STUDENT and PARENT HANDBOOK



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Dear Parents,

I sincerely welcome all of you into the extended family of Big Apple Academy, the school that cherishes the fundamental traditions of Western and Eastern European education and combines them with the best practices of American schooling. The Big Apple Academy is well known for its challenging and rigorous academic programs, but more importantly, programs that get results. Our students consistently achieve high scores on standardized state exams, win Nationwide Olympiads in various subject areas, and receive acceptances into Specialized High Schools across New York City. For several decades, our school has been opening its doors to students and families, providing learners with innovative teaching instruction, rigorous curricula, and systematic approaches in teaching and learning. Several generations of students have already recognized significant benefits of our academic programs that allowed them to succeed in middle school, high school, and beyond. I sincerely hope that your children's learning experiences within the walls of the Big Apple Academy will enrich them with knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to succeed in our competitive, ever changing world.

This handbook contains an important source of information for you and your child. The handbook clarifies important school procedures and policies that pertain to academics, schedules, school structure, and responsibilities of learners. I encourage every student and parent to review the contents of this handbook and to work with the school staff to achieve our academic and safety goals so that all students may benefit from a quality, effective education.

Please note that this handbook is a flexible document and may be revised at any time.

I look forward to your becoming an integral part of our school and hope that together we can provide a positive and exciting experience for your child.

> Sincerely, Wlad Gorny

> > Principal

Academic Year Description

The academic year at Big Apple Academy begins on September 1st each year (unless this day falls on a weekend or a holiday). The school year is divided into four academic semesters (terms) and students' progress report cards are distributed by the end of each marking period. The term division is planned according to the following time periods:

Term 1 September – October

Term 2 November – December

Term 3 January – March

Term 4 April – June

The annual school calendar is posted on the school website and contains term division dates, list of holidays, and dates for school recess. (http://www.bigappleacademy.com/news-events/calendar/)

School Day Description

The hourly daily schedule is provided to all students upon their enrollment. Classroom teachers familiarize students and parents with daily routines and lesson schedules. A school day at Big Apple Academy begins at 8:00 A.M. when students arrive to school and get ready for breakfast which is served in the school cafeteria. The academic day begins at 8:30 A.M. and the school bell designates the beginning of the first lesson (Instructional time). Each class obtains its unique schedule in September, and all learning activities are held in accordance with a class program allocated for a specific day of the week.

Lunch, snack, outdoor, and after school activities are scheduled for all grade levels. Kindergarten students enjoy a one hour nap time after lunch, followed by outdoor activities. The Homework Preparation Time begins at 3:20 P.M. During this time, students complete assigned homework under the guidance and supervision of a classroom teacher. Two Homework Prep sessions are interrupted by a snack which is served in the school cafeteria. Students are officially dismissed at 5:00 P.M. and are escorted to assigned class-stations to prepare for bus boarding. To ensure a smooth dismissal and a safe bus boarding, each student group is supervised by a teacher. Students are escorted to their buses by a chaperone and a school security quard.

To meet the needs of working parents who cannot pick up their children before students' dismissal, the school offers a one hour extension time free of charge. Students are assembled in the classwaiting area and are supervised by school personnel. The school is officially closed at 6:00 P.M. An additional fee of \$10 per 10 minutes will be charged in case a child is picked-up after 6:00 P.M.

Daily Schedule for Grades K-2

Time		е	Activities
7:30 AM	-	7:55 AM	Arrival
8:00 AM	-	8:25 AM	Breakfast
8:30 AM	-	9:10 AM	1 st Lesson
9:15 AM	-	9:55 AM	2 nd Lesson
10:00 AM	-	10:40 AM	3 rd Lesson
10:50 AM	-	11:30 AM	4 th Lesson
11:35 PM	-	12:15 PM	5 th Lesson
12:20 PM	-	1:00 PM	6 th Lesson
12:25 PM	-	12:50 PM	Lunch (Session 1)
1:00 PM	-	1:30 PM	Lunch (Session 2)
1:00 PM	-	1:45 PM	Playtime (Kindergarten)
1:45 PM	-	2:45 PM	Nap Time (Kindergarten)
1:45 PM	-	3:00 PM	General School Activities
			and Afterschool Programs
3:00 PM	-	3:30 PM	Kindergarten Snack
3:30 PM	-	4:00 PM	Snack (1st - 2nd Grades)
3:30 PM	-	4:45 PM	Homework Preparation (Kindergarten)
3:00 PM	-	4:45 PM	Homework Prepartion (Grades 1 & 2) *
4:50 PM	-	5:00 PM	Dismissal
		_	

^{*}Homework prep for grades 1 & 2 is divided into two sessions with a break for snack.

Daily Schedule for Grades 3-8

Ti	m	е	Activities
7:30 AM	-	7:55 AM	Arrival
8:00 AM	-	8:15 AM	Breakfast (session 1)
8:15 AM	-	8:25 AM	Breakfast (session 2)
8:30 AM	-	9:10 AM	1 st Lesson
9:15 AM	-	9:55 AM	2 nd Lesson
10:00 AM	-	10:40 AM	3 rd Lesson
10:50 AM	-	11:30 AM	4 th Lesson
11:35 AM	-	12:15 PM	5 th Lesson
12:20 PM	-	1:00 PM	6 th Lesson
1:05 PM	-	1:45 PM	7 th Lesson
1:05 PM	-	1:45 PM	Lunch (session 1)
1:50 PM	-	2:15 PM	Lunch (session 2)
2:20 PM	-	3:10 PM	General School Activities
			and Afterschool Programs
3:20 PM	-	4:00 PM	Homework Preparation (session 1)
4:05 PM	-	4:20 PM	Snack
4:25 PM	-	4:55 PM	Homework Preparation (session 2)
5:00 PM		Dismissal	

Procedures for School Visitors

In an effort to increase the safety of our school buildings, the Big Apple Academy has adopted the following school visitation rules and procedures. We appreciate your cooperation as we continue to provide a safe environment for our students and staff.

- Each visitor shall enter his or her name, the purpose of his or her visit, and the time of entrance into the logbook located at the security desk.
- Visitors must present a form of ID to enter the premises.
- Permission to proceed to a classroom must be sought from the building administrator or designee.
- During instructional time, no visitors are allowed to enter the classrooms unless authorized by the principal or school administrator.
- Should the intended visit interfere with the planned instructional program, the security guard will advise the visitor and suggest an alternate time for the visit.
- Visitors must verbalize their intended destination to the school security personnel. They, in turn, will contact the classroom teacher and pass necessary messages to the students.
- If a visitor intends to speak with the principal or a designee, he or she must wait until the security guard contacts the school office and obtains entrance permission for the visitor.
- Parents visiting the school for scheduled meetings with teachers must wait by the security desk until the teacher in question welcomes them at the security desk and escorts them to an allocated meeting room.
- The school principal and site administrators may allow limited access to visitors based upon their personal understanding of the situation and/or knowledge of the person in question.

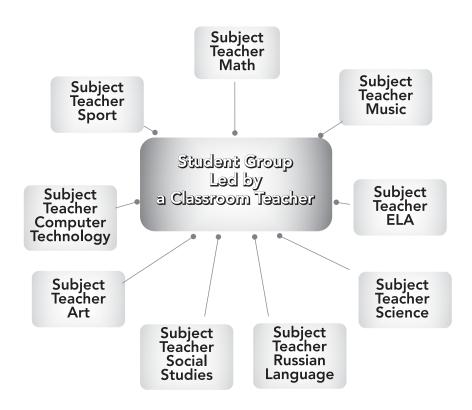
- Parents who visit the school for student pick up before the end of the school day must remain in the waiting area by the security desk at all times. Security guards will pass information regarding student pick up to a classroom teacher. Parents, who intend on visiting any other destination in school (a classroom or an administrative office), must register in the Visitor Log and present a form of ID.
- Visitors must park their vehicles in a way that allows full access to school busses and does not interfere with school operations. Any car blocking school bus access to the boarding area and/or creating dangerous boarding conditions for the students will be reported to the police.
- Homework preparation sessions are considered to be instructional times subjected to the same rules and regulations. In order to pick up a child during these times, parents MUST notify the school at least 30 minutes prior to pick-up. No child will be released from class during homework preparation without prior notification.
- Parents who regularly visit the school, are easily recognized by the school staff, and have long standing relationships with the school, are expected to adhere to these procedures as well as any other visitor.

Individuals who fail to comply with the requirements provided herein may be temporarily and/or permanently denied access to the Big Apple Academy facilities.

Educational Model and Structure

Big Apple Academy implements the "multi-year grouping" and a "teacher/student progression," educational model that has been successfully utilized in Western and Eastern European schooling. Below is a chart demonstrating the core of our academic beliefs: the idea of a classical, multi-faceted education based on team teaching and multi-year grouping that fosters intellectual, social, and physical development of students in grades K-8.

Student Grouping and Class Structure



The Multi-year grouping model encompasses the following components:

- Multi-year placement for both, students and teachers.
- Classroom Teacher stays with the same group of learners for more than one academic year.
- Team teaching (approximately 10 highly qualified teachers serve a single group of students)
- The period of time students and teachers stay together is determined by the school administration

Students are grouped in accordance with their academic levels and are provided with a differentiated instruction to satisfy their individual learning needs. Students' academic level is determined by multiple assessment results and summative evaluation. Effective leveling and multi-year grouping allow us to develop a family-like environment, providing teachers with the opportunity to build strong, meaningful relationships with students. Therefore, student/teacher progression provides for a greater knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses, allowing for increased opportunities for teachers to tailor the curricula to individual students' needs.

Role of a Classroom Teacher

In many ways, the role of a classroom teacher at the Big Apple Academy is that of a manager who organizes the learning process and works in close cooperation with subject teachers. He/she distributes and collects numerous forms, takes attendance and lunch count, responds to illness, supervises recess, manages transitions, guides students during homework sessions, responds to parental notes and phone calls, and creates a comfortable atmosphere for learning. However, classroom teachers do not provide direct teaching instruction in academic subjects across grade levels. They are an essential part of a much bigger team that includes subject teachers who are assigned to individual classes. Most importantly, classroom teachers are the first point of contact for parents and students. As such, the classroom teacher is the goto person in case of questions, problems, concerns or general inquiries.

Role of a Subject Teacher

One of the most beneficial components of the Big Apple Academy's educational model is the practice of selecting highly-qualified teachers who work within their specific areas of concentration and expertise. Our Math, English, Science, and Social Studies teachers are able to provide teaching instruction across all grade levels and possess necessary knowledge and skills to fulfill and enrich the learning curricula. By working in teams, they create a learning environment where students are encouraged to be active participants as individuals and as members of collaborative groups. Carefully crafted teaching instruction and learning experiences motivate students and nurture their desire to learn in a safe, healthy, and supportive environment which develops compassion, as well as mutual respect.

BIG APPLE ACADEMY'S INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL AT A GLANCE

CLASSROOM TEACHER SUBJECT TEACHER At Big Apple Academy At Big Apple Academy Provides teaching instruction in Provides for a systematic class supervision during instructional a specific learning discipline and is directly responsible for the time, after school, and other school sponsored activities quality of learning process Consistently assesses and Monitors student progress and evaluates student performance informs school administration, using a broad variety students and parents of techniques Guides the learning process toward the achievement of Consistently supports established curriculum goals, subject teacher to enhance communicates clear objectives teaching instructions to the students for all lessons, units, and projects Collaborates with a classroom Ensures the completion of teacher in establishing specific homework assignments during academic goals for individual **Homework Prep Sessions** students and class in general Gathers, stores and monitors Monitors and evaluates data related to student accomplishments of students on a regular basis, provides progress

learning for use in assessing progress towards achieving the instructional objectives

Provides coaching and mentoring related to social skills and student behavior. Creates and sustains a productive learning atmosphere

Employs a variety of instructional techniques and teaching strategies to meet different aptitudes and interests of students, including technology and whole group/small-group learning

reports as required, and

communicates with parents

Team Teaching

School Registration and Student Enrollment

School registration is an important process that occasionally, triggers numerous questions. In order to properly observe the teacher- student ratio and ensure the academic success of learners, the school limits student enrollment and prioritizes student selections. Priority in registration is given to the current Big Apple Academy's families who decide to continue with our program of study. Each year, in April, we conduct a preliminary survey to determine the number of students who wish to continue their education in the Big Apple Academy. When the preliminary data is collected, we begin the second phase of the registration process during which parents submit necessary documentation to the school's financial department. Enrolled students, who fail to submit their applications in accordance with specific deadlines, automatically lose their priority status, and the school may select outside candidates from the current waiting list.

New Student Enrollment and Orientation

Placement Tests are administered to all prospective students. Parents wishing to enroll their children at the Big Apple Academy should schedule a placement test by calling the main office or registering online at www.bigappleacademy.com. All parents who have registered their children for the placement test will be notified of the date by phone and email. In instances when the scheduled date is missed for any reason, make-up dates will be assigned on the individual case basis, only if available seats are available after the initial testing period.

The first days of school might be very hectic for students and families. Therefore, parents should take part in students' preparation and overall readiness for school. As a parent, you are expected to place a sticker with specific information on your child's clothes during the first week of his/her attendance. An example, along with specific instructions is also mailed to your home address well before the start of the school year. This information will help your child's teachers to accurately identify and place him/her on the correct bus route. Stickers are available in office supply stores (*Staples, Office Depot*, etc.). The following is an example of a sticker that must be attached to your child's clothes. Please clearly fill out the following information on your child's sticker:

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	BUS #
HOME ADDRESS		
TELEPHONE # ()		
GRADE LOCATION	*	_BUS STOP
*Please indicate the specific lo		86 th Street (3-8 Grades) or
	503 1	aka Straat (K-2 Grades)

The first ten days are preparatory. In the course of this time, children will be given their textbooks. Classroom teachers will be able to establish communication lines with students and parents. Subject teachers will take their time to review basic material from the previous school year. Children will get to know their teachers, learn crucial school rules, and acclimate to the school environment and schedules. During this time, please fill in your child's academic journal, sign your youngster's name on all textbooks and workbooks. Please provide book covers for all of the mentioned school materials.

School Recess (Winter, Mid-winter, Spring)

To satisfy the demands of working parents, we offer free- of- charge recreational activities during winter, mid-winter, and spring recess breaks. The school is officially open, sustaining its regular operational hours, and no changes are made to the transportation schedule. However, academic activities, lessons, and homework prep sessions are not conducted. At this time, students are free from the structured, academic schedule and are engaged in play activities, educational games, arts and crafts, as well as reading sessions. Breakfast, lunch, and snack are served according to the school schedule, and students enjoy outdoor play in the school backyard. Lateness and absence procedures do not apply at this time. However, please note, disciplinary procedures remain in effect.

The Summer Program

Summer time at the Big Apple Academy is packed with adventures and unforgettable experiences that allow children to fully enjoy their summer time and re-energize for the upcoming school year. During the summer months (July and August Sessions), the Big Apple Academy operates as a Summer Camp. At the end of the school year, in May, all parents receive a Questionnaire Form wherein they express their desire to enroll their children into the Summer Program. Interested parents may obtain detailed information regarding daily schedules, field trips, and activities planned for the Summer Program.

Our campers enjoy recreational activities on the beach and at the swimming pool. They have many opportunities to demonstrate their skills in various talent shows, and attend numerous trips and competitions. Our Summer Program broadens children's social skills and often taps into resources your child never had to call on before. Experienced teachers and counselors guide camper groups through all activities scheduled during the summer program. Kids choose from myriad varieties of sports and entertainment, such as basketball, soccer, football, karate, tennis, gymnastics, ballroom dancing,

aerobics, computers, the Dance Revolution Program, X-Box, arts, and crafts. We strive to engage all of our campers through a Summer Program by enhancing the summer activities as well as by adding new and exciting experiences for every upcoming Summer Program. Therefore, every summer is different, and the campers who attend the program regularly find the camp interesting and appealing.

After School Sports Activities and Clubs

We are committed to provide our learners with ample opportunities to apply their talents and skills in multiple academic clubs and afterschool sport activities during the school's operational hours. In our Afterschool Club Program, children enjoy an exciting afternoon full of physically and artistically enriching activities. The Big Apple Academy had established a partnership with multiple service providers who offer our students a plethora of after school activities such as:

- Chess
- Soccer
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Basketball
- Tae Kwan Do
- Martial Arts

A complete list of all Afterschool Club activities is generated in September and is sent home with your child for your review. Please note that the Afterschool Club's cost is not covered by the school tuition; therefore, parents should provide additional payments directly to the service providers to ensure the participation of their children in activities of their choice.

Communication with Parents PTC

To support our students academically in and out of school, administrators, teachers, and families need to have a shared understanding of their children's learning and work as partners to meet students' academic and social needs. Big Apple Academy holds two parent-teacher conference sessions over the course of the school year. Parents are notified in advance regarding specific dates and time of PTCs. The first meeting is conducted at the closure of the first marking period in November, and the second takes place in April. We always look forward to meeting with parents and strive to provide them with the most convenient PTC structure. Usually PTC's consist of two parts: the first part includes an assembly for all parents and caregivers whose children attend a particular grade level. During the

parent assembly, the Principal and Department Chairpersons address the parents to discuss upcoming events, current changes, instructional innovations, and overall academic standing of students. Department Chairpersons provide parents with strategies that parents may use at home to help their children meet instructional goals for the year. The second portion of the PTC allows parents to approach teachers individually and discuss their children's progress in a private manner. In cases when parents experience date and time conflicts during scheduled PTC's, they are encouraged to schedule a parent-teacher conference at a mutually agreed-upon time. We truly want to make your child's school life a rich and a rewarding one and, therefore, urge all parents to attend PTC conferences.

Requesting Individual Conferences

Occasionally, parents express a need to arrange individual conferences with teachers to discuss their child's performance, behavioral issues, or other sensitive matters. In this case, parents should make a phone call to the administrative office and schedule a meeting with teachers that will suit both, a parent and a teacher. To avoid an interruption in the learning process, *individual conferences may not be scheduled during instructional times*.

Communication Lines

Consistent parental involvement drastically increases the likelihood that quality learning will occur in the classroom and at home. Parents play a crucial role in their children's academic, physical, social, and moral development. Therefore, our teachers do their outmost to establish and sustain indispensable collaboration with parents and families. Recognizing that strong communication is fundamental to building a sense of community between home and school, we create a variety of ways to keep families informed regarding all situations students encounter in school.

- In addition to the parent-teacher conferences, our teachers can be contacted via email or by phone. In the introductory letter, which is distributed to all students at the beginning of the school year, all teachers are required to provide their contact information to parents. Please note that teachers are NOT REQUIRED to provide their personal home and/or cell phone numbers.
- You may also express your concerns at any convenient time by choosing electronic communication and contacting our Parent Coordinator at <u>parentcoordinator@bigappleacademy.com</u>. You may also email your questions to Department Chairpersons. We encourage you to use all possible communication lines and systematically oversee the academic and social progress of your child.

Department of Mathematics
Department of English Language Arts
Department of Social Studies
Department of Science Studies
Department of Computer Science

math@bigappleacademy.com
english@bigappleacademy.com
socialstudies@bigappleacademy.com
science@bigappleacademy.com
computerscience@bigappleacademy.com

ACADEMICS

Student Assessment and Summative Evaluation

During the academic year, teachers implement a broad range of assessment techniques to evaluate student's progress and target content areas and skills in need of improvement. Collecting student's evaluation data from various assessment sources allows us to enhance teaching instruction and ensures the fulfillment of the academic curricula.

Annual Diagnostic Tests are administered by each academic department and are aligned with the school's rigorous curriculum. These tests are conducted twice a year and provide for students' summative evaluation, providing a clear indication of what students know and are able to do at specific grade levels and within specific areas of study. All students receive advance notice regarding specific dates for when these tests will be administered.

Standardized Assessment (State Test)

Annual standardized assessments are mandated by the State of New York and are aligned to the NY State learning standards. Elementary and middle school students in New York State take yearly State Tests in core academic subjects to assess their mastery of the *Common Core Learning Standards*. Students' test results are one of the factors that we use to decide whether to promote a student to the next grade level. We carefully analyze students' test results to determine focus on specific instructional standards and to evaluate the effectiveness of our programs.

- English Language Arts (ELA): Grades 3-8
- Math: Grades 3-8
- Science: Grades 4 and 8

Standardized test data is only the tip of the iceberg used to monitor overall and year-to-year performance. We assess our students in a variety of ways, including shorter assessments that give our school and its departments a clear picture of progress not only on an annual basis, but on a daily, weekly, and monthly scale.

Crucial to the learning process are assessment that take the form of homework assignments, classroom tests and quizzes. In every core subject area, homework assignments allow students to reinforce and practice the knowledge they acquired in class. But just as importantly, homework assignments give teachers an indication of how well each individual student has learned a particular topic and what additional work needs to be done to reach the highest level of proficiency in it. Frequent class quizzes serve the same purpose: they provide a very detailed view of incremental progress and allow teachers to quickly make adjustments and addendums to make the learning process more successful.

Ongoing evaluation of students' performance is based on multiple assessments of students' learning and includes a variety of work samples taken from the following:

- Class Assignments
- Anecdotal Records
- Performance Assessments/Projects
- Journals/Logs
- Discussion/Problem Solving/Classroom Participation
- Homework
- Writing Folders
- Collaborative Work
- Lab Work
- Quizzes/Tests

Regents Examinations for Intermediate School Students

The Big Apple Academy fully observes all academic procedures established by the State of New York. However, the Big Apple Academy implements a unique and accelerated learning curriculum that greatly differs from the academic programs offered by many public schools across New York State. Therefore, we are privileged to introduce high school courses to our eighth graders and administer the following Regents Examinations on an annual basis.

- Integrated Algebra
- Geometry
- U.S. History and Government
- Living Environment

These Regents Exams are a series of tests that are given to students to evaluate their knowledge and comprehension in the abovementioned subjects. The exams are based on core subjects that are typically offered to high school students. The Regents Exams originate from the New York State Board of Regents. Therefore, we have no influence over the New York State Board of Regents' decisions and must fully observe all Regents procedures and schedules mandated by the State of New York.

Class Record Journal Definition and Purpose

The administration of Big Apple Academy has developed a Class Record Journal as an official school document which has been designed to monitor individual student's performance and curriculum fulfillment. It also provides for a summative student's evaluation in all subjects, and ensures a systematic approach in collecting information regarding students' academic achievements. Parents may request the release of information recorded in the Class Record Journal. However, parents may not review an educational record of other students on the class list. The record contained in the Class Record Journal is transferred into students' academic journals by classroom teachers on weekly basis.

Student record and Student Individual Journals (SIJ)

The Student Individual Journal (SIJ) is an official school document designed to inform parents regarding student's progress, behavior, and academic issues on a daily basis. All students are responsible for the systematic maintenance of their journals. This includes a consistent recording of a weekly schedule and homework assignments for each subject. The assessment results, including students' grades for tests, quizzes, homework, and other assignments are entered into students' journals on a regular basis. Classroom teachers carefully monitor journal maintenance and periodically provide parents with comments and information regarding upcoming school-sponsored events. Furthermore, teachers utilize SIJs to communicate with parents at the first sign of trouble. We encourage parents to call teachers if they observe any issues, and we, likewise, encourage teachers to communicate information to parents with honesty and openness. In order to insure the flow of communication between teachers and parents, we require parents to sign the SIJ on a weekly basis. Parent's signature in the journal acknowledges that the student's grades and remarks were seen by the parent.

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Student Promotion and Retention

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, students must demonstrate the proficiencies listed below:

- An overall average of 65% or above, computed by averaging yearly grades for Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
- A yearly average of 65% or above in Mathematics.
- A yearly average of 65% or above in Reading.
- Yearly average of 65% or above in Language Arts.

Our goal is for all students to make substantial progress and achieve a level of proficiency that enables them to be promoted to the next grade level. However, there are cases when students do not achieve the desired level of proficiency and should be retained at the same grade level. In such cases, school officials will hold a conference with the child's parent or guardian to present information about the student's lack of progress/proficiency and recommendations for retention. We view student retention as an action of last resort taken after a careful evaluation of a student's performance in all subject areas. This decision is usually made on an individual basis by the committee of designated teachers led by the Department Chairpersons who take into consideration the following factors:

- Promotional standards established by Big Apple Academy
- Student proficiency levels achieved on the NYS Tests Promotion Standards
- Student attendance (absenteeism and tardiness)

In order to avoid student retention and provide learners with necessary opportunities to master their skills, the committee may offer a *Summer Remediation Package* which includes learning materials specifically crafted to eliminate knowledge "gaps" and master necessary skills. In this case, parents must acknowledge receipt of and ensure the completion of the *Summer Remediation Package* during summer recess. At the end of August, students are invited for a re-test on the school premises to determine to what extent they are ready to meet the challenges of the next grade. If students achieve a grade of 65 or higher during the summer re-test, they are promoted to the next grade level.

Attendance Requirements

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous day's material, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the learned materials. Therefore, students should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences.

Absences

Since excessive absences or tardiness may affect the quality of a student's academic performance, the Big Apple Academy expects all students to attend classes regularly. Students who are out of class for any reason other than to represent the school in a school-sponsored activity are considered absent. All notes relating to the reason for the absence must be brought to a classroom teacher within 10 school days of the student's return to school. Notes brought in after the 10-day period will not be accepted, and the absence will be recorded as an unexcused absence. Students are expected to make up ALL missed work during periods of absence.

Absences due to Personal Illness

When a student's absence as a result of illness exceeds four consecutive days, the student must present a statement from a physician or a health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. The same document

must state that the student's health is within normal range and that he/she is permitted to return to normal, daily activities. If a student exhibits a questionable pattern of absences, the attendance committee may also require a physician's or clinic's statement of illness after a single day's absence noting the condition for absence as one for which there are extenuating circumstances.

Absences for Doctor Appointments

Absences for appointments with doctors and other health care professionals will be classified as exempt from compulsory attendance requirements if the student returns to school on the same day as the appointment and presents a note from the health care provider stating the time of the appointment and the time the student left the health care provider's office. This note also should be signed by the parent or accompanied by a note from the parent. If the appointment is at the end of the school day, and the student has been at school all day up to the time of appointment, the absence will be exempt from compulsory attendance requirements as long as the student brings a note from the health care provider the following day.

Release during the School Day

Student safety and security are primary goals at the Big Apple Academy. The following procedure is adopted to ensure our school deploys a consistent security process with regard to the early release of students to an authorized adult. Parents cannot go directly to their child's classroom and pick up their child from the school's premises during the day. Teachers do not have the authority to let children leave their classrooms. Parents who need to take their child from school before the end of the school day, such as for a medical appointment or for a family emergency, must inform the main office in advance and sign their child out by making an entry in the Pick-up Journal, located at the security desk. Students who obtain Early Release Permission Forms must sign out at the security desk to leave early, even when accompanied by an authorized adult.

Parents or legal guardians of a student must authorize any other adults that they permit to take physical custody of their child during the school day. Such authorization must be provided in writing to the main office of the school. All authorized adults will be entered into the student information database as approved by the parent/legal guardian. Only the parent/legal guardian may request changes to the list of authorized adults in the student information management system.

Students of ages 12 or over may leave the school premises without adult supervision ONLY upon the following provisions:

- 1. Parents have signed and notarized the School Release Form
- 2. All classes have finished for the day
- 3. Students may not return to school until the following day

Make-up Work from Absences

Students will have an opportunity to make up any assignments and performance assessments after an excused absence. Students will receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the allotted time period. For your convenience, homework for absent students on any particular day may be picked up at the school or delivered to the parents via the school bus attendant, provided that the absent student regularly uses the same bus route.

Absences and Grading

Absences should not affect students' grades if the following conditions are met:

- 1. Absences are justified and validated for excused reasons.
- 2. Make-up work for all absences is completed satisfactorily.

Textbooks

Textbooks are the property of the NYCDOE and are issued to students at no charge for use while enrolled in the program. We encourage parents to apply a protective cover for all the textbooks received at the beginning of the school year. Textbooks must be paid for in full if they are lost or damaged extensively. At the end of each academic term, books will be checked and fines assessed according to the extent of the damage other than routine wear. Students are responsible for the return or replacement of all instructional materials and textbooks issued.

Student Expectations and Responsibilities

In order for any school to be successful, the environment must be one conducive to learning. The atmosphere sought at Big Apple Academy is one in which respect from one person to another is readily observed and in which a proper balance exists between each person's right to be an individual and his/her responsibilities to function as a member of a larger

community. Each individual must recognize that his/her personal rights do not extend beyond other's rights. Students have a responsibility to:

- 1. Attend school regularly and punctually. Make every effort to achieve successful results in all areas of their education.
- 2. Be prepared for class with appropriate materials and properly maintain textbooks and other school equipment.
- 3. Follow school regulations regarding entering and leaving the classroom and school building.
- 4. Help maintain a school environment free of weapons, illegal drugs, controlled substances and alcohol.
- 5. Behave in a manner that contributes to a safe learning environment and which does not violate other students' right to learn.
- 6. Share information with school officials regarding matters that may endanger the health and welfare of members of the school community.
- 7. Respect the dignity and equality of others and refrain from conduct which denies or impinges on the rights of others.
- 8. Show respect for school property and respect the property of others, both private and public.
- 9. Be polite, courteous and respectful toward others regardless of actual or perceived age, race, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, sexual orientation, physical and/or emotional condition, disability, marital status and political beliefs, and refrain from making slurs based on these criteria.
- 10. Behave in a polite, truthful and cooperative manner toward students, teachers and other school staff.
- 11. Promote good human relations and build bridges of understanding among the members of the school community.
- 12. Use non-confrontational methods to resolve conflicts.
- 13. Participate and vote in class government elections.
- 14. Observe ethical codes of responsible journalism. Responsible journalism is a term used to describe an honest piece of written work. In other words, plagiarism and misrepresentation of facts are strictly prohibited in student works.
- 15. Refrain from obscene and defamatory communication in speech, writing and other modes of expression in their interactions with the school community on the school premises and via all social media.
- 16. Express themselves in a manner which promotes cooperation and does not interfere with the educational process.
- 17. Assemble in a peaceful manner and respect the decisions of students who do not wish to participate.
- 18. Follow the school dress code.

DRESS CODE

Below, you will find clarification on what articles of clothing may and may not be worn to school. This list is being provided to you to clarify whatever confusion you may have in regard to what is considered appropriate clothing. Incorporated into the clothing list is the notice about the kinds of consequences a student should expect if the dress code is to be violated.

- 1. Footwear must be worn at all times. Unsafe footwear such as: loose sandals, flip flops, shower shoes, wheelie shoes and the like, is not permitted.
- 2. Hats or other head coverings, except in the case of religious observance, may not be worn in the building.
- 3. Each student must dress in a manner that does not attract undue attention. Shorts and skirts should not be a distraction. As a general rule, shorts/skirts should not be shorter than knee length.
- 4. Clothing should not be tight, revealing or suggestive. Belly shirts, crop tops, tube tops, strapless tops, backless sundresses, tank tops, halter tops, off the shoulder blouses, see-through tops, pants that reveal underwear, etc. are not permitted. At no time, should a student's undergarments be visible nor should any skin be visible between the bottom of the student's shirt and the top of his/her pants/skirt.
- 5. No clothing may be worn that promotes illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco products. In addition, clothing with messages or graphics deemed offensive, profane, violent, derogatory or otherwise inappropriate is not permitted.

Upon a student's first violation of the dress code, the parents are notified by the classroom teacher. If the same student violates the dress code for the second time, he/she will receive a warning of suspension. Should a student violate the dress code after the second incident, he/she will be removed from school until such time as a meeting can be scheduled with the student, his/her parents and the Principal.

Students are expected to comply with the dress code. If a student is sent to the office by a teacher for violating the dress code he/ she is expected to cooperate and not argue or engage in a confrontation with the teacher. Challenging a teacher's authority will result in greater and more serious consequences.

Bullying

Bullying occurs when a student or a group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a school operated vehicle, and the behavior:

- Results in harm to the student or the student's property.
- Places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property.
- Is so severe, persistent, and pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student's victim, and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school. Bullying is prohibited by the school policies and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyber bullying." If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, principal, or another school employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct. If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The school administration will also contact the parents of the victim and of the student who was found to have engaged in bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying. Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited. The principal may, in response to an identified case of bullying, decide to transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another class at school.

General Conduct Violations

The categories of conduct below are prohibited at school and all school-related activities.

Students shall not:

- Fail to comply with directives given by school personnel (insubordination).
- Leave school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
- Disobey rules of conduct on school buses.
- Refuse to accept discipline management techniques assigned by a teacher or principal.
- Use profanity or vulgar language or make obscene gestures.
- Fight or scuffle.
- Threaten a student, employee, or volunteer, including off school property if the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- Engage in bullying, harassment, or making hit lists.
- Engage in conduct that constitutes sexual or genderbased harassment or sexual abuse, whether by word, gesture, or any other conduct, directed toward another person, including a student, employee, or volunteer.
- Engage in inappropriate or indecent exposure of private body parts.
- Participate in hazing.
- Cause an individual to act through the use of or threat of force.
- Commit extortion or blackmail (obtaining money or an object of value from an unwilling person).
- Engage in inappropriate verbal, physical, or sexual conduct directed toward another person, including a student, employee, or volunteer.
- Damage or vandalize property owned by others.
- Deface or damage school property—including textbooks, lockers, furniture, and other equipment—with graffiti or by other means.
- Steal from students, staff, or the school.

Disciplinary Actions

At Big Apple Academy we believe that discipline is one of the key components to successful educational process. Therefore school rules are strictly enforced and students are expected to conduct themselves in the respectful and mature manner. In case of a student misbehaving in school a set of disciplinary measures has been created.

Cluster Consequences (Behavior Problems)

- Oral reprimands (Classroom teacher)
- Written notice to parents placed into a student's individual journal (Classroom teacher)
- Personal teacher/parent conference (Classroom teacher)
- Referral to the Principal/ Assistant Principal/Principal Designee (Classroom teacher)
- Discipline Conference with a student/ parent notification (the Principal or a designee)
- Written Warning of Suspension/ parent notification (the Principal or a designee)
- Letter of Suspension/parent notification (the Principal)
- Letter of Expulsion / parent notification (the Principal)

Warning of Suspension

Warning of suspension is a written document provided by the Principal or designee to the parents in order to notify them of their child's misconduct. Parents are expected to read, sign and return the provided document to the child's classroom teacher. Warning of Suspension also notifies the parents that this measure is the last one taken by the school before issuing a suspension.

Suspension

Suspension is a period of time during which a student is temporarily barred from attending classes, participating in school activities and being on school grounds. The school principal determines the length of student's suspension.

Suspensions are issued in cases where all previous disciplinary measures have failed. The first suspension issued to the child is

normally for one day, followed by 3 day suspension in case of repeat misconduct and the last measure is a 7 day suspension. Any student who has received a seven day suspension and still fails to conduct him/herself properly may be expelled from the school.

Please note in cases of extreme misconduct or violent behavior a suspension may be issued without a prior issuance of a warning.

Conduct that may lead to suspension/expulsion includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Conduct that violates the rights or safety of others.
- Defacing or destroying school property.
- Disrespectful or objectionable conduct and verbal abuse directed at teachers, other school employees or fellow learners.
- Outright defiance of lawful requests or instructions issued by persons in authority.
- Sexual harassment.
- Immoral behavior or profanity.
- Possessing, using or displaying evidence of use of any narcotics, unauthorized drugs, alcohol or any other intoxicant.
- Bullying.
- Repeated infringements of the School rules or the Code of Conduct.
- Possession of dangerous weapons (guns, knives and other objects which may threaten the lives of learners/teachers).

Monitoring Devices /School Policies

The Big Apple Academy establishes the use of Video Surveillance to promote the safety and security of students and staff, the protection of the school property, deterrence and the prevention of criminal activities and the enforcement of crucial school rules and procedures.

Video Surveillance is a term that refers to video-audio-digital components of multi-media surveillance.

Camera Location, Operation, and Control

- School division buildings (2937 86th Street/ 503 Lake Street) and grounds are equipped with video monitoring devices.
- Video surveillance is placed in all public areas of the school including classrooms, hallways, staircases, playgrounds and cafeterias.
- Monitoring devices are used in the public areas only.
- Public Area: An area open for public use where the expectation of privacy is not violated by what could normally be openly observed, such as the school grounds, an academic hallway, classroom, science laboratories and lunchrooms.
- Cameras placed on the outside of the building premises are positioned only where it is necessary to protect external assets or to provide for the personal safety of individuals on school grounds or premises.
- Surveillance cameras located internally are not directed to look through windows to areas outside the building unless it is necessary to protect external assets or to ensure personal safety of students or employees of the Big Apple Academy.
- Cameras will not be used to monitor inside change rooms, locker rooms, and washrooms.

Notification

- All teachers and school personnel will be made aware of the Big Apple Academy's video surveillance guidelines and practices. The Monitoring Devices School Policies will be included in the Student and Teacher Handbooks and acknowledged and signed by all the parents/ guardians upon student's enrollment.
- Only individuals authorized by the School Principal in accordance with this policy, will have access to video monitors, or be permitted to operate the controls.
- Video recordings of students, staff, or others may be reviewed or audited for the purpose of student and personnel's safety in adherence to the school policies.
- The school administration may use video surveillance of students, staff, and others to detect or deter behavioral offenses that occur in view of the camera.
- The school administration may use video surveillance and the resulting recordings for inquiries and proceedings related to law enforcement, deterrence, and student discipline.
- The Big Apple Academy and/or its administrators may utilize information obtained from the video surveillance system for instructional purposes to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and promote the standards of excellence promulgated by the school mission.

Video Monitors and Viewing

- Only individuals authorized by the School Principal will have access to the video monitors while they are in operation.
- Video monitors will be in controlled access areas wherever possible.
- Video records will be viewed on a need-to-know basis only, in such a manner as to avoid public viewing.

Disclosure

- Recordings will not be disclosed except in accordance with this policy. Disclosure of video electronic data will be on a need-to- know basis, in order to comply with the Big Apple Academy's policy objectives, including the promotion of the safety and security of students, the protection of school property, deterrence, and the prevention of criminal activities and the enforcement of school rules.
- An individual who is the subject of video monitoring has the right to request access to the recording.

Protection of Information and Disclosure/Security and Retention of Electronic Video

- All video electronic data not in use will be securely stored.
- The school principal will authorize access to all video electronic data.
- The principal will ensure that a Video Electronic Release Form is completed before disclosing video surveillance electronic data to appropriate authorities or third parties. Any such disclosure shall only be made in accordance with applicable legislation. Such release forms should include the individual or organization who is requesting the video electronic data, the date of the occurrence and when or if the video electronic data will be returned or destroyed by the authority or individual after use.

Policies on Wireless Devices and Other Electronics

In accordance with the Citywide Standards of Discipline and Intervention Measures (The Student Discipline Code), students are prohibited from bringing cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, CD players, other electronic devices, and any other items which may pose danger to the school community. Big Apple Academy has a Zero Tolerance policy in regard to electronic devices. Please note

that the discipline code will apply accordingly, with no exceptions, to each student who uses or brings a cell phone, iPods, MP3 players, CD players, other electronic devices to school. Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, CD players, and other electronic devices are strictly prohibited. In cases when a student chooses to disregard the abovementioned policy, the following procedure has been placed into effect:

First violation –The electronic device will be confiscated from the student and returned to the parent(s) at their request.

Second violation – will result in confiscation of the electronic device which will ONLY be returned to the parents at the end of the school year.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are a necessary routine for ensuring the safety of students and staff. All students and staff are expected to follow the established fire drill plan posted in each classroom of the school. When the fire alarm bell sounds, students are expected:

- To evacuate the building in a quick, quiet and orderly manner under the supervision of the assigned chaperones.
- To evacuate the building through the designated exits.

When the all clear is given, students are expected to re-enter the building in a quiet and orderly manner under the supervision of the chaperones.

The Big Apple Academy provides transportation on school buses to all students. All bus transport from Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island is free of charge.

Transportation

Academy Transportation provides transportation services for our school. The administration of the Big Apple Academy, along with Academy Transportation work hard to make your child's travel as safe as possible. Bus routes and stops are planned out by the control center of the company 10 days prior to the start of the new school year. All buses are equipped with radio transmitters and have a permanent connection with the main office. The drivers, who work on specific routes, check their paths 2-3 days before school starts, making necessary corrections. Yet despite all of the above, as we have learned from our previous experience, there may be unexpected delays during the first few days at the start of the school year.

We kindly ask you to bring your child to the bus stop at least 5 minutes earlier. The time of the bus arrival within the urban area of New York City may vary in the range of 10-15 minutes. Please be patient and do not leave the stop. If you'd like to receive additional information about the current location of the bus, please call at (718) 373-8373 or (917) 299-8114.

During drop off times, when there is no one available to pick up a child from the bus stop, the child will be taken to a designated waiting area located at the school bus parking lot at **2124 Mill Ave** If such an event were to occur, there will be an additional charge of \$30 for every 30 minutes the child spends in the waiting room.

Parents of children ages 12 and over may choose to sign the Bus Release Agreement Form permitting their children to leave the bus without adult supervision.

Student Conduct on Buses

Students are required to comply with all rules of conduct while on school bus and to comply with the Student Code of Conduct. Students who misbehave or violate the Code of Conduct while on the bus will be disciplined according to the Code of Conduct and may be suspended from the bus for a period of time. The rules of conduct for bus passengers are in place for everyone's safety. Offenses will carry the same punishment as similar offenses at school and may result in loss of transportation privileges.

Bus Rules

- Instructions and directions given by the bus driver and the Bus Chaperone must be followed at all times.
- 2. When students are waiting for their bus after school, they must stay in the appointed area until the bus arrives.
- 3. Students must sit in the seat facing forward with feet on the floor.
- 4. Students should talk quietly.
- 5. Eating is not allowed on the bus.
- 6. Students are not permitted to leave the bus at stops other than their assigned stops.
- 7. The following items are contraband on the bus: food or drink (these must be left in the back pack or lunch box), weapons of any kind, matches, lighters, explosives of any kind, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, animals, radios, stereos or CD players.
- 8. Profanities, obscenities, sexual language, gestures, and racial slurs of any type will not be tolerated.

Thank You

In the end we would like to thank you for choosing Big Apple Academy and trusting us with the most important aspect of raising a child: Education. We look forward to working in collaboration with you to help our students achieve their full potential while growing up and maturing in the productive, caring and safe environment.





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