



Substance Use and Abuse Prevention Policy
Boston Collegiate Charter School
2017-2018

Introduction

The mission of Boston Collegiate Charter School (BCCS) is to prepare each student for college. To fulfill this goal, BCCS is committed to promoting an atmosphere of safety, respect, and caring for all student, staff members, and visitors that promotes teaching and learning.

BCCS recognizes its responsibility in establishing and implementing goals regarding use and prevention of substance abuse. An Act Relative to Substance Use, Treatment, Education and Prevention was signed into law on March 14, 2016, as Chapter 52 of the Acts of 2016.

The following goals are in observance of the six elements of a Safe and Supportive Schools Framework.

(I) Leadership

Leadership is essential in developing and implementing effective substance use prevention and abuse education policies. Per [Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, s 96](#), “the policy, and any standards and rules enforcing the policy, shall be prescribed by the school committee in conjunction with superintendent or board of trustees of a charter school.” In adopting or updating policies, the BCCS board of trustees will work in conjunction with school leadership teams, school counseling teams, and school nursing teams in developing clearly defined goals to prevent and address substance use and abuse among BCCS students. This leadership should result in strong links between identified and local needs and prevention program/system designs.

Comprehensive substance use prevention programs involve the use of multiple strategies that include education and training; social competence skill development; social norms with expectation for behavior; policies, procedures and protocols; and problem identification and referral services. Our school leadership teams, school counseling teams, and school nursing teams will play a key role in implementing and overseeing these programs.

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Annually, at least one member of the school leadership team, school counseling team, and school nursing team will meet to review our policy and its implementation, and make any recommendations for amending the policy or any of its implementation procedures. This meeting will occur by the end of each school calendar year.

(II) Professional Development

All of our teachers and staff see students on a daily basis and often recognize changes in student performance, demeanor, and appearance that indicate a student may be at risk. BCCS will provide tiered training, so that all BCCS staff know district policies, procedures, and protocols for prevention, intervention, and follow-up in preventing and responding to substance use and abuse.

All BCCS teachers and staff will be provided training on the early warning signs and behaviors that indicate a student may be experiencing substance use problems, and will be made aware of building-based referral systems and other protocols to follow.

BCCS will implement the annual use verbal screening tools in one middle school grade (7-8) and one high school grade (9-12) to help identify risk for substance use related problems. This screening tool will be administered by our school nurses after they attend proper training.

Teachers and staff responsible for implementing substance use prevention curricula will receive external training and professional development on implementing evidence-based programs and effective strategies for preventing substance abuse.

(III) Access to resources and services

BCCS staff can play a key role in identifying and referring students with substance use related problems and working with their families. Educators and school counseling personnel will work in collaboration with substance use counseling professionals and mental health specialists to meet the needs of those students most at risk.

BCCS will ensure its school counseling personnel have access to information and strategies necessary to facilitate referrals to community services for the wide variety of mental health problems that students experience, including substance abuse. Each year

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our school nurses and counselors will work in collaboration to update our resource list for the network of services available through the agencies in their areas.

Collaboration between schools and community behavioral health providers can address student-specific issues, including interventions such as small group, individual supports, and school re-entry plans. These efforts can support schools staff including consultation on general as well as student-specific challenges and plans for school and community providers responses when necessary.

(IV) Academic and non-academic strategies

Integrating substance use prevention and education into school is one the easiest ways to reach youth and young adults. BCCS has implemented evidence-based substance abuse curriculum for grades 5 through 12. These programs are currently in practice at BCCS and are developmentally appropriate and demonstrate cultural competency:

HealthSmart (<http://www.etr.org/healthsmart>)

Get Real: Sex Education that Works

Additionally, BCCS has school-based mental health professional who work directly with young people who are identified as being at risk. At least one adult in every school building will be designated as the point of contact and support for students who are considered to be at risk.

(V) Policies and Protocols

SUBSTANCE USE POLICY

Boston Collegiate is committed to providing an alcohol-free, tobacco-free, and drug-free learning environment. In order to protect the health and safety of our school community, Boston Collegiate prohibits student use or consumption of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property or at any school function. A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substances.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior

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to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, section 96, this policy shall be posted on Boston Collegiate’s website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS

Boston Collegiate understands that substance use prevention requires education. In accordance with state and federal law, Boston Collegiate shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs. Such programs shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on non-use by school-age children.

The school shall receive guidance on the curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program from the board of trustees.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, section 96, this policy shall be posted on the Boston Collegiate website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

(VI) Collaboration with families

Since 2014, MA General Laws chapter 71, section 96 has required each public school to have policies regarding substance use prevention and the education of its students about the dangers of substance abuse, to notify students’ parents or guardians about the policies, and to post the policies on the school’s website.

BCCS believes that families are essential partners in schools’ efforts to prevent substance abuse. Parental input, particularly from parents of students with substance related-problems, helps identify and prioritize the needs of the school community.

BCCS emphasizes the importance of school-community-home collaborations in weaving

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together the resources for comprehensive, multifaceted approaches to preventing substance use and abuse. Providing parents/guardians with information regarding the school's substance use prevention and abuse education policies is critical, as they play a key role in their success. BCCS will inform parents/guardians about its substance use prevention and abuse education policies on an annual basis.

This policy will be posted on the BCCS website under [insert location]. BCCS student handbooks will also contain information on BCCS policies, procedures, and protocols. This information will also be made available to Parent Teacher Associations/Organizations, School Councils, and other related programming. Materials will be easily understandable and culturally appropriate.

Evidence-based prevention curricula selected for use or developed at BCCS must contain an education component specifically designed for parents/guardians and other actively involved family members. This outreach can help parents/guardians and family members to keep students safe from substance use, by modeling skills and attitudes at home, thereby supporting the prevent component of the school initiative. Effective programming will involve parents/guardians through regular activities and by using more than one approach.

Verbal screening tools

Massachusetts law stipulates that by the 2017-2018 school, subject to appropriation, all public school shall implement a verbal screening tool to screen students annually at two different grades levels for substance use disorders.

The relevant sections of the statute are as follows:

[MA General Laws, chapter 71, section 97:](#)

Section 97. (a) Subject to appropriation, each city, town, regional school district, charter school or vocational school district shall utilize a verbal screening tool to screen pupils for substance use disorders. Screenings shall occur on an annual basis and occur at 2 different grade levels as recommended by the department of elementary and secondary education, in consultation with the department of public health. Parents or guardians of a pupil to be screened pursuant to this section shall be notified prior to the start of the school year. Verbal screening tools shall be approved by the department of elementary and secondary education, in conjunction with the department of public health.

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De-identified screening results shall be reported to the department of public health, in a manner to be determined by the department of public health, not later than 90 days after completion of the screening.

(b) A pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian may opt out of the screening by written notification at any time prior to or during the screening. A city, town, regional school district, charter school or vocational school district utilizing a verbal screening tool shall comply with the department of elementary and secondary education's regulations relative to consent.

(c) Any statement, response or disclosure made by a pupil during a verbal substance use disorder screening shall be considered confidential information and shall not be disclosed by a person receiving the statement, response or disclosure to any other person without the prior written consent of the pupil, parent or guardian, except in cases of immediate medical emergency or a disclosure is otherwise required by state law. Such consent shall be documented on a form approved by the department of public health and shall not be subject to discovery or subpoena in any civil, criminal, legislative or administrative proceeding. No record of any statement, response or disclosure shall be made in any form, written, electronic or otherwise, that includes information identifying the pupil.

(d) The department of elementary and secondary education shall notify each school district in writing of the requirement to screen students for substance use disorders pursuant to this section. School districts with alternative substance use screening policies may, on a form provided by the department, opt out of the required verbal screening tool. The form shall be signed by the school superintendent and provide a detailed description of the alternative substance use program the district has implemented and the reasons why the required verbal screening tool is not appropriate for the district.

(e) No person shall have a cause of action for loss or damage caused by an act or omission resulting from the implementation of this section.

[Section 63 & 64 of St. 2016, c. 52:](#)

SECTION 63. Each city, town, regional school district, charter school or vocational school district shall implement the verbal substance use disorder screenings required by section 97 of chapter 71 of the General Laws by the 2017-2018 school year.

SECTION 64. The department of elementary and secondary education, in consultation with the department of public health, shall create a notice and opt out form relative to

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substance use disorder screenings required by section 97 of chapter 71 of the General Laws.

BCCS is working with the Department of Public Health on guidance for school concerning those verbal screenings and their full implementation, pending funding, for the 2017-2018 school year.

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