

Student Handbook

El Paso Bridges Academy

"If children do not learn the way we teach, then we must teach them the way they learn"

4320 N. Stanton

El Paso, TX 79912

Phone (915) 532-6647

Fax (915) 532-8767

www.bridgesacademy.org



Bridges Bulldogs

Parent & Student Handbook for *FULL-TIME* Students

Parent & Student Handbook for FULL-TIME Students

The Bridges Academy program is exclusively for children with average or above intelligence who have specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia and attention deficit disorders (ADD/ADHD). For consideration of admission, a diagnostic testing done within the last three years, or letter from a doctor is required. We may request diagnostic testing if testing is outdated or incomplete.

Once all test results have been examined, an interview and visit to school will finalize admission.

IMPORTANT: Our intake requirement: that the Bridges students suffer no primary emotional/behavioral disorder relies on the opinion of the doctor and the parents. When it becomes apparent to the school staff that the child's behavior is disruptive, the child will be excused from Bridges and referred elsewhere, since our services are not specialized in those areas.

Tuition and Fees:

\$400 Fee: Enrollment/Annual Evaluations

Registration Fee is Non-refundable and separate from tuition.

Documentation of income at the time of enrollment is required for consideration of assistance. The IRS has ruled that tuition cost for a special school that has a program designed to educate children with learning disabilities is a medical expense deduction. (Revenue Ruling 78-340, 1978-2 C.B. 124)

Generally, to qualify for the deduction, the child's doctor must recommend the school and there must be a medical diagnosis of a neurological disorder- such as Dyslexia, ADHD, anxiety disorder, depression, etc.

Transportation expenses to the school or to tutoring also qualify for a medical expense deduction. If transportation is by car, the allowable expense, plus parking and tolls, or the actual cost of operation the vehicle. Diagnostic evaluations also qualify for a medical expense deduction. Medical expenses must be claimed on Schedule A, Itemized Deductions, and are subject to certain limitations. Check with your accountant for any updates or changes.

On the first day of school a Bridges student must have on file:

- Income information if financial assistance is required
- Signed Contract
- Report Card of previous school/or Transcript
- Diagnostic Testing and/ or letter from doctor
- Complete and signed enrollment forms
- Copy of Prescription *
- Instruction from doctor to administer medication *
- Medication in correct prescription bottle w/ specific instructions *
- Doctor's Signature on medical form
- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card
- Shot Record
- Letter from teacher/Optional
- Copy of Parent(s) drivers' license

*** If Required**

Bridges Academy is accredited by Texas Association of Accredited Private Schools for grades first through ninth, is co-educational, and accepts students regardless of race, faith, sex/gender or national origin.

Student Medical Policies

Students enrolled must have on file an up-to-date immunization record. We do not require a tuberculosis test at this time. Children must have a second measles vaccine within 30 days of their twelfth birthday, *by state law*.

A student's prescription (if applicable) must be sent in the correct and most recent prescription bottle; the label must state the exact dose, and the exact time the medication is to be administered. If the medication is changed in any way, we cannot administer it unless the updated prescription is provided by a doctor's note or new bottle we cannot give any over-the-counter medication unless we have the appropriate medical form signed by you giving us permission to administer Tylenol, etc. Without written authorization, we must call and receive authorization from you to administer the medication. If the student becomes ill during the school day, school personal will call the parent. If the student has a fever, he/she may not remain in school and parents will be called to pick-up the child and he/she must stay home for 24 hours after the child's temperature returns to normal. Medical forms are part of the enrollment packet or can be obtained at the school office. A new medical form must be filled out whenever you child's medication or medical condition changes.

Uniform

Uniform information is given at enrollment time and students must adhere to the dress code. If a student does not adhere to the dress code requirements, parents will be notified to bring in the correct apparel. See the back of the handbook for additional information. Free Dress Opportunities are available to all students who have earned this privilege by observing the uniform dress code at all times. Please take the time to label your child's uniform items because unlabeled lost and found items will remain in the office for only two months before they are donated to Goodwill. A written notification will be sent as a reminder for any unclaimed items.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is billed on the 1st of each month and payments are due no later than the 15th. Late payments or returned checks are subject to a \$25.00 fee unless financial arrangements have been established with the accounting department. The Academy reserves the right to withhold grades, report cards, and/or diplomas for nonpayment. Students may also be suspended if tuition and fees are 60 days past due. Tuition assistance may be reduced or eliminated due to excessive tardiness and/or absences.

Lost or Damaged Property

Students who lose or damage textbooks, library books or other property or equipment are required to pay replacement costs. Failure to do so may result in the following: lowered grades (because of lack of textbook), loss of library privileges, a hold on report cards and other records.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Bridges Academy has a general policy prohibiting the use of any and all electronic devices while on school property.

Possession and use of cell phones, computers, and other devices capable of electronic communications at school is a privilege and not a right. Possession and use of such devices at school or school-related events or activities shall be subject to school approval and regulations. All cellular phones must be turned off and kept by the teacher or front office during the school day and while in the school building. The school will not be responsible for damage to, loss or theft of any cellular phone or electronic device a student brings to school. Devices that are found on students will be confiscated. If a school employee observes a student using any cell phone or other telecommunication device during the school day or a school-related activity, the school employee shall confiscate the device and turn it in to the front office. Any such device may be powered on and searched by school officials if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation. The school administration will return confiscated items to the parent after payment of a \$30.00 return fee. The school will not be responsible for damage to or loss or theft of confiscated items.

School administrators shall have the discretion to determine the appropriate use of phones for students participating in extracurricular activities or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities on or off school property.

The use of camera phones for recording is strictly forbidden on the school premises at any time.

The school further prohibits students from possessing other electronic devices – including but not limited to radios, tape or CD players, iPods, iPad, electronic games and other similar devices – on school property during the school day. These devices disrupt classes and distract others from learning. If a school employee observes a student using any electronic device during the school day or on a school related activity, the school employee will confiscate the device and turn it in to the front office. The school administration will return confiscated items to the parent after payment of a \$30.00 return fee. The school will not be responsible for damage to or loss or theft of confiscated items.

Any student refusing to give a cell phone or other electronic device to school staff shall be subject to disciplinary penalties in accordance with School policy.

Special permission must be obtained from the school for the use of personal tablets and/or laptops by students while in class. Students with permission to use personal tablets and/or laptops may only do so for the purpose of completing class assignments.

Student Pick-Up and Drop-Off

School starts at 8:15 am and is dismissed at 3:30pm, Monday –Thursday. Fridays all students are dismissed at 12:15 pm. Bridges Academy is not responsible for students before 8:00 am and after 3:30 pm, nor Friday after 12:15p.m. unless your child is in daycare. Bridges daycare is available Mon-Thurs from 7:00 a.m. and after school until 6:00 p.m. at a cost of \$3.00/Hr.

There is no after school daycare on Friday.

When dropping off or picking up your children please drive carefully and slowly through the parking lot. This is important for the safety of your children and others.

Absences

The state of Texas requires all students from the ages of 6 to 18 to attend school. (TAC Section 25.085). A parent/guardian commits an offense if the student is required to attend school and fails to attend 10 or more days or parts of the days within a 6 month period in the same school year or 3 or more days or parts of days within a 4 week period. An offense may be prosecuted in a Justice of the Peace Court in which the individual resides. The parent/guardian or reasonable person will receive a written notice. **Please note:** The fact that a parent/guardian or responsible person did not receive a notice does not create a defense to prosecute. Any exceptions to attendance must be considered and approved by El Paso Bridges Academy. Absences are to be called in to the office no later than 9:00 am. Students are required to make up all class work and homework.

Tardiness

A student is considered tardy after 8:20 am. Please be aware that 5 unexcused tardies count as one unexcused absence and will be included in the number of absences for each semester. Students must pick up an “admit slip” in the school office before proceeding to class. After 5 unexcused tardies, in a nine week period the student will have to attend **Friday School**.

Friday School

Time 12:30pm-2pm

Cost \$50.00

- Students will have grade appropriate work to do.
- Please provide lunch for your child.
- Students will be supervised by a teacher.

Make-Up Work

School work missed during absences must be made up within the same length of time, i.e., if a student misses 2 days, he/she has 2 days to complete make-up work. A phone call, email or note may be used to excuse absences by notifying the Registrar. Teachers will determine what work must be turned in and when it must be turned in.

Suspended

Students who are suspended will receive unexcused absences. Student suspended for 3 days will be required to complete missed assignments. All work must be completed in a timely matter and correctly. Students will receive zeros for work not turned in on time.

Snow Days / Emergency Closings

Weather conditions may occur which will make it necessary for campuses to be closed. Parents and students are advised to view the school website and listen to local radio or television for announcements that the school will be closed.

Bridges' policy is to remain closed, due to snow or icy weather. Bridges will close when EPISD, YISD, or SISD closes. Listen to local radio and TV stations; we will try to have an announcement made by 7:15 am. Some students in outlying areas (i.e., northeast, Las Cruces, lower valley, or Juarez) may not be able to come even if we're open; in such an event, an excused absence would be given with a parental phone call. Make-up days, if necessary, will be announced.

Forgotten Lunches

When your child forgets his/her lunch, they may purchase items from the snack bar. This is not an adequate lunch for your child, but it will provide them with something to eat. Please make every effort to send a sack lunch Monday thru Thursday (No lunch is necessary on Friday) and a snack daily. **No sodas or candies. Please do not bring fast food.** We reward students for good behavior each week (3 or less demerits) with the opportunity to purchase slices of pizza (\$1.00/slice) for Merit Lunch on Thursdays. Students who do not wish to purchase pizza on that day must bring their own lunch.

****Students will not be allowed to call home for forgotten lunches.**

Early Pick Up

If your child must leave during the day for a medical appointment or other commitment, please let us know AHEAD of time. We can make sure your child is ready to go when you come for him/her, instead of being out on a field trip or at P.E. **Parents must report to the office before picking up student for any appointment.** Students cannot be released early without parent/guardian signing them out. Students can only be released to persons who are on the release form with proper ID.

Fire and Disaster Drills

Fire, lock-down, and evacuation drill instruction will be discussed during the first week of each semester. Students need to understand and follow these procedures. Instructions will be posted on the bulletin board in each teacher's room. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

Videotaping of Students

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior in classrooms and hallways, and in common areas of the school. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. The Principal may review the tapes routinely to document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the school policy.

Report Cards

Report cards are given out on a 9-week basis. The dates are listed in the school calendar. Students are given letter grades and/or numerical grades.

Grades for 1st & 2nd : Student grades are based partly on effort, neatness, improvement, and correctness of work.

A = 90-100	or	E = Excellent
B = 80-89	or	S = Satisfactory
C=75-79	or	N = Needs Improvement
D=70-74		
F=0-69	or	U= Unsatisfactory

Grades for 3-9: Student grades are based equally on tests, daily class work, and special reports and projects. Some special projects may count more than one grade. Students receive letter grades for department/effort.

Numerical Grades	A= 90-100
	B= 80-89
	C= 75-79
	D=70-74
	F=0-69

Department/Behavior/Effort Grades: E, S, N, U

Grades for 7th-9th: Students earn 1 credit for each subject taken for 4 quarters. Students who have 6 or more absences (excused or unexcused) in a semester per class will not receive credit.

Progress Reports Progress reports are sent out after the 4th week of the 9-week period. These reports will notify parents of your child's success or any problems your child may be having such as failing, close to failing, not working up to their potential or discipline concerns. Feel free to contact the school with any concerns. Good communication is very important for your child's success.

Discipline Plan

Merits

Each week, every student is given 1 merit day for each day they do not have a demerit. If he/she retains four merit days by Thursday then the student is eligible to buy pizza on that Thursday.

Additional Merits may be awarded, at the discretion of the teachers and staff, to a student for exemplary behavior, unexpected exceptional acts of service to the school or others and reasons determined by the teachers.

Bridges Bucks

For everyday the student is present and is demerit free and tardy free, your child receives \$1 Bridges Buck. At the end of the semester, the student will go shopping in the Merit Store. Bridges Bucks are handed out the day of the merit store in December and May. Students may not share merit bucks or save them for the next merit store. If student is absent, teacher will select items for student.

Minor Demerits

* A minor demerit is given after a warning from the teacher. Four minor demerits equal one major demerit. Minor demerits will be given to students for any of the following:

I – Interrupting

R – Lack of Responsibility

- No homework
- No student planner, no signature on planner or notes/permission slips
- Not having materials as needed for class
- Not dressing out for PE

C – Lack of Consideration

- Rude or inappropriate remarks to teachers/peers
- Inappropriate touch, shoving, pushing

N – Not Attending

- Not returning to task after a warning, re-direction or re-explanation by teacher
- Leaving classroom without permission
- Not promptly returning to classroom
- Minor display of public affection.

Major Demerit

A major demerit will be given to the students for any of the following:

- Profanity
- Rock throwing
- Stealing
- Smoking
- leaving school without permission
- Extreme behavior that endangers the emotional and physical wellbeing of students/teachers
- Truancy
- Pornographic material
- Fighting
- Destruction of school property
- Displaying Signs of Public Affection
- False activation of the School's fire alarm system (any associated costs will be charged back to the parents).

Four minor demerits in one day = 1 major demerit.

Consequences of a Major Demerit 5th thru 9th Grades

Majors are counted by semester. The student begins each semester with no majors. Parents will be informed by mail about each major. The consequences of a major are as follows:

1st Major	Student earns re-focus area* for 3 days
2nd Major	Student earns re-focus area* for 3 days
3rd Major	Re-focus area and parent conference
4th Major	Re-focus area, parent conference, discipline committee
5th Major	Suspension for 3 days with make-up work assigned; if it is not completed, zeros will be given.
6th Major	Expulsion

Suspension: Students who are caught with pornographic material will be suspended for 3 days. This may lead to expulsion.

*** Refocus area consists of a desk in a classroom partitioned on 3 sides. Students will miss scheduled field trips if in refocus area.**

Expulsion: Student will be expelled immediately for having a weapon or drugs. **By law**, the Academy must inform the police. Any object fashioned to cause harm would be considered a weapon.

- Threats toward the school, faculty and other students will be taken seriously and will require a parent conference. Depending on the nature and frequency of threats, the student will be suspended or expelled.
- Bomb threats and other threats of violence will require police involvement. Our students are impulsive by nature. Please lock up guns, ammunition, knives, slingshots, archery equipment, BB guns and BBs, laser lights, and anything that could cause injury.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to disrupt school activities and/or conduct of classes.

Consequences of a Major Demerit 1st - 4th Grades

1st Major	1 day of re-focus area *
2nd Major	2 days of re-focus area *
3rd Major	3 days of re-focus* /parent conference
4th Major	3 days of re-focus* /parent conference
5th Major	3 days of re-focus* /parent conference: depending on decision by parents, administration, teacher, student may be suspended for 1-3 days
6th Major	Expulsion; parent conference: depending on decision by administration

* Refocus area consists of a desk in a classroom partitioned on 3 sides. Students will miss scheduled field trips if in refocus area.

Behavior Plan 1st - 4th Grades

Green	Every day the student begins each class period on green.
Yellow	Student is given a warning. Student will move to "Yellow".
Red	Student will receive demerit from classroom teacher. Student will move to "Red".
Blue	Student will be sent to Ms. Keys or Mr. Arreola. Depending on type of behavior, student may receive a major demerit.

Uniform Requirements

GIRLS

- Bridges t-shirt, Bridges polo, Bridges sweatshirt
- Clean uniforms, shirts or blouses tucked in all times, brown/black belt (plain)
- Blouse: white, light blue button-down Oxford shirt, no logos
- Polos: white, light blue, navy blue, short/long sleeved no logos
- Sweaters: white, navy blue cardigan or vest
- Sweatshirts: navy blue, no logos
- Shoes and socks: sneakers, 100% white ankle, white knee length, or solid dark socks (black, brown) **No boots of any kind are allowed.**
- Skirts, shorts, jumpers: khaki, navy blue, no logos; no cargo, solid brown/ black belt required;
- No caps, gloves, hats, or dangling earrings; no make-up (including nail polish); no excessive jewelry or body pieced jewelry except for earrings; no jewelry that may be hazardous to wearer or others: no mid-riff exposing clothing, no army attire (boots, camouflage, etc.) no bandannas or hair nets that depict the gang look; no clothing, manner of dress, hairstyle, or jewelry that, in the director's opinion, is offensive, hazardous, or which distracts other student and no make-up.
- No additional attire of any kind other than uniform.
- Winter additions: white, navy blue turtleneck shirts, / white, navy blue tights (plain, no lace)

Girls and Boys P.E. Outfits

- Navy blue P. E. shorts/ no logos
- Navy sweatpants.
- Bridges t-shirt
- Bridges sweatshirt or navy blue sweatshirt (no logos)
- Sneakers
- Baseball cap: optional

**** Please insure that your child practices appropriate personal hygiene and that they wear proper deodorant when necessary.**

Uniform Requirements

BOYS

- Hair cut—clean, cut above collar
- Clean uniforms, shirts tucked at all times, brown/black belt (plain)
- Bridges t-shirt, Bridges polo, Bridges sweatshirt
- Shirt: white, light blue, button-down Oxford shirt, no logos
- Polo: white, light blue, navy blue, short/long sleeved no logos
- Sweaters: navy blue cardigan, sweater vest, no logos
- Sweatshirt: navy blue – no logos
- Shoes and socks: sneakers, 100% white socks or solid dark colored socks (blue or black)
No boots of any kind are allowed.
- Pants, shorts: khaki, navy, no cargo or side pockets of any kind brown/ black belt required
- No caps, gloves, hats, or earrings; caps may be worn at P.E., but at no other time; no excessive jewelry; no spikes, hanging chains (including wallet chains); no army attire (camouflage, boots, etc.); no bandannas or hair nets that depict the gang look; no clothing, manner of dress, hairstyle, or jewelry that, in the director’s opinion, is offensive hazardous, or distracting to other student, no make up (including nail polish)
- No additional attire of any kind other than uniform
- Winter addition: white or navy turtleneck shirts

Girls and Boys P.E. Outfits

- Navy blue P. E. shorts/ no logos
- Navy sweatpants.
- Bridges t-shirt
- Bridges sweatshirt or navy blue sweatshirt (no logos)
- Sneakers
- Baseball cap: optional

**** Please insure that your child practices appropriate personal hygiene and that they wear proper deodorant when necessary.**

Rules for Free Dress

Certain school days that end at 12:15 pm. will be free dress days. Parents will receive a calendar that shows the designated free dress days. Free dress is a privilege, a reward for following the uniform dress code. Any student who receives a uniform citation may not have free dress. Uniform citations are voided right after a free dress day. In other words, a student gets a clean slate and may earn free dress for the next free dress day. The following rules apply for free dress days:

- No concert t-shirts, no profanity or abusive language, no religious t-shirts, no morbid themed t-shirts
- No tattered jeans or holes in clothes
- No dangling earrings
- No midriff shirts or blouses
- No tank tops
- No caps or hats
- No see-through blouses
- No sweats
- No military attire (camouflage, boots, etc.)
- Boys must be clean-shaven
- Girls and boys-no make up/nail polish
- Boys may not wear earrings
- No pierced body rings
- Hair must not be a distraction/groomed
- No clothing, manner of dress, hairstyle, or jewelry that, in the director's opinion, is offensive, hazardous, or which distracts other students.
- Boys and girls may not have excessive amounts of jewelry

**Students may be given additional free dress for various reasons. If free dress is allowed on a full school day, students must dress out for P. E. in approved P. E. clothes

Example of Daily Schedule:

8:15	School begins
8:20	Student is tardy
8:15-8:30	Organizational period
8:30	Reading
9:20	Math
10:10	Snack time in homeroom: Parents please provide snack or send money for snacks.
10:25	Grammar/Language Arts
11:15	Science
12:05	Lunch, recess
12:50	Social Studies
1:40	P.E.
2:30	Music/Dance/Art
3:20	Homeroom, organizational periods student, planner checked
3:30	Students dismissed (12:15 on Fridays)

Merit Pizza Lunch on Thursday – Pizza cost is \$1 per slice, Merit Lunch, for students who earned the privilege, notice will be sent home with child on Wednesday afternoon, otherwise parents send lunch. Microwaves are available for children to heat their food.

No Lunch on Friday

School Hours

Bridges Academy is not responsible for students before 8:00am or after 3:30pm Monday-Thursday, nor after 12:15pm on Friday.

- **Before school care is available Monday -Friday from 7am – 8 am at \$3.00 per hour.**
- **After school care is available Monday – Thursday from 3:45pm - 6:00pm at \$3.00 per hour.**
- **No afterschool care is available on Fridays.**