

Bronx Studio School **for** **Writers & Artists**



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Bronx Studio School for Writers and Artists

Scholar-Activist Mission & Core Values

Mission: The *Bronx Studio School for Writers and Artists* (BSSWA) was founded in September 2004 in the Hunts Point-Longwood section of the South Bronx by a fierce collective of teachers, families, and partners, on three fundamental premises. First, every student has an historical obligation to work hard, get smart, graduate from college and transform her/his communities into better places. Second, we believe there is a “writer” and an “artist” embedded in every single one of us. We proudly recognize ourselves as community-based, college preparatory, public secondary school that employs writing and the Arts to inspire our students and prepare them to excel, academically and socially, in college and the professional world. We regard writing and the arts as fundamental literacies each student should acquire to better decipher, negotiate, and enrich our complex world. And, third, each member of the BSSWA professional family commits her/himself to working alongside each young scholar she or he may encounter, regardless of their assigned grade or cohort, and inspiring her or him to exceed our collective academic and character expectations.

Under no circumstances shall we accept a student’s past academic history, emotional challenges, or socio-economic status as an excuse not to meet our **collective mission** to cultivate generations of community-based, college bound, scholar-activists committed to leading wide-awake, literacy-rich lives and improving the quality of the world around them.

Scholar-Activist Core Values & Contract

The *Scholar-Activist Contract* is based on five core values. Our commitment, first and foremost, to: (1) achieve *academic excellence*, (2) extend a *helping hand* to those in need, (3) maintain a *peacekeeping* culture, (4) summon the courage to express our *creativity* (“think differently!”), and (5) demonstrate pride in our school work as well as the accomplishments and gains of others (*school spirit*), define what it means to be a *scholar-activist* at BSSWA.

As a young scholar at the *Bronx Studio School for Writers and Artists*, I agree to:

1. Meet or exceed our school-wide goal of **90% daily attendance**
2. Arrive to school and classes **on time**
3. Arrive to each of my classes **prepared to work and learn**. This includes bringing my planner, subject notebooks, pens, pencils, paper, and a book bag to school every day.
4. **Ask a question** when I do not understand what is taught or what is expected of me
5. **Complete my homework, class work, and projects** thoughtfully, carefully, and on time
6. Be **respectful, courteous, and helpful** to all my classmates, teachers, staff, and guests
7. **Honor the uniform** every school day
8. Be responsible for **creating a safe, promotive, and productive** classroom environment
9. Serve as a **peacekeeper** within our community. I will do my best to resolve all conflicts with others peacefully and avoid all forms of gossiping, bullying, or name calling. I will also do my best to help classmates resolve conflicts peacefully and seek help resolving conflicts from adults when needed
10. **Respect all property, personal belongings, and shared spaces** within our school, *Casita Maria*, and throughout the community including the café, stairwells, classrooms, restrooms, and hallways

STUDENT PROCEDURES

School Hours for students

- Our school doors open at **8:00 am**
- Students should have a BSSWA ID card at entry to swipe into the CASS system
- Class starts at 8:15 am **sharp**
- Students arriving between 7:30am-8:00am may eat breakfast in the café
- Students are expected to enter, go to their lockers and get to class before 8:15
- Students who arrive to the classroom after 8:15 am will be considered late. **They must get a CAASS system pass before entering their first period.**

Absence & Lateness Policies for Students

- Attending school every day is essential for academic success! Our goal is for every student to have 90% attendance or better.
- Students should schedule doctor and dentist appointments for times outside the school day
- In case of sickness or a family emergency, students should notify the school by telephone
- Upon returning to school, the student must have a note excusing the absence
- When a student is absent, it is his or her responsibility to speak to the teachers and arrange to make up missed assignments
- Students arriving to school after 8:15 am will be marked late but the CAASS System
- Parents of students late for school after 8:30am will be notified via the school messenger automated calling service

Student Lateness

- First period class starts at 8:15AM. Students entering class for the first 5 minutes will be allowed to enter without a late pass.
- If a student arrives after 8:20, do not admit him/her without a late pass

Student Passes

- Students **must be given a pass** before leaving the classroom. Passes will be provided by the main office. There will be one pass per classroom.
- **NO MORE THAN ONE STUDENT** may be out of your room at any one time (students pulled out for services are the exception.)
- **Students should not leave the classroom for the first or last 10 minutes of class**
- Students **MAY NOT** go to the office during class time, except in an emergency
- Students **MAY** only use school phones in case of an emergency and must ask permission of the office staff
- **Do not send students to see anyone during class time.** In case of emergency, please contact the appropriate administrator for assistance.

- The school nurse's office is located on the first floor across from the front desk in room 116. The school nurse will provide you with passes to send a student to her office. Please do not send students to nurse with your classroom pass.

VISITORS

- All visitors to the school must sign the registry book at the main entrance; the school safety officer will issue a pass and the visitor will be directed to the main office in room 216
- School Safety and the main office should be notified immediately if an unauthorized person is present in the building

Student Transportation

- Ms. Nelly will distribute transportation passes to students
- In September, only a student who has handed in a completed blue student information card will receive his/her transportation pass
- If a student loses his/her pass, please tell them to see Ms. Nelly after school at 2:40. Students should not see Ms. Mildred about their transportation passes during the school day
- Half- and full-fare status is determined by the Department of Education according to students' reported addresses; the rules for fare status for grades 7-12 are different from those for grades K-6. Please do NOT send students to the office to ask about changing their fare status. The only way for students to change their fare status is through an official, legal address change.

BSSWA Student Dress Code

Young Men and Women:

- Light blue, dark blue or white collared polo shirt with the school logo on it. Color is determined by grade.
- Khaki, blue, or grey dress pants, slacks (no baggy or excessively tight styles and only 2-4 pockets), or khaki dress/skirt (length: to the knee when seated).
- dress shoes, sneakers or boots any color and style. No flip-flops, athletic sandals or cleats, and no heels or platforms higher than 3 inches.
- No large jewelry, hats, "du-rags", jeans, or baggy pants should be worn at any time during the school day.
- Students are not permitted to wear any headgear in school unless it is religious in nature.
- Students will also not be permitted to wear anything that shows gang colors or affiliation.

Please note: If we discover a student out of dress code in school, the student will be given a shirt to wear for the day. All students should wear uniform while in class. Students will serve detention after the 3rd uniform violation in a month.

What Every HS Student Must Do to Graduate

To get a high school diploma every NY State student must complete:

- 4 years (8 credits) of English
- 4 years (8 credits) of Social Studies
- 3 years (6 credits) of Math
- 3 years (6 credits) of Science
- 1 year (2 credits) of Foreign Language
- 2 credits of The Arts (art, art history, music, dance, etc.)
- 1 credit of Health
- 7 credits of Electives
- 4 credits of Physical Education

In addition, every student must have credit for the following NY State Regents Examinations:

- Integrated Algebra
- Living Environment
- Global Studies
- English Language Arts
- US History & Government

To pass the Regents a student must earn a 65% or better.

A student must pass ALL 5 Regents exams with a 65% or better.

Passing is a 65% but to prove true mastery of a subject, 85% is expected.

To obtain an Advanced Regents Diploma a student must pass the 5 Regents Exams listed above plus **three** math Regents' (Integrated Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry), **two** Science Regents (Living Env and Earth Sci or Chemistry), **6** credits of a Foreign Language and the LOTE exam.

Students with an IEP can graduate with a Local Diploma. This means they can receive graduation credit for Regents exams with a 55% to 64%. At BSSWA we want all of our students, IEP or not, to graduate with a standard Regents diploma and not use the safety net an IEP provides. Do not ever tell a student that 55% is "passing" with an IEP. It is not. It is simply a safety net.

- To go from the 9th grade to the 10th grade a student must earn a minimum of 10 credits
- To go from the 10th grade to the 11th grade a student must earn a minimum of 20 credits. 4 of those credits must be in English and 4 of those credits must be in Social Studies
- To go from the 11th grade to the 12th grade a student must earn a minimum of 30 credits

A student will graduate with over 44 credits, but it is not the number of credits that determines graduation. High school graduation is based on completing all the requirements listed above.

A failing grade is 64% or below.