss the violation, how things can be made better and clarify future intentions.
- If the violation warrants a suspension, students will be offered a Re-entry meeting to re-integrate them into the community.
- Level 2 Family Conferences will be held for all Level 3 Infractions (please see above for explanations of Family Conference.)
## Level 1: Uncooperative or Noncompliant Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infractions</th>
<th>Interventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Being late for school or class</td>
<td>● Student will self-correct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Unexcused absence</td>
<td>● Teacher/Staff will offer Usual constructive Reminders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Food and/or seeds outside of cafeteria</td>
<td>● Parent outreach for support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Failure to wear uniform</td>
<td>● Invitation to resume Respect Agreements or BELA Community Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Cutting class</td>
<td>● Active Listening and/or I-Message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Interrupting</td>
<td>● Four Options Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Electronic Use violation (student does not turn in electronic device)</td>
<td>● Individual and/or group counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Engaging in verbally rude or disrespectful behavior</td>
<td>● Conflict resolution meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Defiance</td>
<td>● Referral to Thinkery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Using school computers and/or other electronic equipment without</td>
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<tr>
<td>appropriate permission</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Failure to be in one’s assigned place in the classroom or school</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Calling out</td>
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<td>● Note-passing</td>
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<td>● Refusal to work</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Invading personal space</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Sub misbehavior</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Level 2: Disruptive or Disorderly Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infractions</th>
<th>Interventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Chronic refusal to Self Correct, or Adhere to the Above Interventions</td>
<td>● Student Teacher Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Engaging in disruptive behavior in the classroom</td>
<td>● Family Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Unsafe or Rough Play</td>
<td>● Restorative Conference with social work staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Cursing at or using derogatory language towards staff or student</td>
<td>● Reflection/Behavioral Action Plan with Mentor Teacher during Leadership Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Defying or disobeying the lawful authority or directive of school personnel or school safety agents</td>
<td>● Individual or Group Counseling Referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Escalating peer conflict</td>
<td>● Parent outreach for support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Lying/giving false information</td>
<td>● Four Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Entering or attempting to enter a school building without authorization or through an unauthorized entrance</td>
<td>● Buddy Room</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Apology Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Individual/Group Counseling referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Referral to social work and/or BLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Referral to a Community Based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Inappropriate use of technology
- Gambling
- Leaving class or school premises without permission
- Repeatedly cutting class
- Making sexually suggestive comments, innuendos, propositions or similar remarks, or engaging in nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature (i.e., touching, patting, pinching, sending or posting such material on the internet)
- Engaging in scholastic dishonesty which includes but is not limited to:
  - Cheating (e.g., copying from another’s work; using material during an assessment which is not authorized by the person giving the assessment; collaborating with another student during an assessment without authorization; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting, in whole or part, the contents of an unadministered assessment; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for one’s self to take an assessment; bribing another person to obtain an assessment that is to be administered; or securing copies of the assessment or answers to the assessment in advance of the assessment)
  - Plagiarizing (appropriating another’s work and using it as one’s own for credit without the required citation and attribution, e.g., copying written work from the Internet, or any other source)
  - Colluding (engaging in fraudulent collaboration with another person in preparing written work for credit)

- Referral for Substance abuse counseling services
### Level 3: Safety Risks and/or Violations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infractions</th>
<th>Interventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Possession of, selling or distributing illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco or unauthorized prescription medications</td>
<td>• Parent outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fighting/ Physical Altercation</td>
<td>• Referral to school counseling team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engaging in physically aggressive behavior</td>
<td>• Individual/Group Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vandalism, graffiti, or other intentional damage to school property, or property belonging to staff or other students</td>
<td>• Automatic Administrative Referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engaging in sexual conduct on school premises or at school-related functions</td>
<td>• May require school safety and/or police involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Posting, distributing or sharing material containing a threat of violence, injury or harm, or depicting violent, actions against or lewd pictures of staff or student, including posting this material on the Internet</td>
<td>• Family Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bringing unauthorized persons to school or allowing unauthorized visitors to enter school</td>
<td>• Out of School Hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Theft (Knowingly possessing property belonging to another without authorization)</td>
<td>• Re-entry to Community Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Repeated inappropriate use of internet</td>
<td>• Referral to Community Based Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engaging in physically aggressive behavior that create a safety risk or results in minor injury</td>
<td>• Referral for Substance Use counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sexual harassment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engaging in an act of coercion or threatening or instigating violence, injury or harm to another or others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gang related behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tampering with, changing or altering a record or document of a school by any method</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bringing dangerous items</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engaging in harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying) based on</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
an individual’s actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, national origin, weight, religion, religious practices, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability; such behavior includes, but is not limited to: physical violence; stalking; verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens another with harm; seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; hazing; taunting; exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate; using derogatory language or making derogatory jokes or name calling to humiliate or harass.

- Chronic refusal to follow BELA expectations
- Using slurs based upon actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, weight, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability
- Falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm
- Making a bomb threat
- Inciting/causing a riot
- Possessing, selling, or using a weapon or firearm
- Using controlled substances or prescription medication without appropriate authorization, or using illegal drugs, synthetic hallucinogens, and/or alcohol.
- Engaging in threatening, dangerous or violent behavior

Step 3: Restoration and Celebrations:
As a community we actively and proactively celebrate the growth and development of each student, academically as well as socially and emotionally. When a student conducts herself in a manner that requires redirection, we acknowledge that as an opportunity for growth.
student, on her own, or with the support of an adult if necessary, takes the initiative to do her part to make things right and restore a healthy learning environment, we applaud and celebrate that personal victory.

Specific Feedback: When teachers/staff observe students upholding the values, they will acknowledge the students by giving specific positive verbal and/or written feedback such as: “When you held the door open for your classmates, you were showing your respect for them.” “Thank you for being just by walking with your hands and feet to yourself.” Give a Core Value shout out (positive praise)

Positive Phone Calls
Each week, every teacher will make a minimum of 3 positive parent phone calls.

Student of the Month
Each grade level will determine 1 student to represent the grade level as student of the month. Student names and grade level will be posted in the parent newsletter each month.

Sisterhood Shout Outs
We encourage students to support their peers in offering compliments, praise and encouragement when appropriate. Typically, this would take the form of a private conversation. There will also be scheduled opportunities for students to give a “shout out” to other students.

Re-Entry Circle and Support
Students who have had to leave the community for a variety of reasons, including suspension, will be welcomed back to the community by a team of individuals whose goal is to re-integrate students in the healthiest way possible. This ensures that students can participate effectively in the school community, aware of an potential adjustments that need to be made in order to support their academic and social emotional learning.

A Note on Students with an IEP: BELA EmpowerMEnt is intended to be a constructive way for students to engage in healthy problem-solving strategies. Students with an IEP are held to all appropriate behavioral expectations just as any other student as long as their disability is not the cause for the inappropriate behavior. Teachers will need to consult with Dean of Student Life for any student in question regarding a student’s particular disability, its impact on the student’s behavior, and strategies that can be used to better support student.

I believe. I can. I will.
Appendix B: COMPUTER USE AGREEMENT

This version is in effect since August 2017

Students and Parents/Guardians – Please review this Computer Use Agreement (this “Agreement”) and sign and return the Consent Form below.
You should retain a copy of this Agreement for your records.

BROOKLYN EMERGING LEADERS ACADEMY (“BELA”) is pleased to provide the student signing this Agreement (“Student”) with a laptop computer (the “Computer”) for use inside and outside of BELA’s school facilities, to enhance, enrich, and facilitate learning and communication at BELA, as further described in this Agreement. The use of the Computer is a privilege extended to students while registered, enrolled and in good standing at BELA. The Computer is provided by BELA only for educational and school-related purposes, curriculum enhancement, and communication.

RECEIPT AND RETURN OF THE COMPUTER

The Computer, together with all related equipment, software and accessories, will remain the property of BELA or its lessors or licensors, as applicable. As a condition of the use and receipt of the Computer, both the Student and the Student’s parent/guardian (“Parent/Guardian”) must sign and return to BELA the Consent Form to this Agreement. By doing so, Student and Parent/Guardian agree to adhere to the terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement.

If Student’s enrollment at BELA terminates for any reason, Student must return the Computer on the date of such termination. If Student fails to return the Computer upon termination of enrollment, Student and Parent/Guardian may be liable for the replacement cost of the Computer.

Student must return the Computer to BELA [at the end of each school year and] at any time upon request by BELA as determined in BELA’s sole and absolute discretion.

CARE OF EQUIPMENT

Student will exercise all due and reasonable care in use and handling of the Computer, including, but not limited to, the following:

• Only carrying the Computer while it is enclosed within the protective case or equipment provided with the Computer.
• Not leaving the Computer unattended in hallways, classrooms, unlocked lockers, or any other unsupervised area.
• Ensuring that the Computer remains free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not applied to the Computer by BELA.
• [Serial number stickers are not to be tampered with.]

**ACCEPTABLE USE**
Student’s use of the Computer must be consistent with the core values and code of conduct of BELA, including the following:

• Student must obtain a BELA faculty’s permission before using the Computer during classroom instruction.
• Use of the Computer for recreational or entertainment [during class time] is prohibited.
• Use of the Computer for outside e-mail is prohibited.
• Student must not use the Computer to access any websites not specifically authorized by BELA.
• Student must not loan their Computer to others.
• Student must not transmit or knowingly receive any materials using the Computer in violation of any U.S. or New York State law, including but is not limited to the following: threatening, harassing, pornographic, obscene, or profane material, materials related to the illegal use or manufacture of restricted substances, defamatory or discriminatory material, or material protected by trade secret.
• Student must not use the Computer to conduct illegal activities or create malicious code or viruses.

**NETWORK ETIQUETTE**
Student must abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. For example, Student must:

• Be polite. Never send, or encourage others to send, threatening or abusive messages. Student must comply with the BELA Discipline Policy and the Code of Conduct, including the provisions on harassment and bullying.
• Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language, material or images.

**PRIVACY**
Information on the Computer is not guaranteed to be private. Computers, files and communications may be accessed and reviewed by BELA personnel or BELA’s designees. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
SOFTWARE
Student must not tamper with or remove software installed by BELA. From time to time BELA may add or remove software applications. Student must not download or install any software, programs, or applications onto the Computer without the express permission and approval of BELA. For all technical support needs, students must contact their Mentor Teacher and/or Ms. Dionna.

DAMAGE, LOSS OR THEFT
As soon as Student observes any damage, Student must return the Computer to BELA for repair.

Student will be responsible for damage to, or loss of, the Computer or any associated equipment or property, when the damage or loss:

- is caused by Student’s negligent use or misuse;
- is intentional;
- goes beyond normal wear and tear; or
- results from a violation of this Agreement.

The maximum loss incurred by Student for a lost, stolen, or damaged Computer is $400 in each instance.
BROOKLYN EMERGING LEADERS ACADEMY
COMPUTER USE AGREEMENT – CONSENT FORM

I have read the Computer Use Agreement and I agree to adhere to all guidelines that are involved for use. I understand that any violation of the Computer Use Agreement may result in the suspension or revocation of Computer privileges. I recognize that Parents/Guardians may be contacted if a violation occurs, and any consequences delineated in the Brooklyn Emerging Leaders Academy Discipline Policy may be enforced.

Date:

Student Name (please print):

Student Signature:

Parent/Guardian Signature:

School Leader Signature:
Appendix C: Biometric Finger Scanning Identification System

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our school is implementing a biometric finger scanning identification system in an effort to provide accurate student identification as well as security for our student accounts. We are using this new identification system because we are held accountable for our records through audits. We want to eliminate clerical errors and provide an easy and accurate way to identify students and be sure no one else can charge items to their accounts.

What is Biometric Identification?
Biometric identification is an automated method of identifying a person based upon physical or behavioral characteristics. Our school has selected the identiMetrics Biometric Finger Scanning Identification System because it is secure, accurate, cost-effective and non-intrusive.

How does finger scanning identification work?
Using a finger scanner, the software scans certain unique points on the finger to create and store individual templates that identify each student. When the student returns, the software again scans the finger and looks for a match in the database. When a match is found, the student is identified.

What about our students’ privacy?
We are not fingerprinting the students. The software scans the finger for identification. It does not store a copy of the fingerprints. Instead, the software creates a template of the unique points on the finger. The template is converted to a unique number and is stored in the school’s database with the same level of security of all of our records. The templates are also protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is the same Federal Law that protects all student records. When your child graduates or is no longer enrolled in the school system, the templates are deleted. At no time is a fingerprint image stored. No fingerprints can be recreated or delivered to any agency - governmental or otherwise.

Thanks for your attention!

It is important to us that your child's experiences in school are educational and rewarding. This new way of identifying our students is safe, easy, accurate, efficient and secure. If you have any questions or do not want your child to participate, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Dionna Matlock
Dean of Operations
(347) 473-8832
Appendix D: Knowing your Rights: Family Educational Rights

The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of students’ education records. FERPA gives families certain rights with respect to their children’s education records. Those rights are explained below.

- Families or eligible students have the right to inspect and review all of the student’s education records maintained by the school. For records including information on more than one student, families are limited only to information pertaining to his/her child. Schools are not required to provide copies of materials in education records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for families or eligible students to inspect the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

- Student records or other identifiable information are maintained in a secure location to ensure confidentiality. Records that are no longer required or need to be disposed are done so in a manner that ensures confidentiality and security.

- Families and eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent/guardian or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record commenting on the contested information in the record.

- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent/guardian or eligible student before releasing any information from a student’s record. However, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties:
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
  - Accrediting organizations
  - Judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law

Appendix E: Procedure for Accessing Student Records

1. A parent/guardian may request to review his or her child’s student file. Any person requesting to review a student file must request it in writing and submit it to the main office.
2. The Dean of Operations will review the request and determine whether to release the information to the requester. If the requester is not a parent/guardian, a Consent for Release of Student Information letter will be sent to the parent/guardian for permission.
3. Once permission is granted to review a student’s file, the requester must sign the Record of Access form. If a student has an IEP, the requester must also sign the Confidential File Access Log form in the student folder.

Procedure to Amend or Appeal Student Records

1. If a parent/guardian believes the education records relating to the student contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s right to privacy, he or she may ask that the record be amended. A parent/guardian may express the appeal in writing to the School Leadership Team and must include the following:
   - Information that is claimed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s privacy rights
   - Records in which the parent/guardian believes the information is contained
   - Basis for the claim (i.e., why he/she believes the information is inaccurate, etc.)
   - The parent’s/guardian’s proposed change
2. The School Leadership Team will review the request and make a determination within fifteen school days of receiving the letter. The School Leadership Team will provide the parent/guardian with a written response to the request and provide an explanation for the decision.

If the action is warranted, the school may decide to remove, modify, or expunge the information in the record. Removing, modifying, or expunging an entry is not an admission that the entry was improper or that any person acted improperly by including the entry on the record.
3. If the request is denied or no ruling is made in the allotted time, the parent/guardian has the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Directors within twenty school days from the adverse ruling or failure to rule.

4. A hearing officer will be appointed by the Board of Directors. A hearing will be held within twenty school days after the parent/guardian files the request with the Board, and the parent/guardian will be given notice of date, place, and time of the hearing with sufficient advance notice.

5. A parent/guardian will be given the opportunity to present the appeal and may be assisted or represented by individuals of his or her choice or own expense. The hearing officer’s decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.

6. A written report containing a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision will be issued fourteen calendar days from the conclusion of the hearing. If necessary, the hearing officer will direct the School Leadership Team to amend the records accordingly and inform the parent/guardian in writing. The hearing officer’s decision will be final. If the parent/guardian does not agree with the decision, the parent/guardian has the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information or stating why he/she disagrees with the decision of the hearing officer, or both.
Appendix F: Freedom of Information Law

Brooklyn Emerging Leaders Academy complies with New York State’s “Freedom of Information Law” (FOIL). When the school receives a request for information under the Freedom of Information Law, it responds in the following manner:

- Within five business days of receipt of a written request, the school shall make the information available to the person requesting it, deny the request in writing, or provide a written acknowledgment of receipt of the request that supplies an approximate date, which shall be reasonable under the circumstances, for when the request will be granted.

- If BELA determines to grant access to the requested information, and if circumstances prevent disclosure to the person making the request within twenty business days of the acknowledgment of receipt of the request, the school shall state, in writing, both the reason for the delay and a date certain, within a reasonable period of time, depending on the circumstances, when the request will be granted in whole or in part. Failure of the school to conform to the provisions of paragraph one above or this paragraph two, shall constitute a denial of the request.

- If an individual is denied access to a record, he or she may, within 30 days (or such period as defined by law, as may be modified over the course of the charter), appeal such denial to the School Leadership Team.

- Upon timely receipt of such an appeal, BELA shall, within 10 business days of the receipt of the appeal (or such period defined by law, as may be modified over the course of the charter), fully explain the reasons for further denial or provide access to the record sought. The school also must forward a copy of the appeal, as well as its ultimate determination, to the New York State Committee on Open Exceptions to disclosure: Brooklyn Emerging Leaders Academy Charter High School may deny access to a requested record for a variety of reasons, including that:
  
a) such access would constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
  
b) such access would violate either state or federal law;
  
c) such records are compiled for law enforcement purposes; and/or
  
d) such records are interagency or intra-agency materials which are not statistical or factual tabulations of data, instructions to staff that affect the public or a final policy. Except for records specified in Public Officers Law §87(3), the school shall not be required to prepare any record that it does not maintain or have in its possession.
Appendix G: Special Education Services

The Special Education and support staff at BELA is a team of educators who are dedicated to meeting the social, emotional, and academic needs of each student through a multi-sensory approach to learning. BELA is one that prides itself on differentiating instruction to meet the specific learning styles of each and every one of their students. BELA believes that each student has a different, unique style of learning. It is BELA’s goal to identify each student’s learning style so that the curriculum and academic content can be presented in a way that is easily understood by the students. To ensure that this goal is achieved, lessons are presented to meet the visual, auditory and kinesthetic (tactile) learners.

Vision: At BELA, it is our vision that all students are provided with the tools they need to succeed emotionally, socially, physically and academically. We believe that while most schools seek to identify areas of weakness in a student, we aim to identify the areas of strength and teach toward them. For this reason, teachers at BELA are provided with the most relevant professional development on a weekly basis. Teachers are provided with the tools and resources necessary to provide differentiated instruction to the students as well as weekly observations to provide teachers with constructive feedback.

Appendix H: 504 Plans

It is BELA’s intent to periodically review and update student health records, and bring to CST meetings students that may need the supports offered through a 504 plan. The CST will identify and evaluate students qualified under Section 504 who are in need of accommodations to participate in school programs on an equal basis with their non-disabled peers. Students who may be in need of such accommodations are evaluated by the BELA CST team and, when appropriately approved by the parent, are provided accommodations pursuant to a written 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan) that outlines the accommodations the student will receive.

School staff and parent/guardian can request an evaluation by the CST for any student who is reasonably believed to be disabled and in need of accommodations, within the meaning of Section 504, in order to attend and participate in school activities on an equal basis with his or her non-disabled peers. When staff members initiate a referral through the CST, the Head of School or Dean of Student Supports must notify the parent within five school days (aligns with IEP timeline) that they have received an evaluation request and document in a student information system such as Alma. The Head of School or Dean of Student Supports will need to ensure that
parents are well informed of the Section 504 processes through delivery of the Notice of Non-discrimination and the Parental Rights Notice. Parent consent is required before an evaluation can be done. All initiated 504 plans will be renewed yearly by the CST and files will be housed in a locked file drawer and on the secure server. Once a referral is received it will follow the process of the CST protocol.

**Appendix I: Brooklyn Emerging Leaders Academy Complaint Policy**

Except as described below, any individual or group may bring a complaint to the School’s attention. A complaint should include a detailed written statement of the nature of the complaint including the names of the individuals involved and the time, date, and place the incidents and/or actions at issue occurred; an allegation referring to the specific term of the charter or provision of law that the School has violated, what response, if any, was received from the School thus far, what relief the complainant is seeking, and the name, address, and phone number of the complainant.

If a complaint is made regarding a staff member at BELA, it will first be the responsibility of the Head of School to address the complaint to the satisfaction of the Board and the complainant. The Board will serve as the appeals body for any complaints not satisfactorily resolved or that involve the Head of School directly in the complaint. Complaints must be submitted to the Board at least one week prior to the next Board meeting. Complaints submitted less than one week before the next Board meeting will be addressed at the subsequent meeting of the Board. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the Board responding at or prior to its next regular public meeting. The Board will act on the complaint and provide a final response to the complaint within thirty (30) days of receiving the formal written complaint or by the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board unless extenuating circumstances outlined in the complaint require an expedited review. The Board shall render a determination in writing if appropriate or required.

The complaint process is guided by Education Law Section 2855(4)(2)(d). An individual or group (a complainant) may bring a complaint alleging a violation of the school’s charter, the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (Charter Schools Act), or other applicable law relating to the management or operation of the charter school to the school’s Board.
Consistent with Section 2855(4) of the Charter Schools Act, if the complainant is alleging a violation of law or of the School’s charter and determines that the Board has not adequately addressed the complaint, the complainant has the right to present the complaint to the school’s authorizing entity, the New York City Department of Education, which will review the complaint and investigate as appropriate. If after bringing the complaint to the authorizing entity, the complainant determines the authorizing entity has not adequately addressed the complaint, and the complaint alleges a violation of the law or of the School’s charter, the complainant may present the complaint to the State Board of Regents, which will review the complaint and investigate as appropriate. The determination of the Board of Regents shall be final.
BELA Handbook Acknowledgement of Receipt and Agreement

IN SIGNING AND SUBMITTING THIS AGREEMENT (please initial each line):

_______ I acknowledge that I have received, read, and support Brooklyn Emerging Leaders Academy Charter High School’s Student & Family Handbook and its policies.

_______ I understand that I am expected to be actively involved in my child’s education and to maintain open communication with the staff and administrators of BELA.

_______ I understand that as a part of the BELA school community, my student will have access to confidential counseling services, including individual and small group counseling, and I consent to this. I also understand that I will be informed of any safety issues or concerns that may come up in sessions.

_______ I acknowledge that I have read and understand the BELA EmpowerMEnt Guide.

_______ I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Biometric Fingerscanning Identification System.

_______ I acknowledge that I have read the section of the Student & Family Handbook regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the procedures for accessing, amending, and appealing my child’s school records once she is age 18 or over.

_______ I acknowledge that I have read and agree with the section of the BELA Student & Family Handbook regarding neighborhood trips and community events outside of the school building.

_______ I acknowledge that I have received a copy of BELA’s FERPA policy, BELA’s Procedure for Accessing Student Records, and BELA’s Procedure to Amend or Appeal Student Records (FOIL policy).

_______ I acknowledge that I have read and signed the Computer Use Agreement and understand that I, along with my student is responsible for the care and maintenance of the laptop assigned to her.

This Pledge must be signed and returned to the student’s Mentor Teacher no later than Tuesday, September 5th. If I have any questions or comments regarding the Student & Family Handbook, I will call the school’s main office at (347) 964-8550 to speak to my child’s Mentor Teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

Student Name (please print) _____________________________________________________
Student Signature _____________________________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Name (please print) ____________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature _____________________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Phone (day) ______________________________________ (evening) __________
Today’s Date _____________________