

Boston Higashi School

Accredited by The National Commission for the Accreditation of Special Education Services



Daily Life Therapy[®] Guidelines

***Our mission** is to help children and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder learn to reach their full potential through the application of the methodology of Daily Life Therapy®. This unique educational philosophy, developed by the late Dr. Kiyo Kitahara of Tokyo, Japan incorporates a broad and balanced curriculum including academics, art, music, physical education, computer technology and social education. Students take on challenges, learn to overcome obstacles and gain confidence from their own success. This process allows our students to develop a love for learning so they may fully enjoy their family, community, and all that life has to offer. As each student grows and learns, their personality and individual character matures allowing them to benefit from and most importantly contribute to society as adults.*

The Boston Higashi School does not discriminate with regard to race, sex, color, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or age.

A Personal History of Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

“I am resolved to continue as long as I live in my effort to foster and educate the little souls that are put in my care, and also continue my concentration on training young teachers who can carry on my work.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

The late Dr. Kiyo Kitahara, founder of both Musashino and Boston Higashi Schools, was born on April 24, 1925 in Nikko, Tochigi Prefecture, Japan. She studied independently for the School Teacher Screening Examination. At age sixteen, she was the youngest in the nation to pass the exam. In 1942, she began her teaching career at her own former school, Kiyotaki Elementary School in Nikko. Dr. Kiyo Kitahara resumed her formal studies, graduating with a Bachelor of Law from Meiji University, Tokyo, Japan, in 1956.

In 1964, Dr. Kitahara established Musashino Higashi Kindergarten. Her well known method for educating autistic children, Daily Life Therapy®, evolved out of her successful efforts to teach autistic children integrated with normal children. In 1973, Musashino Higashi School was designated as the Research Organization of the Ministry of Education of Japan. In 1977, Dr. Kitahara established Musashino Higashi Elementary School. In 1986, she opened the Musashino Higashi Specialized High School to teach autistic students important vocational skills. The majority of graduates from this school are now finding valued positions in the regular work force.

During this time, Daily Life Therapy® was receiving recognition abroad. In 1980, Bowling Green State University in Ohio, USA, presented an Honorary Doctorate of Pedagogy to Dr. Kiyo Kitahara for her innovative contributions to education. As Dr. Kitahara lectured across the United States at annual conferences of the Council for the Exceptional Children and the Autism Society of American, parents began requesting admission into her school for their children. After Dr. Kitahara established Musashino Higashi Junior High School in 1983, she opened her International Division in September, 1984, to accommodate foreign students. When demand for admission into the International Division continued to increase, Dr. Kitahara decided to open a school in the United States so that the majority of children could receive their education within their own culture and near their families.

In September 1987, with the support from leaders of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Boston Higashi School opened with students from America and many other countries. The development of Boston Higashi School fulfills the dream of Dr. Kitahara to enable autistic children from all over the world to benefit from Daily Life Therapy®. Presently, more than 1,600 students attend her schools, and at least one quarter of them are autistic.

Dr. Kiyo Kitahara, recipient of the prestigious Avon Grand Award as Woman of the Year, 1988, devoted her life to improving and enriching the educational methods for both typical and autistic students so that their future may hold great promise and so that they may, in turn, make important contributions to following generations.

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Goals

GOALS FOR EACH DIVISION AT SCHOOL & AT HOME (RESIDENCE)

These goals build a framework to provide consistency throughout all aspects of the student's life.

Early Childhood

- * To establish a daily routine.
- * To learn basic daily living skills.
- * To enjoy activities at school and at home (residence).
- * To learn how to play with peers and toys and appropriately use equipment.
- * To enjoy community activities.
- * To be familiar with the relationship between community sites and their corresponding activities.
- * To establish pre-academic skills and interests.

Elementary

- * To further improve basic daily living skills.
- * To expand the play opportunities.
- * To initiate interpersonal interactions.
- * To incorporate manners into social situations.
- * To learn about safety in the community and follow safety rules.
- * To build a foundation of basic academic skills through age-appropriate activities.

Middle School

- * To improve basic daily living skills and increase independence.
- * To acquire the basic skills to complete daily chores.
- * To improve social skills and manners.
- * To interact appropriately with people in community settings.
- * To participate in community activities with appropriate manners.
- * To apply basic academic skills to a variety of subject matters and activities.

Younger High School

- * To become independent in daily living skills.
- * To perform job-related activities within the school, residence and home.
- * To follow directions across a variety of environments.
- * To generalize functional skills into community activities.
- * To increase independence by following survival skills in a variety of situations.
- * To demonstrate appropriate manners during interpersonal interactions.
- * To integrate academic skills with functional topics, themes and activities.

Older High School & Young Adults

- * To practice job skills at in-school work settings.
- * To increase participation in community activities.
- * To demonstrate independence in daily living skills & household chores.
- * To interact appropriately within social situations.
- * To apply academic skills to functional and age-appropriate activities.

Emergence

- * To be employed in the local community after graduation.
- * To be socially and emotionally independent as a young adult.
- * To have an individual life style plan which will promote continued learning and independence for the future.
- * To access community resources through weekly errands and routines. (i.e., banking, library)
- * To be prepared to move to a new residence, program and work setting.
- * To choose and plan recreation and community activities.
- * To utilize academic skills within community activities and maintain an interest in age-appropriate topics.

GOALS FOR EACH MONTH

"We keep in mind the fact that education is a 24-hour operation covering every hour a child is living. This is the foundation on which we carry out our program of education as related to the foregoing."

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

<u>September</u>	To get adjusted to a new environment[s]. To establish a daily routine through consistency and repetitious practice. To identify/recognize teachers and peers in class or group.
<u>October</u>	To establish attending skills through the use of basic postures. To be respectful in the cafeteria by following rules; eat a variety of foods neatly & quietly. To build stamina through vigorous physical exercise. To fully participate and enjoy Sports Day.
<u>November</u>	To demonstrate a good hand washing routine. To maintain one's belongings in an orderly fashion (fold clothes, neat room, etc.). To work cooperatively with his/her peers during leisure activities (reading, games, etc.).
<u>December</u>	To review progress over the semester and prepare goals for vacation. To adjust his/her clothing (neat appearance, weather conditions). To develop indoor exercise routines for cold weather.
<u>January</u>	To re-adjust to the routines of school. To increase stamina and diffuse energy during indoor exercise routines. To practice fine motor skills (button, zip, tie, etc.) on winter clothes.
<u>February</u>	To maintain good health through personal hygiene, hand washing, clean environment, etc. To focus on good study habits during academic and homework time. To follow directions promptly and properly.
<u>March</u>	To continue expanding academic skills. To utilize a variety of communication tools (email, AAC devices, icons, etc.).
<u>April</u>	To demonstrate and display academic achievements through a portfolio. To increase and demonstrate independence during a variety of chores. To prepare goals and enjoy April vacation.
<u>May</u>	To readjust to new routines at school. To maintain a clean environment. To become familiar with and demonstrate independence in choreographed routines.
<u>June</u>	To increase tolerance to exercise activities in warm weather. To prepare for the Annual Celebration. To enjoy school break with family.
<u>July</u>	To enjoy water play and Family Day. To enjoy the summer schedule activities and practice public manners (field trips, etc.). To prepare for Bon Dance.
<u>August</u>	To review the school year and progress made. To prepare for the next school year. To set goals and prepare for Summer Vacation!

Attendance and Schedules

ABSENCES EXCUSED DISMISSAL/EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Please notify the Education Office at (781) 961-0800 (x117, 126, 105, 106 or 101) or edoffice@bostonhigashi.org in the event that your child will be absent, dismissed from school early or will be arriving at school late. For residential students, please also include: reception@bostonhigashi.org in the email or call ext 201 during residential hours.

Please make all efforts to avoid taking your child during school hours for dentist/doctor appointments. If dismissal is necessary, please be sure to report to the receptionist/Education Office.

Emergency Assistance

In case of emergency, please call 781-961-0800. You will be directed to either the day or residential program.

INCLEMENT WEATHER OR STATE OF EMERGENCY

Delayed Opening / Early Dismissal

When inclement weather is forecasted, please consult your local television and radio stations for school district closures or delayed openings. When school is cancelled in the student's district, no transportation is provided for out of district students. Also, when the Town of Randolph posts a weather-related closure, many districts will not provide transportation due to the possibility of dangerous road conditions. Parental discretion is always advised for those who elect to drive their child to our campus during weather emergencies.

Delayed openings and emergency early dismissals are aligned with home district advisories and parents should consult with their transportation vendors.

The Boston Higashi School adheres to directives for all State of Emergencies issued by the Governor of Massachusetts. Day students should remain at home when a State of Emergency is declared.

STUDENTS' SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Early Childhood Division

	Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri
1	8:50~	DLS				
	9:15~	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise
2	9:40~	Circle time	Circle time	Circle time	Circle time	Circle time
	9:55~	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack
	10:05	Readiness	Readiness	Readiness	Readiness	Readiness
	10:25~	Assembly				
3	10:55~	Communication	Work Time	Language/ Comm	Work Time	Communication
4	11:35~	Work Time	Joint P.E.	Joint P.E.	Joint P.E.	Joint P.E.
	12:10~	Lunch				
	12:55~	Break Time				
5	1:25~	Joint Music	Joint Music	Joint Music	Joint Music	Joint Music
6	2:10~	Play	Structured Play	Play	Structured Play	Joint Play
	2:50~	Snack				
	3:00~ 3:30	DLS				

STUDENTS' SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Elementary Division

	Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri
1	9:00 ~ 9:40	Homeroom/DLS Exercise				
2	9:40 ~ 10:20	P.E.	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (Basic Study)
	10:20~	Transition				
	10:25~ 10:55	Assembly				
3	10:55 ~ 11:35	Academics (Math)	Joint P.E.	Art	P.E.	Social Emotional Learning
4	11:35 ~ 12:15	Academics (Science)	Art	Academics (English/LA)	Academics (Making Words)	Joint Music
	12:15~ 1:00	Lunch/DLS				
	1:00~ 1:30	Enrichment				
5	1:30 ~ 2:10	Music	Academics (Math)	Music	Skills Group	Joint P.E.
6	2:10 ~ 2:50	Communication	Joint P.E.	Communication	Academics (English/LA)	Academics (English/LA)
	2:50~ 3:00	Snack/DLS				
	3:05~ 3:30	Afternoon Home Room/DLS				

*Academic content may be subject to change

STUDENTS' SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Middle School Division

	Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri
1	9:00 ~ 9:40	Homeroom/DLS Exercise				
2	9:40 ~ 10:20	Academics (Basic Study)	Art	Joint Music	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (Basic Study)
	10:20~	Transition				
	10:25~ 10:55	Assembly				
3	10:55 ~ 11:35	Communication	Academics (Making Words)	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (English/LA)	Joint Music
4	11:35 ~ 12:15	Academics (Math)	P.E.	Joint P.E.	Music	Academics (Science)
	12:15~ 1:00	Lunch/DLS				
	1:00~ 1:30	Enrichment				
5	1:30 ~ 2:10	Academics (English/LA)	Academics (Basic Study)	Art	P.E.	Academics (Math)
6	2:10 ~ 2:50	Music	Social Emotional Learning	Academics (English/LA)	Communication	Joint P.E.
	2:50~ 3:00	Snack/DLS				
	3:05~ 3:30	Afternoon Home Room/DLS				

*Academic content may be subject to change

STUDENTS' SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Younger High School Division

	Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri
1	9:00 ~ 9:40	Home Room (Daily Living Skills, Review Schedule) & Exercise				
2	9:40 ~ 10:20	P.E.	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (Basic Study)
	10:20~	Transition				
	10:25~ 10:55	Assembly				
3	10:55 ~ 11:35	Art	Joint P.E.	Art	P.E.	Academics (Science)
4	11:35 ~ 12:15	Music	Academics (English/LA)	Vocational	Academics (English/LA)	Joint P.E.
	12:15~ 1:00	Lunch/DLS				
	1:00~ 1:30	Enrichment				
5	1:30 ~ 2:10	Academics (Basic Study)	Academics (Math)	Music	Academics (Math)	Joint Music
6	2:10 ~ 2:50	Communication	Joint Music	Communication	Vocational	Social Emotional Learning
	2:50~ 3:00	Snack/DLS				
	3:05~ 3:30	Afternoon Home Room/DLS				

*Academic content may be subject to change

STUDENTS' SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Older High School Division

	Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri
1	9:00 ~ 9:40	Home Room/DLS Exercise				
2	9:40 ~ 10:20	Academics (Basic Study)	Joint Music	Academics (Basic Study)	Joint Music	Academics (Basic Study)
	10:20~	Transition				
	10:25~ 10:55	Assembly				
3	10:55 ~ 11:35	Academics (English/LA)	Art	Academics (English/LA)	Academics (English/LA)	Academics (Math)
	11:35~ 12:05	Lunch				
	12:05~	Transition				
	12:15~ 12:45	Emp. Ed.	Enrichment	Enrichment	Enrichment	Emp. Ed.
4	12:45 ~ 1:25		Joint PE	Social Emotional Learning	Joint PE	
5	1:25 ~ 2:05		Communication	Art	Academics (Science)	
6	2:05 ~ 2:45		Academics (Math)	Academics (Science)	Academics (English/LA)	
	2:45-3	Snack				
	3-3:30	Afternoon Home Room/DLS				

*Academic content may be subject to change

STUDENTS' SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Emergence Division - Younger

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
9:00 ~ 9:40	Home Room/ DLS & Exercise	Home Room/ DLS & Exercise	Home Room/ DLS & Exercise	Home Room/ DLS & Exercise	Home Room/ DLS & Exercise
9:40 ~ 10:20	Work	P.E. Art Academics	P.E. Art Academics	P.E. Art Academics	Work
10:20 ~ 11:00					
11:00 ~ 11:50					
11:50~ 1:00	Lunch and Leisure				
1:00 ~ 1:30	Music	Functional Academics	Functional Academics	Functional Academics	Music
2:10 ~ 2:30	Work	Community Education	Community Education	Community Education	Work
2:30 ~ 3:00					
3:00 ~ 3:30	Home Room & Transition				

*Academic content may be subject to change

STUDENTS' SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Emergence Division - Older

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
9:00 ~ 9:40	Home Room/DLS/Exercise				
9:40 ~ 10:20	P.E.	Job Site Participation			P.E.
10:20 ~ 11:00	Functional Academics				Functional Academics
11:00 ~ 11:40	Creative Arts				Creative Arts
11:40 ~ 12:30	Lunch				Lunch
12:30~ 1:00	Leisure	Lunch			Leisure
1:00~ 1:30	Functional Academics	Music	Leisure	Music	Functional Academics
1:30 ~ 2:10	Community Education	Job Site Participation			Community Education
2:10 ~ 2:30					
2:30 ~ 3:00					
3:00 ~ 3:30	Home Room & Transition				

*Academic content may be subject to change

RESIDENTIAL DAILY SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Mornings

7:00AM Wake up
Grooming & dressing
7:30AM Morning chores
Changing/Making beds
Vacuuming/Cleaning rooms
Folding/Storing clothes
7:45AM Breakfast
8:15AM Brushing teeth
Preparation for school
8:50AM Leave for school

Afternoons

3:40PM Arrive at residence
Assembly in each division
Announce schedules
Store backpacks
Toileting/Daily chores

4:00-6:25PM Activities (Examples)

INDOOR/OUTDOOR

Recreational Music
Individual/Group Games
Cooking
Daily Chores
Homework
Carwash
Library
Playground
Nature Trail/Walk
Leisure Walk
Water Play

ACTIVITY LEADER PROGRAMS

Vocational

- Café Setup
- Clerical
- Bread Making, etc.
- Auto Detailing

Art

- Monthly Themed Art
- Greeting Cards
- Expressive Art, etc.

COMMUNITY TRIPS

Shopping
Swimming
Library
Haircut
Post Office
Laundry Mat
Library
Bowling
Out to Eat
Seasonal Trips

- View Holiday Lights
- Trick or Treat
- Plymouth Plantation

Music

- Choir
- Group Dance
- Music/Integrated Tech, inc.

Physical Education

- Team-Based Sports
- Skill Practice
- Special Olympics, etc.

Social Communication

- Eno Board
- Group Communications
- Social games
- iPad/Computer Skills, etc.

6:00 or 6:30PM Dinner; Girls, Middle School, Jr. High, High School,
Young Adults and Emergence Program divisions
7:00PM Prepare for bedtime, showering, brushing teeth, grooming,
watch TV/Video, bedtime story, individual leisure (e.g., iPad,
weekly calls/SKYPE to family)
8:30-10:00PM Activities and/or Bedtime (depending on the division)

* All specific Weekly Plans are available, upon request, to all families from each division.

RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Mornings

7:30AM	Wake up Grooming & dressing
8:00AM	Morning chores Changing/Making beds Vacuuming/Cleaning rooms Folding/Storing clothes
8:15AM	Breakfast
8:45AM	Brushing teeth
9:00AM	Activities (indoor/outdoor)

Afternoons

12:15PM	Lunch
12:45PM	Brushing teeth/washing hands
1:00PM	Activities (indoor/outdoor)
3:30PM	Snack time
3:45PM	Daily chores/Activities
6:00PM	Dinner; Intermediate division
6:30PM	Dinner; Middle School, Girls, Jr. High, High School, Young Adults and Emergence Program divisions
7:00PM	Prepare for bedtime, showering, brushing teeth, grooming, watching TV/video, bedtime story, etc.
8:30-10PM	Activity and/or Bedtime (depending on the division)

SAMPLE WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

On Grounds

Hiking (nature trail, leisure walk, etc.)
Exercise (treadmill, group games, jogging)
Sports (basketball, softball, roller blading, etc.)
Play (indoor/outdoor with play equipment)
Games (board games, puzzles, group games)
Cooking
Homework
Recreational music
Recreational events (e.g., Bingo Night, Movie Night)
Daily Chores/Vocational Chores
Computers
iPads
Gym Activities
Seasonal (sledding, water play)

Community Outings/Field Trips

Golfing Special Olympics
Bowling Sporting Events
Swimming Beach/Lakes
Playground Science Museum
Library Other Museums
Movie Theater
Shopping (grocery, mall, local stores)
Parks (e.g., Blue Hills Reservation, MA,
Audubon Society, etc.)
Zoo
Concerts
Farms
Community Events
Restaurants
Arcade Center
Post Office
Out to Eat or Have Snack

*The Weekend Field Trip Calendar will be distributed to parents monthly

School Policies & Procedures

DAILY LIFE THERAPY®
A Unique Educational Approach

Within every living child exists its most precious bud of self-identity. To search this out and foster it with loving care; that is the essence of education of the autistic child.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Daily Life Therapy® began in 1964 when Dr. Kiyo Kitahara established the Musashino Higashi Kindergarten in Tokyo, Japan. Her now well-known method for educating children with autism, Daily Life Therapy®, emerged naturally from her experience teaching an autistic child who was enrolled in her regular kindergarten class.

Daily Life Therapy® is an educational philosophy and a way of teaching based on that philosophy found only at two schools, the Boston Higashi School in Randolph, MA and the Mushashino Higashi Gauken in Tokyo, Japan. This philosophy believes that the purpose of education for each child is to find that “most precious bud of self-identity” by fully developing one’s potential and dignity. This is accomplished through a holistic education of the entire child via the three fundamental “pillars” of

- 1) Physical stamina building,
- 2) Emotional stability, and
- 3) Intellectual stimulation.

Together, these pillars provide the foundation which is at the core of a broad and full education rather than one directed as a piecemeal approach to remediating deficits.

These three pillars make the educational methodology at the Boston Higashi School, absolutely unique. Without medication, students can use vigorous physical exercise to learn to regulate their biological rhythms of life and thus gain the many other benefits in health, stamina, mood, awareness of one’s surroundings, and concentration that result. In this vibrant and energetic environment, through a highly consistent, highly structured approach using group dynamics teachers bond closely with each student to achieve emotional stability so that understanding and trust can develop through “heart to heart” education. Being healthy and happy leaves a child free and open to experience. The varied and intellectually stimulating atmosphere for learning is then part of this core approach, as Dr. Kitahara saw the way a “normal” child learns as a “mirror” for the proper education of the autistic child as well.

Based on this strong philosophy, the Daily Life Therapy® approach is consistent across all aspects of teaching and campus life. Through group dynamics, in classes, students are naturally taught social interactions and relationships as they study a broad-based age-appropriate curriculum covering literacy, math, science, social studies and the arts, consisting equally of music, art, physical education, and computer technology. Students move around a large campus, explore a nature trail, participate in community events, and interact socially with classmates and others in a wide variety of opportunities that expand their world and help them grow into adulthood.

Social Education develops from the building blocks of play in childhood to community leisure and recreational activities for young adults all directed toward establishing active interpersonal engagement with others and opportunities for experience with and connectedness to one’s surroundings, so often lacking in those with Autism.

According to Dr. Kitahara, “play is the bridge to social development” and learning how to do this through the natural developmental playtime sequences of the Daily Life Therapy® curriculum builds a strong foundation for social relationships.

Play is fun and contributes to feeling happy, successful and self-confident. Playing helps children explore the sensory world, discharge energy, develop problem-solving skills, enhance fine and gross motor abilities, learn social and emotional roles, express one's feelings and be creative. Developmentally, adolescents continue this play and add more advanced leisure and recreational activities such as drama club and community road races. Together, these components of the social education program are geared to develop the capacity to enjoy activities, to join others for participation and socialization, to develop functional capacities and basic concepts about the world and to develop communication skills that opens the individual to the enjoyment of a variety of experiences in a richer more fulfilling life.

Special subjects, including the visual arts and music are taught on the premise that children with ASD can develop creativity and are able to express their artistic abilities through learning the skills to draw, paint and perform musically on instruments and vocally. An understanding and appreciation of the beauty of art and the world around them is also created, leading to a heightened awareness and enjoyment of one's surroundings.

The management of behavior through Daily Life Therapy® relies first on the mutually trusting relationship between student and teacher that is a bond of love and deep understanding. In describing this relationship, Dr. Kitahara said, "a teacher does not love a student but is in love with a student". Secondly, it relies on the development of skills for self-regulation that the student learns gradually through the structure, group dynamics, emotional stability, exercise, enjoyment and participation in activities that make life more fun and other learning throughout the program. Social independence is accomplished by concentrating on the child's strengths rather than on the undesirable behavior. Aversive measures are never used to change behavior.

A major tenet of Daily Life Therapy® is that education should be conducted in an environment of normality. In the Tokyo program, the format is a mixed educational setting. In the Boston program, some children are included in mainstream classrooms with typical age peers. Other students are in on-campus clubs with typical peers joining them here (i.e. drama club). Still other students hold off-campus jobs or participate in leisure programs. The goal of Boston Higashi School is life long inclusion in the community.

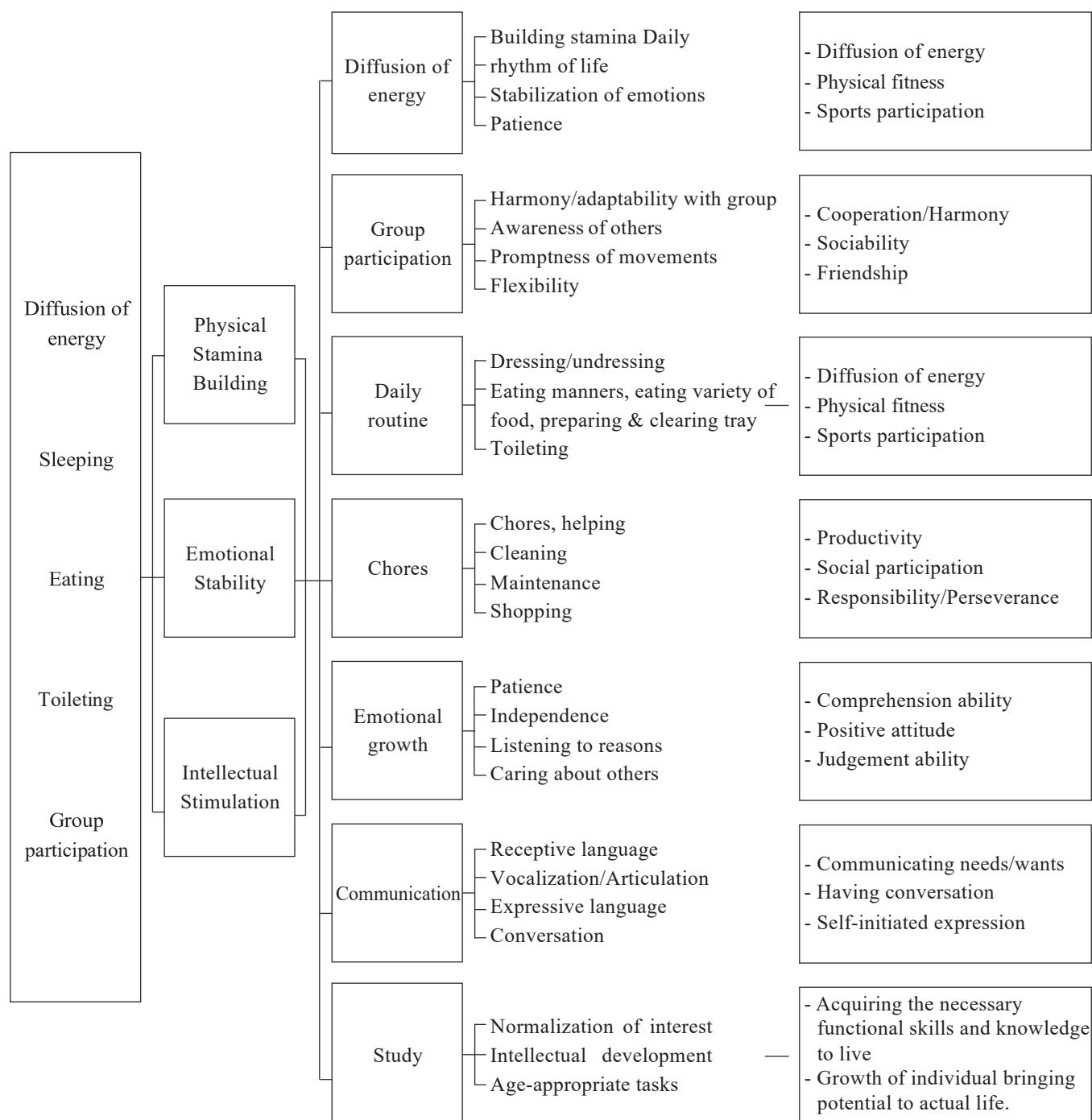
In conclusion Daily Life Therapy® is not a set of discrete techniques or interventions to change or eliminate the behaviors of children with ASD. It is a socially valid and clinically meaningful outcome-based educational approach that is holistic and "heart-to-heart" between teacher and child.

DAILY LIFE THERAPY® FLOW CHART

Establishment of daily rhythm 3 Pillars in DLT

Independence in daily living skills

Social Independence



CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

“When teaching I always keep before my mind something that is but natural, namely, that I must give any child the education that is important to him/her. . . Each child is a treasure. Each child is an individual with its own individual existence. A school is a place where these various different individuals are collected for education, and not a plant, which turns out standard articles. Thus an important matter is what orientation education should have and how to preserve every single individuality.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Age: 3 – 22

Diagnosis: Autism Spectrum Disorder and Related Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Students whose diagnosis falls within the category of Autism Spectrum Disorder are eligible to apply for admission to the Boston Higashi School. Students presenting with related Neurodevelopmental Disorders are also eligible to apply. Applications are considered on an individual basis. Students must be able to fully participate in the vigorous physical education and group dynamic program that underlie the methodology of Daily Life Therapy®

The new DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Medical Association) has changed the description of autism and its subtypes. Consistent with this new description, the Boston Higashi School serves students within the full range of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Relevant older terms and subtypes are now subsumed under this ASD umbrella, which differentiates conditions by their place on a single continuum or spectrum.

Students anywhere along this spectrum still have in common the defining characteristics of impairments, however rather than a triad of socialization, communication and flexibility/imagination, the first two have been re-conceptualized as a single construct. Thus, to meet the criteria for ASD, individuals must show deficits in Social Communication and must also exhibit Restricted and Repetitive Behavior (RRB). Individuals who show such impairments may meet the criteria for eligibility for the Boston Higashi School.

Deficits in Social Communication are characterized by difficulty with social-emotional reciprocity, impairments in various forms of nonverbal behaviors such as making eye contact, using and understanding body language and/or facial expressions and in using gestures, and deficits in developing and maintaining appropriate relationships, beyond one’s caregivers, including play-based and social friendships.

Impairments in RRB’s can involve the exhibition of stereotyped and repetitive movements or activities, excessive adherence to routines/rituals, excessive resistance to change including transitions, restricted or perseverative interests and altered reactivity to sensory input.

For a diagnosis to be given, these characteristics must be present since “early childhood”, even if they do not manifest themselves until social demands exceed the youngster’s capacity, and they must be sufficiently limiting to impair everyday functioning.

Rather than subtypes, functioning in each domain is seen as ranging along a continuum of severity defined by how independent the individual is. Three levels are proposed: 1. Requiring Support, 2. Requiring Substantial Support, 3. Requiring Very Substantial Support.

Autism Spectrum Disorder is still regarded as a developmental, non-progressive, lifelong neurological behavioral disorder that is derived from multiple etiologies, which are only partially known and understood. However, this is a more coherent conceptual view of the disorder rather than just a collection of symptoms. It is regarded as a condition the child has rather than defining the child, who is seen as a unique personality with other areas of strength and possibly need. Among other areas to be considered are problems with motor coordination, activity level and sleep regulation, level of anxiety, cognitive capability, and gastrointestinal or immune dysfunction.

The program at the Boston Higashi School has always recognized these domains as areas to be addressed educationally. Motor coordination problems include difficulties with balance, coordination, judgment, attention and awareness of one's own body boundaries and of oneself in space, with clumsiness in large muscle activities as well as in eye-hand coordination for skills needed for daily living, for academic learning, or for play and with oral coordination for speech production as well as eating. Level of activity difficulties may include lethargy and under arousal as well as non-purposeful hyperactivity. Similarly, sensory difficulties may also be of the under aroused (hypo) or the hyper sensitive type. Many students react with overt anxiety to new situations, loud noises, transitions, or changes in routines whereas others are less affected while still others show this by irritability, tantrums, stereotypical behaviors, aggression, or oppositional-defiant attitudes. Intellectual capabilities of those with Autism Spectrum Disorder can run the entire range as well and includes those with generalized impairment but splinter savant skills.

The Boston Higashi School is not a treatment facility for students with mental health diagnoses, emotional disturbances or conduct disorders.

ADMISSION PROCESS

Boston Higashi School employs a rolling admissions process serving students ages 3-22 with diagnoses along the Autism Spectrum, which previously included Autism, Autistic-like, PDD-NOS and Asperger's Syndrome. Students presenting with related neurodevelopmental diagnoses might also meet the criteria for eligibility for admission.

Referral

Referrals are typically made by school districts to the Admission Coordinator. Parents who plan to fund privately may submit a private pay referral. Application materials will be sent to parent/guardian for completion and a school tour will be scheduled. The Admissions Committee reviews submitted application materials to determine if the student is appropriate for admission consideration.

Interview

Applicants considered potential candidates for admission are invited to the Boston Higashi School for a screening with qualified staff. The Admissions Committee will conduct an interview with parent/guardian.

Decision

The Boston Higashi School does not discriminate on the basis of a student's race, color, sex, national origin, age, or sexual orientation. Admission decisions are made on an individual basis and are reviewed as circumstances change.

The Admissions Committee reconvenes for review and determination of admission. Occasionally a prospective student may be asked back for further observation. The final admission decision is made within ten days following the screening interview. The Admissions Coordinator then notifies the school district and parent/guardian. The Daily Life Therapy® Guidelines book and school calendar is mailed to both parent/guardian and school district.

Before an admission date can be determined, the following forms must be completed:

- Confirmation of Funding
- Current signed IEP reflecting placement at Boston Higashi School
- All requisite medical and school consent forms

Day of Admission:

Parent/guardian will meet with pertinent Boston Higashi School staff to review new student protocols and procedures. Parent/guardian of residential students will have an opportunity to visit their child's bedroom and to organize their belongings.

RESTRAINT PREVENTION AND BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT

*“The laughter of children is always heard in an enjoyable school.
It is alive with vitality and full of smiling faces.”*

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

I. Introduction

A. Basic Premise

In Daily Life Therapy® learning to support behavior is an integral part of the systematic educational approach to achieve social independence and dignity. The goal of the Boston Higashi School behavior support policy is to enhance the character of the individual through a process of regulating reciprocal emotional relationships (establishing a bond between people). It is not based upon a procedure to control discrete behaviors.

The uniqueness of Daily Life Therapy® is derived from the integrative aspects of behavior support as part of the educational approach in the entirety. In order for behavior support to be effective continuous educational progress in all areas must be achieved. Behavior support is predicated on addressing the whole life of the child and not a result of analyzing discrete behaviors. The holistic approach promotes prediction, proaction, and prevention in the regulation of emotions and behavior. The success of behavior support is achieved through physical exercise to establish a healthy daily routine, intellectual stimulation, and emphasis on high expectations that enhance richness in life directly affecting the behavior of the student.

Aversive measures, punishment, medication or time-out procedures are never used and are considered counter-productive to the bond and trust between teacher and student and among teacher, student and family, the most critical aspect of Daily Life Therapy®.

Student Separation Resulting from Behavior Support

1. The Boston Higashi School does not utilize time out/exclusion rooms. Staff may separate a student from his/her group, if necessary, when a student is displaying behaviors that are potentially unsafe or overly disruptive in the classroom. This is not used as a method of punishment, but rather a means to assist the student in redirecting their attention and de-escalating the situation. During this time, the student will be continuously with a staff member who will be utilizing various behavior support strategies to help teach the student appropriate skills for calming down. Examples of redirecting might be taking a walk down the hallway, getting a cup of water, or sitting quietly together in a quiet space. These types of interventions will be documented in the individual student log for all programs.
2. If a student must be separated from his/her peers for more than 30 minutes, the staff must obtain approval from one of the supervisors to continue. The supervisor will sign on the student's log for the acknowledgement and report to the Director of Programming or his designee.
3. It is essential that a student return to his/her group as soon as the student is calm, and that separation from his/her peers is at a minimum. Some examples of exclusionary separations at BHS include the following:
 - Going outside of the classroom to get a drink of water
 - Going for a walk with a staff member in the hallway for a few minutes
 - Going for a walk with the student outside
 - Reviewing a visual schedule with the staff in a quiet space

Additional staff will be present during these times to ensure the student's safety while they are briefly away from their group.

Behavioral Expectations for Progress:

The student will increase his self-control, thereby enabling him to have many opportunities and experiences in life.

The student will (be able to) return to his family and community as an active participant.

The student will (be able to) benefit completely from his educational opportunities.

All of the following strategies need to be examined within the context of Daily Life Therapy®. Without fulfillment in the three basic tenets of Daily Life Therapy® these strategies are incomplete. As previously mentioned, the three basic tenets include participation in physical education, gaining stability of emotions, and stimulating the intellect.

B. General Strategies:

Prediction, Proaction and Prevention can be explained more clearly within two categories. This includes General Strategies and Specific Strategies. General Strategies are the fundamental prerequisites for establishing a foundation for learning. These are:

Initial Stage Guidance: This guidance is based on the fundamental ideas of child development. In order to begin the learning process, a child must first develop a basic foundation, a “readiness” to learn and a readiness to begin participating in life itself. There are three basic elements: sleeping, eating and toileting. When a child with autism first begins at school, he typically has very irregular sleeping patterns. The teachers at Boston Higashi School will provide vigorous physical activities along with stimulating intellectual/play activities to enable the child to remain awake during the day and fall asleep at night only. In order to completely accomplish this task a child’s dietary habits must also be addressed. Many students exhibit strong food preferences and eat only similar tasting foods or foods with certain textures. The students are encouraged to eat a wider variety of foods through intense direction by one or more staff members using physical prompts, verbal prompts and modeling. The bonding between the child and teacher begins during this stage. The main aim when developing this bond is that the teacher will come to know the child extremely well and the child will develop trust and a feeling of comfort and consistency with the teacher. In addition, during the Initial Stage the child will naturally increase his physical stamina, which will enable him to be an active participant with positive feelings throughout the entire day. All of this will strongly influence the learning process.

Environment of Normality: Not only are academics presented at an age-appropriate level, including the students’ age-appropriate interests through age-level contents, but also expectations are high for all students in all areas. The students are given opportunities for typical learning experiences and social opportunities throughout the curriculum, which outlines a variety of academic, physical, creative and vocational activities. The students are also viewed within a normal developmental framework with high expectations for attending skills. Correct postures and eye contact are emphasized to prepare children to focus on the teacher and the environment. Initially, teachers use exaggerated voices and movements to teach attending skills and provide clear guidelines of the teacher’s expectations of the students. The general school environment is similar to a typical school, physically and programmatically. There are many opportunities for the students to be challenged and subsequently achieve success. (See “School Events”)

Group Dynamics: The Boston Higashi School utilizes a group approach similar to typical schools. After adjusting to their class or group, children develop an increased level of comfort and anxiety is automatically decreased particularly in stressful situations. The students also provide positive role models for each other, as well as receive stimulation from their peers to develop appropriate behaviors. The holistic approach of group dynamics is a step-by-step process founded on imitation. Socialization, which is a weak point for many children with autism, is naturally integrated within this approach. (Also see, Group Orientation)

C. Specific Strategies:

Specific strategies enable students to learn appropriate skills to maintain their high level of learning throughout every aspect of their lives. This allows the students to participate in many opportunities and experiences throughout their lives, including those opportunities where they are giving to rather than only receiving from society.

Bonding between the teacher and student: When a child is first introduced to the program several teachers work intensively to establish relationships with the child. This bonding process establishes effective ties without attending to inappropriate behavior. It establishes trust between the student and teacher. This process of the development of a strong bond develops over time with specific practices. For example, the teacher will participate in all the activities with the students such as exercising together and eating the same meals together. Through this approach the students are physically and mentally closer to their teachers. With the basic bonding process established a student's awareness of his teacher and class develops. This enables the teacher to understand and predict undesirable behavior by recognizing what causes the student to become anxious. Also, the student is better able to control his own emotions in time of high anxiety when he is able to rely on his teacher's consistency that was built through their relationship of trust.

Daily routine: A routine oriented schedule is maintained for the students in order to provide consistency and prediction throughout their daily lives. This structure not only enables the students to make sense of their environment, but also allows the teachers to relay consistent and definitive expectations. Through concise instructions that are always clear and uniform the learning environment becomes familiar and comfortable which facilitates the student's progress. Students are able to better cope with change once they feel comfortable in a routine since they always know no matter how chaotic an event is, they will eventually get back to their comfortable and predictable routine. In addition, the teachers will plan to challenge the students with schedule changes or school events, in order to prevent the development of dependency on any routine.

Basic posture training: Postures useful for reducing maladaptive behaviors are learned throughout the student's daily routine as well as in physical education and exercise activities. The students will learn basic postures, which are similar to the idea of mutually exclusive techniques. This process is considerably more complex than the substitution of one behavior for another. Children learn that through attending they can differentiate appropriate behavior from inappropriate behavior, and can eventually select the appropriate behavior. Basic postures also provide the students with coping mechanisms in order to increase control over their behaviors. Through acquiring the basic postures, the students have something comfortable and familiar to turn to when they feel anxious (redirection). In this way, any type of panic attack or behavior difficulty can be diffused quickly and more independently. All of this consequently leads to better self-control and decreased behavioral difficulties since the student is better able to control his own emotions. The key point of these postures is that the students are given a concrete idea of what they are supposed to be doing at each moment.

Group Orientation: Each student is educated in a class or group. Students will not only feel more comfortable with peer support as previously mentioned, but also become more independent through natural group dynamics. Group guidance aims at removing bit-by-bit a student's reliance and dependence on others through a natural method. The basis for this stems from the fact that most life activities are spent in group situations. Students who can feel confident and comfortable in a group have a future with many opportunities. Students are also more stimulated by their group and begin to foster more awareness of their surroundings. In this way the attending behavior and imitation skills can further develop.

Physical energy diffusion: Studies support the fact that physical exercise diffuses excess energy and lowers anxiety levels. Unlike typical peers, children with autism do not naturally diffuse energy through play. Part of physical energy diffusion includes teaching our students appropriate ways to play or engage in physical activities. Through diffusing excess energy many stereotypic behaviors decrease rapidly in students. Also, all of the physical activities and equipment that are taught directly affect the variety of opportunities for the students to socialize and participate in life. This also effects the overall development and self-esteem of the students, which directly effects the behavioral domain.

Instructional Planning: The education of students at the Boston Higashi School is well rounded and includes academics such as language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, computer technology,

behavior difficulties by providing intellectual stimulation as well as clear expectations for the students. Age-appropriate materials are presented along with a variety of teaching materials in order to reach each student's level and mode of learning. The lessons themselves are taught in an organized and clear manner with clear beginnings and endings as well as clear goals. (Through improving the students' academic knowledge, they are better able to learn skills that are necessary for life as well as generalize the skill of learning itself to all aspects of their lives.) Overall, each student's life will be enriched through these learning opportunities.

Meetings and review procedures: A team approach to teaching is maintained through support and daily review. All student issues are discussed daily in several meetings. In the morning meetings, teachers will prepare for the students by discussing any issues that occurred overnight or by discussing any plans that were made to solve issues from the previous day. In the afternoon, after the students are dismissed, all teachers meet within their division to discuss student issues again and plan for the following day. Master Teachers will report to the Division Directors in order to receive more suggestions or reminders. Through these meetings and review procedures all staff are aware of student issues and can plan accordingly to prevent similar occurrences. The focus of the meetings is to review the student's whole life, not just specific behaviors. The teachers will evaluate the three tenets of Daily Life Therapy® and plan accordingly if one area seems to be lacking. Through this support and planning system the main aspects of behavior management under Daily Life Therapy® can be accomplished; these again are prediction, proaction and prevention.

D. Reward in Daily Life Therapy®

"Natural" reward is used in Daily Life Therapy® to encourage further achievement from students, and is not the same as a material reinforcement. There is no basic procedure or time for giving rewards. Each individual child is considered unique and any reward such as verbal praise naturally develops from the bond and relationship between teacher and student. In addition to verbal praise, recognition of the student's effort and hard work, a reward may be a favorite activity. Rewards, however, are always used for educational purposes, in accordance with the philosophy of Daily Life Therapy®.

Contingency reinforcement or operant conditioning is not used in Daily Life Therapy®. The reward is part of the child's natural environment and not simply a linear function of antecedent behavior or consequence. The reward, as part of the natural environment, provides a means for recognizing the child's effort and developing the child's pride and confidence. Consequently, reward is used to positively impact the child's perception of himself, and can be usefully applied to helping a child gain the confidence needed for social relationships. This process differs considerably from rewarding a child in order to prompt a desired behavior, which will only be maintained if the reward is quickly and consistently provided. Rewards through Daily Life Therapy® are part of an educational approach which teaches children to gain confidence for other educational and social pursuits. The social praise or "natural rewards" that children experience promotes growth in the child's self-esteem, confidence and clarity of appropriate behavior rather than increasing a particular behavior.

E. Prohibition of Aversive Approaches

The Boston Higashi School **prohibits** the use of aversive techniques including the following:

- a. Time-out or seclusion of a student that would involve isolation from physical contact or direct observation from staff or that would imply punishment or an aversive technique (if separation does take place, it will be as described under Behavioral Practices).
- b. Withholding of essential nutrition and hydration
- c. Undue physical exercises; (physical exercise used as an aversive or punishment and not as part of the physical education curriculum);
- d. Subjecting the student to verbal abuse, ridicule or humiliation;
- e. Denial of sufficient sleep;
- f. Denial of program services;
- g. Denial of visitation or communication privileges with family;

- h. Excessive withholding of emotional response or stimulation;
- i. Chemical, mechanical or excessive physical restraint;
- j. Assignment of unduly physical, strenuous or harsh work;
- k. Any technique that results in signs of physical or psychological pain, humiliation or discomfort experienced by the child;
- l. Any and all types of corporal punishment

II. Preventative Methods:

Kimochi-Zukuri (literally to prepare one's mind is always the intent and the goal)

Definitions:

- (1) To prepare the student for an activity or task by removing anxiety or fear.
- (2) To prepare the student for an activity or task by teaching in a stepwise manner.
- (3) To prepare the student for an activity or task through repetitious practice.

Common Practices:

- 1. The teacher will describe the schedule of the day or changes in schedule so the students will be able to predict their activities, develop expectations, and be prepared.
- 2. The teacher will anticipate anxiety provoking situations, and then re-enact those situations or tasks in order to help the student become familiar and comfortable with the activity.

Examples:

Preparation for a new environment and activity: If a child exhibits difficulty paying attention or adjusting to being in the gym or the cafeteria, the teacher will take him/her to the location multiple times to practice or simulate in class a similar situation in order to guide the student to become familiar and comfortable with the environment and accustomed to the teacher's expectations. The activity will be practiced in a stepwise and repetitious manner to promote learning and interest. This will also desensitize them to the activity thus lowering their anxiety.

Preparation for the stage performance: The teacher will familiarize the student with a performance by showing the student materials from the performance, such as a musical instrument or costume, that are used in the activity. Using a concrete "cue" the student will become more aware that "there will be practice for the stage performance".

Common Practices:

- 1. The teacher will have his/her students play or diffuse their energy to become refreshed and to become emotionally stabilized.

When the student exhibits some difficulties in dealing with specific situations or routines the teacher will encourage the student to practice in the situation or the routine in order to become more comfortable and less anxious.

Example:

The teachers will review the Boston Higashi School exercises and basic body positions in their individual classroom prior to performing activities in the large group assembly.

Specific Behavioral Practices:

It is important to note that there is no "recipe" for behavior management under Daily Life Therapy®, rather the entire educational environment is prepared to decrease behavioral difficulties and prevent difficulties such as a panic attack from escalating. However, when a behavioral difficulty does occur all teachers will utilize similar specific practices (De-escalation) under Daily Life Therapy®. As a part of this, all teachers will naturally utilize a method of problem solving for each issue.

Problem Solving

1. Clearly identify the problem.
2. Identify the possible reason(s).
3. Identify strategies to prepare for and prevent this problem.
4. Consistently implement the plan.
5. Review.

All practices are implemented according to Standards and Policies of the School. Techniques are never used separately, but always in an integrated manner. Each child is considered on a case-by-case basis, with regard for the uniqueness of the individual's ability to benefit from normalized daily life experiences. Daily Life Therapy® is not a behavior modification approach nor is it relegated to a behavior modification construct of an antecedent behavior consequence continuum.

Daily Life Therapy® structures the environment according to a normalized context, and is designed to be proactive, predictive and preventative with respect to challenging behavior. The approach is sequential and developmental and is not behavioral in nature.

Physical Assistance: Assisting students physically with their body movements, with the coordination of their movements and with the development of a sense of awareness of themselves as individual entities in space and time is extremely helpful as a teaching methodology to increase the precision of focus and concentration for students with autism. Physical guidance is part of our educational/behavior management approach.

Physical Guidance: Physical guidance is used to teach a student a skill; direct or redirect a student to or from an activity, person or situation; or to de-escalate a situation in which a student may be exhibiting difficult behaviors. Physical Guidance is not a physical restraint, and it is not an emergency intervention. Physical Guidance is utilized as a cue to assist the child in their learning, be it cognitively, physically, or in emotional self-regulation. All staff is trained to use a uniform and consistent method.

Guidance may be used in many domains including, hand-over-hand assistance, as a response to running/bolting, escorts, jogging guidance, re-direction techniques, and eating guidance, depending on the situation. The directions being given to the student at the time of the physical guidance are clearly communicated, and in fact, help the student to learn and to succeed.

Staff are specifically and consistently educated/trained to physically guide students with proper hand-over-hand techniques in areas of academic skills, such as, writing guidance, and in areas of daily life activities, such as, eating guidance. Physical guidance may be used within any activity where a student needs assistance, in order for the student to succeed and learn to his/her full potential.

Physical guidance may be used to direct or redirect a student to or from an activity, person or situation by means of the techniques of escape/evasion. For example, a teacher may use physical guidance to release a student from pulling hair or biting. Other techniques may include escorts, which consists of either one or two staff to re-direct a student to or from a situation. Escorts may be used to re-direct a student from a potentially dangerous situation. Such escorts are not considered to be restraints, as described under physical guidance. Further, staff are taught specifically how to guide and re-direct students who are exhibiting aggressive behaviors, such as hitting, or to de-escalate agitated, disruptive and destructive behavior by means of seated support guidance, blocking and assisted stand guidance.

As part of the physical guidance learning process, staff is educated/trained to give clear directions during the physical guidance procedures, and to process the situation with all students. Follow-up procedures include daily student communication logs, daily division meetings, daily reports to the Division Director or Residential Director, weekly reports to Program Committee, bimonthly reports to Child Safety Committee, and Prediction Proaction and Prevention planning, known as the 3P plan, the term used for a behavior plan.

III. Behavioral Support Policies and Procedures

Purpose of Policy: To ensure Boston Higashi School's behavior support and management policies and

practices promote positive behavior and protect the safety of students and personnel; and restrictive behavior management interventions are used in a manner that protects the safety and well-being of students and personnel in emergency or crisis situations when less-restrictive measures have proven ineffective.

Responsibility for Implementation and Oversight: The Boston Higashi School, under the direction of the Executive Director, oversees the implementation of the policy.

Policy: To administer a physical restraint as defined by the *Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education* (“DESE”) and *The Department of Early Education and Care* (“EEC”) only when needed and as a last resort to ensure the safety of that student and/or the school community. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

- (a) To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; and
- (b) To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

THESE PROCEDURES SHALL BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY AND PROVIDED TO SCHOOL STAFF AND MADE AVAILABLE TO APPLICANTS/PARENTS OF ENROLLED STUDENTS. **These procedures are in accordance with the DESE amendments and EEC regulatory changes revised during the 2014-2015 school year and effective January 1, 2016.**

Procedures: DESE and EEC govern the use of physical restraints for all public and private special education day and residential programs. These regulations are designed to ensure that all students are free from unreasonable use of physical restraints. These regulations do not prohibit staff from using reasonable physical restraints to protect students, other persons or themselves from an assault by a student.

The Boston Higashi School’s Child Safety Committee (“CSC”) reviews the safety issues and student-based issues concerning aggressive and/or dangerous behavior(s) towards self or others that are brought before the CSC. In cases where the CSC reviews issues concerning student aggression and/or dangerous behavior(s), a *Prediction, Proaction and Prevention* Plan, known as a 3P Plan may be recommended. The 3P Plan is a behavior-based plan that supports ways to predict and prevent aggressive or dangerous behaviors and ways to de-escalate or avoid the need for a restraint. The 3P Plan may also identify ways to apply a safe and effective restraint when other less intrusive alternatives have failed or are deemed inappropriate. Members of the CSC include the Executive Director, Restraint Coordinator, Director of Programming, Director of Clinical Services, Director of Special Education, Residential Directors, Director of Training, Head Nurse, Nurse.

Practitioner, Division Directors and Case Managers.

- 1) *In most cases students are pre-identified as candidates who have the potential need for a restraint. In these cases parents are involved in the 3P process and plans are reviewed and approved by parent(s).*
- 2) *In the case of an emergency restraint when a student does not have a previously identified 3P/restraint plan, the incident may be subsequently discussed in the CSC and, when necessary, a 3P/restraint plan will be developed. Parent(s) are notified of the restraint verbally and in writing following the emergency restraint. The Division Director and/or designee are responsible for reporting the behavior and/or incident to the parent(s).*

Definitions Pertaining to Restraints:

Prohibitions: The BHS does not use mechanical, chemical or prone restraints or seclusion/time outs as interventions in its behavioral support program.

De-escalation: Strategies used to diffuse a volatile situation to assist a student to regain behavioral control and to avoid physical intervention

Physical Restraint: Direct physical contact/reasonable force that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm. The term physical restraint does not include providing brief physical contact, without force to promote student safety or limit self-injurious behavior, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort. Approval by the chief administrative officer/designee is required when a restraint last longer than 20 minutes.

Release: Ending the restraint on a student.

Physical Escort: A temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location

Monitoring: Observation of the physical, verbal, and behavioral responses of a student for signs of distress or signs of behavioral calming while being restrained.

Processing: Verbal interactions between staff and a student who has been restrained designed to assist the staff and student in reviewing the behavioral incident and the restraint with the goal of minimizing the need for future restraint.

Restraint Coordinator: Staff member responsible for the oversight of all matters related to restraint, including oversight and documentation of training; ensuring that restraints are only employed when necessary and that the restraint methods taught is being used correctly; data collection, analysis and reporting and review with the restraint safety committee of restraint data and staff/resident safety information.

Restraint Follow-Up: Review by program management of each restraint with involved staff as part of a feedback and quality assurance process.

When Physical Restraint May be Used:

- (a) Less restrictive approaches and physical guidance under Daily Life Therapy ® have been ineffective or failed, and
- (b) The student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others.

When Physical Restraint May Not be Used:

- (a) As a means of discipline or punishment;
- (b) When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting.
- (c) A response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent serious physical harm;
- (d) As a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or IEP may

include the use of a physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

(e) Referral to law enforcement or other state agencies. Nothing in these regulations prohibits:

1. The right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual;
2. Law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or
3. The exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter shall not be used to deter an individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

Administration of a Physical Restraint:

Welle: The Boston Higashi School has implemented the use of the Welle Program (formerly known as the N.A.P.P.I. (Non-Abusive Psychological Physical Intervention) program). The Welle principles complement and reflect the same underlying philosophy and methodology of Daily Life Therapy®, our methodology. The goals of this program are to ensure that all staff feel emotionally secure in making good decisions, for staff to feel recreationally/ academically secure in having the knowledge to apply the principles, and to feel physically secure and free from injuries to themselves or their students. It is equally important to ensure that when a restraint is applied, due a dangerous situation, the student is safe and well cared for. In order to meet these goals, the Boston Higashi School has qualified Well instructors in the school and we work closely with the Welle organization on a year-to-year basis.

In extreme cases, which are potentially life threatening and when a student is exhibiting dangerous behaviors, the staff are trained in the Welle principles to ensure that a safe and effective physical restraint is carried out. Only in extreme cases, defined as a life-threatening or dangerous situation, will restraints be applied.

A restraint as defined by the Massachusetts's Department of Early Education and Care-Residential and Placement Unit (MDEEC Residential and Placement Unit), is the use of any physical, mechanical or chemical means to temporarily control behavior. Physical restraint is defined by the Residential and Placement Unit as a technique involving the use of holding as a means of restricting a student's freedom of movement. The Boston Higashi School will use a safe physical restraint using the Welle program if a student is in a life-threatening or dangerous situation. The Boston Higashi School does not use any mechanical or chemical restraints, including seclusion rooms. As previously stated, the Welle principles reflect the underlying philosophy of Daily Life Therapy®, where Predication, Proaction and Prevention continues to be practiced.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education ("ESE") requires Massachusetts Public or Private Day and Residential Special Education School Programs under regulations 603 CMR 46.00 to annually present parents the opportunity to view and sign consent on the school's physical restraint policy and procedures. Annual consent forms are sent to parents each year.

Trained Personnel: Only trained personnel are authorized to administer a physical restraint. Staff receive annual and on-going in-service training on the Boston Higashi School's Behavioral Support Plan and Physical Guidance program under Daily Life Therapy® and the Welle Program. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint.

Use of Force: A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.

Safest Method: A person administering a physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.05(5). Floor and prone restraints shall be prohibited unless the staff member administering the restraint has received in-depth

training according to the requirements of 603 CMR 46.03(3) and, in the judgment of the trained staff member, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others present.

Duration of Restraint: A person administering a physical restraint shall discontinue such restraint as soon as possible as soon as the student no longer presents dangerous behavior. If, due to unusual circumstances, a restraint continues for more than twenty (20) minutes, it shall be considered an “extended restraint” for purposes of the reporting requirements in 603 CMR 46.06, described below.

Safety Requirements: Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint are as follows:

- (a) No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student including skin color and respiration. A restraint shall be ended immediately upon a determination by the staff member administering the restraint that the student is no longer at risk of causing imminent physical harm to him or herself or others.
- (b) Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If at any time during a physical restraint the student demonstrates significant physical distress, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
- (c) Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations and/or active 3P plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.
- (d) Following the release of a student from a restraint, the program shall implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident. Any student that is restrained will be taken to the BHS health room to be evaluated by the school nurse.

IV. Training

Required Training For All Staff: The BHS Director of Training will determine a time and method to provide all program staff with training regarding the school’s behavior support training/restraint policy. All staff will be trained within the first month of each school year and for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment. Training shall include information on the following:

- (a) The program’s restraint policy;
- (b) Interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including behavior support, physical guidance and de-escalation methods;
- (c) Types of restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when an extended restraint is used;
- (d) Administering physical restraint in accordance with known medical or psychological limitations and/or 3P plans applicable to an individual student; and

BHS Certified Trainers in the Use of Physical Restraint: The School identifies and authorizes senior school staff who have received in-depth training who will be responsible for restraint training, and serve as a school-wide resource to train, monitor and assist staff in implementing safe physical restraints. These school administrators have completed advanced restraint training and are certified trainers. Throughout the school year they will train all direct care program staff to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. All newly hired staff will complete sixteen (16) hours of pre-service restraint training and eight (8) hours of refresher training annually. Staff cannot be solely responsible for students until they have completed the required training. Training in the proper administration of physical restraint shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- (b) A description and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- (c) The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
- (d) Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints; and
- (e) Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint.

V. Reporting and Documentation Requirements:

Informing School Administration: Program staff that administered a restraint will verbally notify the Director of Programming/designee as soon as possible, and by written report no later than the next school working day. The written report will be provided to the Director of Programming for review of the use of restraint and maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint which will be made available for review by the parent or the Department upon request.

Informing the Parents: The Director of Programming/designee will make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parents of the restraint within 24 hours of the event and will notify the parent by written report sent either within three school working days of the restraint to an email address provided by the parent for communication about the student, or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. The written restraint report will be provided to the parent in their native language. The Director of Programming will provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the report.

Procedures for receiving/investigating complaints/Conducting Internal Investigation: Any employee of the Boston Higashi School whom has reasonable cause to believe or is witness to any incident where a student is subject to abuse and/or neglect must immediately take the following steps:

If a staff member is witness to an incident of abuse and/or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to intervene immediately and accordingly, to ensure the safety of the child. Subsequent procedures listed below.

1. Check the physical and/or emotional status of the child. After the staff member checks the student, he/she must notify the nurse. Depending upon the seriousness of the injury, the student will be treated at school and/or taken to a hospital for appropriate medical treatment.
2. It is the employee's responsibility as a mandated reporter, to report any incidence of abuse/neglect. The Boston Higashi School requires the individual to report the abuse/neglect or suspected abuse/neglect to the Director of Special Education or their designee for the Day Program (Monday through Friday) or to the Director of the Residence or their designee for all other times. In all instances, the Executive Director/Director of Programming should be notified immediately during regular business hours. The Executive Director/Director of Programming or his/her designee will be responsible for filing a report with the designated agency of either the *DCF* or the *DPPC*.
3. At all other times administrative staff have been trained in the reporting procedures and can file an abuse/neglect report in the event of a serious situation. The Executive Director/Director of Programming can make non-emergency abuse/neglect report filing during the next business day. The Executive Director/Director of Programming will coordinate any investigation activities at the

school for any federal, state, or local investigator should the report be screened in and assigned for investigation.

In addition, the employee has the right to report directly to the *DCF* or the *DPPC*. Employee's having knowledge of abuse and/or neglect, and do not report it, shall be regarded as collaborating in the abuse/neglect.

4. The Executive Director/Director of Programming or designee will be initially be responsible for:
 - A. Identifying the investigation team members. The Director of Special Education will be responsible for coordinating the interviews and other investigation activities for the Day Program and the Director of the Residence for the Residential Program.
 - B. Oversee the Internal Investigation.
 - C. Review the findings of the school's internal investigation to determine a corrective action plan.
5. The Investigation Team will review the nature of the allegations of the incident reported. The employee involved in the reported incident of suspected abuse/neglect will not be allowed any unmonitored contact with students until the conclusion of the investigation. Depending on the severity of the allegations the employee may be suspended/terminated until the internal investigation has concluded.
6. The Executive Director/Director of Programming will notify the DESE and the *DEEC*, the sending School District (LEA), and the parent(s) of the student, for both the day and, The Executive Director/Director of Programming/Investigation Team will complete the internal investigation within 10 business days. In certain cases, reports may take longer -depending on the extensiveness of the investigation. A copy of the internal investigation report will be submitted to the appropriate named agencies.

Reporting to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: When a restraint has resulted in a serious injury requiring emergency medical treatment for a student or when an extended restraint has been administered (longer than 20 minutes), the program will submit a copy of the DESE physical restraint report along with a Form 2 report within 3 working school days. The program shall also provide DESE with a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the program administrator for the 30-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint. DESE shall determine if additional action on the part of the school is warranted and, if so, shall notify the school of any required actions within 30 calendar days of receipt of the required written report(s). An annual restraint data report will be sent to the Department when requested.

Reporting to the Department of Early Education and Care: The Boston Higashi School submits restraint data to the Department on a quarterly basis.

Contents of the Restraint Incident Report: The Boston Higashi School will document all restraints, including any required administrative approval, and its processing and follow-up procedures in a physical restraint incident report and keep such reports in the student's record.

The written restraint incident report shall include the following:

- (a) The names and job titles of the staff who administer/observe the restraint; the date of the restraint and the time the restraint began and ended; and the name of the administrator who was verbally informed following the restraint.
- (b) A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged in immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to de-escalate the situation; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
- (c) A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided.

- (d) For extended restraints, the written report shall describe the alternatives to extended restraint that were attempted, the outcome of those efforts and the justification for administering the extended restraint.
- (e) Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents or guardians to discuss with school officials or comment on the administration of the restraint.
- (f) Information regarding any further actions(s) that Boston Higashi School will take in regards to the student and opportunities or recommendations for the student's parent(s) to discuss the matter with the Boston Higashi School officials /Administrators. (This portion is completed under comments from the Restraint Coordinator, Division Directors, and Members of Child Safety Committee)

VI. The Administrative Process for Completing/Reviewing all Incident Reports:

1. The incident report is initiated in the BHS health room after the nursing section is completed.
2. The report is then sent to a Director, who assigns a staff person to complete it.
3. The report is then reviewed and signed by the Master Teacher/Division Director.
4. If it is a restraint incident report it is then reviewed and signed by the school's Restraint Coordinator.
5. The report is then submitted to the Executive Director/Director of Programming and reviewed and signed by a member of the Child Safety Committee.
6. The report is then reviewed and signed by the school's Medical Consultant.
7. After all reviews and signatures the report is then sent to the Education Office and filed in the student's record.

VII. Other Follow-Up Procedures:

The Director of Programming/designee will conduct a weekly review of restraint data to identify any student that has been restrained multiple times during the week. Any student who has been restrained multiple times during the previous week will receive a review of their clinical/behavioral needs by the assigned case manager/clinician. Parents/guardians will be invited to this review. Changes made as a result of this service review require parental consent and must be documented in the student's service plan/IEP. Copies of all restraint reports, service reviews, and administrative approvals will be maintained in the student's file. At any time a student may be screened for any medical/psychological concerns by a licensed practitioner for contraindications on the use of restraints.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

The Boston Higashi School is committed to creating and preserving a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. The BHS Plan is written in accordance with Massachusetts' law required under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and to reflect Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014.

I. LEADERSHIP

The Boston Higashi School's (BHS) Child Safety Committee (CSC) plays a critical role in developing and implementing the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans ("Plan") to promote a positive school climate. Educators have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. The CSC is responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying.

Child Safety Committee Members:

John Maina, Director of Programming
Takako Ebihara, Director of Special Education
Heather Katz, Director of Training
Kariuki Muriithi, Director of Residential Programming
Christopher White, Residential Director
Hide Nishizawa, Director, Leisure/Recreation Development
Mark Nolan, Transition Coordinator
Jennifer Tomase, Case Manager
Amy Levitan, LICSW, Case Manager
Annette Kimani, Case Manager
John McAllister, Director of Elementary
Christopher Stanbrook, Director of Middle School
Janelle Palleschi, Director of Younger and Older High School
Jamie Marshall, Director of Emergence Program
Tracy Shepherd, Nurse Manager
Erin, Youhas, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner
Mari DelRosso, Nurse Practitioner
Hilary Holmes, LMHC, School-based Mental Health Clinician

- A. **Public involvement in developing the Plan** As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Plan has been developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, students, parents, and guardians. All interested parties have been provided adequate notice and a public comment period for parents of BHS students before this Plan was adopted by the BHS Board of Directors. The Plan will be posted on the BHS website.
- B. **Assessing needs and resources** This Plan is the school's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of this planning process, BHS school leaders, with the input from families and staff, assessed the adequacy of the school's current programs; reviewed current policies and procedures; reviewed available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assessed available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. This process assisted BHS to identify resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on our findings BHS has developed policies and procedures along with establishing new partnerships with community agencies.

Given the special needs population of the entire school, much data already exists in school that can be analyzed initially and periodically regarding bullying. Daily student logs and notebooks provide data that informs the faculty about the student's condition on a daily basis. Documented conversations with parents

provide additional data regarding concerns. From all of the data collected, a report will be made to the Child Safety Committee (CSC). Student's parents completed an initial survey to assess whether their child has been exposed to any bullying at BHS. The BHS Clinical Team will conduct assessments as needed related to bullying, including school climate, building and grounds "hot spots," day and residential issues, issues related to transportation, and individual needs. These will be used to help identify patterns of behaviors, areas of concern or programmatic issues, which will be reported to the CSC. The CSC will make recommendations to other BHS committee's in developing preventative strategies including age-appropriate curricula, professional development, training, and in-school support services. **Due to the intensive special needs of our students they are never left alone or without direct staff supervision.** The BHS Clinical Team or CSC members will recommend other needs assessments as needed throughout the school year. All assessments will be reviewed by the CSC.

At least once every four years, beginning with the 2015/2016 school year, the school will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature and severity of bullying in our school. Additionally, the school will annually report bullying incident data to the Department.

C. **Planning and oversight** Following are the BHS school leaders responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

- 1) Receiving reports on bullying: Child Safety Committee (**CSC**)
- 2) Collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes: (**CSC**)
- 3) Creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors: (**CSC**)
- 4) Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law: **Heather Katz, Director of Training**
- 5) Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors: **Clinical Support Team**
- 6) Choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use: **Susan Perry, Director of Curriculum and the BHS Faculty**
- 7) Developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them: **The BHS Executive Committee**
- 8) Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct: **Mrs. Ebihara, Director of Special Education**
- 9) Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials: **John Maina, Director of Programming and the BHS Parents Association**
- 10) Reviewing and updating the Plan each year, or more frequently: (**CSC**)

D. **Developing priority statements** The Boston Higashi School is committed to the success of its bullying prevention and intervention policy and procedures.

The BHS expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The BHS is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning,

and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. As an organization, we are aware that bullying may take various forms, including harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, theft, destruction of property or retaliation for asserting or alleging acts of bullying. The school has identified specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying, and the school is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The BHS Director of Programming is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Boston Higashi School Professional Development Program Outline Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Massachusetts's *Bullying Prevention and Intervention* law is reviewed with all Boston Higashi School staff, including but not limited to, educators, residential instructors, administrators, school nurses, education office staff, custodians, and cafeteria staff. The professional development program includes:

- I. Bullying Prevention and Intervention definitions (aggressors, bullying, cyber bullying, hostile environment, target and retaliation) and prohibited areas (school grounds, adjacent areas to school grounds, school-sponsored events, bus stops.)
- II. Research findings and information on specific categories of students at risk for bullying, including cyber bullying and the use of social media.
- III. *Massachusetts's Bullying Prevention and Intervention* law, focusing on the Boston Higashi School responsibilities and staff responsibilities in prevention and intervention of bullying school-wide.

Boston Higashi School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention policy and procedures is reviewed annually with Boston Higashi School staff, including but not limited to, educators, residential instructors, administrators, school nurse, education office staff, custodians, and cafeteria staff. The professional development program includes:

- I. The Boston Higashi School's commitment statement to provide a safe learning environment to all students, and how we as a community promote a safe learning environment i.e. staff to receive *Personnel Policy Handbook* noting the school's policy and procedures on anti-bullying prevention and interventions, as well as the school's code of conduct.

- II. Identifying what bullying is, and communicating with parents regarding bullying concerns, i.e. Boston Higashi School Policy on Internet use and Social Media Safety, parent survey and collaborating with parents.
- III. Staff responsibilities, and duties, for reporting bullying to school leaders.
- IV. Boston Higashi School's Child Safety Committee's role in reviewing parent's surveys regarding bullying, staff reporting requirements, investigation procedures and prevention strategy monitoring.
- V. Anti-bullying curriculum by Committee for Children: Second Step A Violence Prevention Curriculum and MARC Curriculum: Bullying Prevention and Cyberbullying Prevention.

Second Step A Violence Prevention Curriculum is modified and includes topics such as: empathy training, emotion management, and problem solving and focuses specifically on bullying, and cyberbullying prevention. * Note that the Boston Higashi School works on modified curriculums with special education teachers so that our students are able to comprehend material at their own individual level. Additional topics reviewed annually are:

- I. Information and identification of the interactions between aggressor, target and witnessing bullying; Promote and model respectful language, building relationships with students and families, constructively implementing positive classroom management strategies, using positive behavioral intervention strategies (Daily Life Therapy® and WELLE training) and engaging students in decision-making to maintain a safe learning environment.

The Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum was introduced to students and is conducted throughout the school year to ensure appropriate content delivery and exposure to violence prevention and anti-bullying.

New Employees:

All new employees receive all the above-mentioned professional development during the first two-week of training in both the day and residential program. New employees will also receive the Boston Higashi School Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book that includes the school's policy and procedures on anti-bullying prevention and interventions.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed. The BHS Plan describes the strategies for providing support and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the school's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, available services reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets and aggressors. The BHS Plan includes a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets, and family members of those students.

A. Identifying Resources This Plan, with input from staff, families, and the BHS Parents Association, reviewed the adequacy of the school's current programs and staffing with respect to identifying and establishing those elements that support a positive school environment through early intervention and intensive services as part of a preventative approach to bullying. New age-appropriate curricula on bullying-prevention in each grade, staff training and parent programs are being provided as part of the Plan in response to fulfilling identified needs. Bullying-prevention approaches, informed by research including a dynamic understanding about why bullying may occur, will be used to help all elements including targets, aggressors and help families address these issues. Teachers/Instructors and Master Teachers are the first resources in this Plan. Research has shown that "bonding" with a trusted adult and adult supervision are key elements in bullying prevention and both are areas forming critical components of BHS educational practice. Other initiatives include teaching positive skills to students such as how to form friendships, to have social skills in groups and to learn leisure and conversational skills, all of which are proactive measures. In addition the Plan includes safety processes such as separation of target/aggressor, and management of "sub-bullying" and on-looker behaviors. Referrals will be made through the school's incident reporting system to the CSC where subsequent types of responses and interventions will be planned as needed on a case-by-case basis.

B. Counseling and Other Services The BHS is both an international program and one that serves students from all over the United States. These students are unable to access services in their local communities for most of the school year. In these cases the Clinical Team coordinates services for the student in conjunction with the family on an emergency basis to assess the immediate need and so that an appropriate action plan could be developed. For local families, referrals are made to resources of their choice within their home communities that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. BHS collaborates with the student's home school district to identify and secure counseling and other services.

BHS has identified Bridgewater State College, in particular their **MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center) Program** that provides evidence-based training programs on bullying prevention, intervention, and referral sources. On December 7, 2010, senior staff from the BHS attended a training session presented by the MARC Program at Bridgewater State College as part of the research initiatives in the development of the BHS Plan.

C. Students with disabilities Due to the diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder, all of the students at BHS will meet the qualification for a disability affecting social skills development or be vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability as required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3 as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010. Each student, at his/her next IEP Team Meeting, will have consideration given to how this should be individually addressed. In addition, BHS will attach information to the IEP to show how a student's skills and proficiencies need to be developed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing

D. Referral to outside services The Boston Higashi School's Clinical Support Team, in conjunction with the Child Safety Committee, refers students and their families to outside services. The protocol in this referral process will begin with a notification to the student's local school district in partnership to help identify appropriate mental health services in their community. Appropriate referral and identified services will be made in a timely manner. The Clinical Team Lead will maintain a logbook of all referrals, contact names and date of initial service. All referrals for outside services will be reviewed by the CSC on a monthly basis.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Boston Higashi School: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Curriculum Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum

The Boston Higashi School is committed to providing a safe learning environment to all our day and residential students. To ensure that all students learn in a safe school environment, the Boston Higashi School adopted new curriculum programs with a focus on *violence prevention* and *anti-bullying*. The curriculum that the Boston Higashi School uses is Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum. This curriculum will be modified in accordance with each student's learning style, method of communication and student specific accommodations, as stated on the Individualized Education Programs.

The Second Step curriculum was developed from the Committee for Children: a nonprofit working globally to prevent bullying, violence and child abuse. Second Step is a research –based curriculum working to provide a safe learning environment in school settings. The curriculum includes specific lesson plans addressed to meet the needs of students as well as staff training initiatives to help promote a safe and healthy school climate. Although the curriculum is research-based with students within the public school setting, little research in best practices for anti-bullying has been conducted solely with students with severe disabilities. With this in mind; the Boston Higashi School has collaborated with Committee for Children, Adam Peck, Client Support Service Representative in choosing the best curriculum program to implement, as a first step in meeting our student's diverse needs. Second Step is not solely a language-based curriculum, but includes lesson content that can be modified to assist our students in learning the material in multiple ways.

The Second Step curriculum is designed for students K-8 with a focus on violence prevention, which specifically addresses bullying at the 6th grade level and beyond. The school will implement the curriculum content on violence prevention and anti-bullying in classrooms to all students served, elementary through young adults, while

continuing to build on the successes of the Boston Higashi School's safe and cohesive school climate. The Second Step curriculum addresses content that focuses on empathy training, emotion management and problem solving, which can be difficult concepts for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, therefore modification will be made to ensure learning. The curriculum scope and sequence will be adopted in full, and modifications will be made on the delivery of concepts through the use of visuals, role playing, social stories, modeling, setting clear expectations and routines throughout all learning environments, and through repetition of lessons.

Boston Higashi School: Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum Zones of Regulation and CASEL

The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum at BHS is aimed to provide students with a developmentally appropriate understanding of emotional literacy, tools for identifying and communicating emotional needs, strategies for managing emotions, and opportunities to develop and expand their relational capacity. The Boston Higashi School utilizes the Zones of Regulation curriculum to foster skills in self-regulation and emotional control, as well as Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to introduce concepts of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and decision-making in a developmentally appropriate way. SEL lessons are developed by the school-based mental health clinician, in consultation with the director of curriculum, speech and language pathologists as well as the occupational therapists in order to create a cross-curricular and multi-modal therapeutic approach to learning. Lessons are tied to ELA through children's literature, support the communication/speech program by strengthening emotion-based vocabulary, and encourage the strengthening of OT/motor skills by providing students with sensory tools and activities to aid in self-regulation.

Additional Resources

The MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention, was developed by Elizabeth K. Englander, Ph.D. from the Massachusetts MARC Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State University. The MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention specifically addresses topics surrounding bullying and cyberbullying prevention that begin at the kindergarten level and extend up to grade 5. The curriculum focuses on positive social behaviors within the school community. Mainly, the methodology and approaches utilized in this curriculum encourages students to discuss and share their thoughts and knowledge surrounding bullying and cyberbullying.

The Boston Higashi School ensures, that in addition to the Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum, teachers will continue to address and promote general teaching approaches to support bullying prevention efforts:

- Clear expectations for students
- Establishing school and classroom routines
- Creating a safe classroom environment for all students
- Using positive behavioral supports
- Building positive relationships with students Modeling and teaching respectful behavior
- Using positive approaches to aid in respectful social and emotional development
- Support student's interests and participation in academic and non-academic activities.
- Provide Internet monitoring and safeguards

The Second Step Curriculum has been implemented and new curriculum concepts will be introduced and added at each student's individual level, as students demonstrate understanding and mastery of concepts.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, the BHS has put in place policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur

The following procedures that are included in this Plan are based on the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

- A. **Reporting bullying or retaliation** Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A BHS school staff member is required to report immediately to the designee (Day Program-Director of Special Education Residential Program-Residential Director) any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school staff members may be made anonymously. The BHS will use its Incident Reporting Tracking System to receive and process any reports of bullying or retaliation (*See Attachment C: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Report Form*). However, the use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. At the beginning of each school year the BHS will provide the school community including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policy for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. The BHS will include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of each year's information packets for students and parents/guardians. The form will also be available in the education office and posted on the school's website. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the Director of Programming will be incorporated into the Personnel Policy Handbook, Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book and on the school website.

1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The school expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the designee. Any student that knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying/retaliation will be subject to possible disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions outlined in the school's Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book.

B. **Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation**

1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Director of Programming or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The Director of Programming or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Boston Higashi School's Director of Programming or designee will work with a student's IEP TEAM to address the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor for bullying or retaliation. Disciplinary actions for students will be addressed on an individual basis, specifically addressing and determining the nature and cause of the bullying behavior, such as, if it's a manifestation of a student's disability. As part of the process, the Boston Higashi School will immediately put in safeguards to eliminate the bullying behavior, such as adding additional supervision, reducing contact between aggressor and victim and/or implementing schedule changes.

For the school's policy on discipline please refer to the school's Daily Life Therapy® Guidelines Book.

2. **Obligations to Notify Others**

- a. **Notice to parents or guardians** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Director of Programming or designee will immediately notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the Director of Programming or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- b. **Notice to Another School or District** If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Director of Programming or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the Director of Programming or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.
- c. **Notice to Law Enforcement** At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Director of Programming or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Director of Programming will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Director of Programming or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the Director of Programming will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the Director of Programming or designee deems appropriate.

- C. **Investigation** The Director of Programming will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the Director of Programming will interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as needed. The Director will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

As in all school investigations the Director of Programming will at times use members from the BHS Child Safety Committee to assist with the investigation (Investigation Team). To the extent practicable, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigative process. The Director will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation are consistent with the established and approved BHS policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the BHS will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

- D. **Determinations** The BHS Investigation Team will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. At the conclusion of the investigation if bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Investigation Team will make recommendations to the CEO/Director of Programming and take reasonable steps calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The Investigation Team, along with the CEO/Director of Programming will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action are necessary. (Please see page 19, Section B.1)

Depending upon the circumstances, the Director of Programming may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or the members of the clinical support team, and the target's or aggressor's parents or

guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The Director of Programming or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation such as developing a safety plan, additional staff supervision or by providing a social skills group. All notices to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Director of Programming or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations. The or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

E. Responses to Bullying

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the Boston Higashi School's determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the BHS use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the school may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with the BHS Clinical Department and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting 3 P behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the Director of Programming or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Director of Programming or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's range of disciplinary practices in accordance with policies and procedures in the Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book (Attachment G).

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the Director of Programming or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The Director of Programming or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. As part of the schools standard operating procedures, **all BHS students are directly supervised by school/residential staff at all times.**

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Director of Programming or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed.

If so, the Director of Programming or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

The Boston Higashi School will engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of the school to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. The law requires the school Plan to include provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the BHS including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyber-bullying. Parents and guardians are notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Please see Sections III and VIII of this Plan, Access to Resources and Services for referral information.

A. Parent education and resources The BHS offers the following educational program for parents and guardians that are focused on anti-bullying curricula.

PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

As part of the Boston Higashi School's Anti-Bullying Program, this Parent Education Program is designed to facilitate the open lines of communication and reciprocal flow of information between home and school that are essential to mutual understanding and a successful program for students. By letting parents know what we are doing and how we are doing it, and inviting them to join us in our efforts, we create an effective process, open to on-going revision that remains responsive to the needs of our total community.

The following description provides a brief outline of the program.

- **Introduction to BHS Policy:** The Introduction will provide an overview of the structure of responsibility for oversight of BHS Policy for Anti-Bullying, including the administrative structure, the personnel involved, the way the needs of students and the resources available have been assessed and the Plan developed to date as well as planned for in the future.
 - **Definitions:** The various common terms used in the discussions will be defined, and the scope of the discussion will be presented. Included in the discussion are the areas of physical, emotional, and verbal bullying as well as cyber-bullying using both the Internet and cell phones.
 - **Curriculum:** This will include some history/review of the selection criteria for the curriculum, based on the characteristics of our school population and their perceived needs and how the available curriculums on the market can best be used/modified with our students. Some examples will be shown throughout the age span.
 - **Staff Training:** Staff training is a key component of the anti-bullying partnership. From the natural aspects of Daily Life Therapy to the specific language and components of the Anti-Bullying Program, the ways in which staff training contributes to student safety and freedom from bullying will be discussed.
 - **Resources to be Accessed:** A list of additional educational and community resources for interested parents to access will be included, such as agencies, books, programs, and web-based resources.
- B. Notification requirements Each year the Boston Higashi School notifies parents/guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used (see Section IV page 15). This notice includes information about the dynamics of bullying, the special characteristics of our student population that renders them vulnerable to bullying, the proactive characteristics of the BHS program to prevent bullying as well as cyber-bullying and online safety. The BHS sends parents a written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's internet safety policy. This required information is published annually in the BHS Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book that each parent receives at the beginning of every school

year. The information is also posted on the BHS website and is available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

The following statement is published in the school's Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book each school year. All parents receive a copy of this Guidelines book annually. Information is also published in the BHS Personnel Policy Handbook for all staff and on the BHS Website.

The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(b), and describes the law's requirements for the prohibition of bullying.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber bullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM

Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws to include (g) (v): The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about the Department's problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system. This information is available in both hard copy and electronic formats:

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

IX. DEFINITIONS

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as noted below.

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyber bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

X. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a private school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school policies.

Nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

Student Internet/Social Media Use Guidelines

The Boston Higashi School. offers Internet access for our students. All uses of the Boston Higashi School's Internet access (like all other uses of our computer facilities) must be in support of and consistent with educational objectives. All students who use the Boston Higashi School 's Internet access are expected to read these Guidelines and/or to take part in a discussion of the Guidelines with a teacher. Adherence to the Guidelines is a condition for a student's privilege of Internet access.

The Internet

The Internet is a vast, global network, linking computers at universities, schools, laboratories, and other sites. Through the Internet one can communicate with people all over the world through discussion forums and electronic mail. In addition, many educationally valuable files may be downloaded from the Internet. Because of its enormous size and resources, the Internet's educational potential is boundless. Because of its broad reach the Internet also contains the potential for abuse. These Guidelines are intended to help ensure that students use this valuable resource in a safe and appropriate manner.

Student's Individual Responsibility

All student use of the Internet is to be conducted under staff supervision. Staff members are not expected to monitor student use at every moment. Every student is expected to take individual responsibility for his/her appropriate use of the Internet.

Levels of Student Access

1 Internet and World Wide Web

While at Boston Higashi School the students will have access to the Internet with teacher supervision in classrooms, computer rooms, and at the residence. Social Media sites are currently blocked until further notice. No individual account agreement is required. Before a student may access the Internet he or she must be familiar with these Guidelines.

2. Individual Email Accounts

When the BHS determines that a student is ready to use an Email account with password, the student will develop his/her individual Email account with his/her teacher. Before an account will be provided, the guidelines statement below will be completed and signed by the student and the student's parent or guardian.

Internet Access Is a Privilege

The Internet access through the Boston Higashi School is a privilege. School officials may cancel a student's access to the Internet if this privilege is abused. Inappropriate conduct on the Boston Higashi School's Internet access will also be subject to disciplinary action, in conformity with the Boston Higashi School Anti-Bullying Policy.

Massachusetts Law Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing

Every year the Boston Higashi School must certify to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on or before October 1, that the school has met the requirements of the anti-hazing law. Even though the BHS does not participate in any organized sports with other teams, and organizations that are part of or are recognized by the school, we are still required to comply with the law and this regulation

Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Sections 17-19 and 603 CMR 33.00, all secondary schools, both public and private, must:

Adopt anti-hazing policies as part of their disciplinary policies, and distribute copies of the anti-hazing law to all students enrolled full-time; to all student groups, teams, and organizations that are part of or are recognized by the school, or are permitted by the school to use its name and facilities; and to all known unaffiliated student groups, teams, or organizations.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires that all parents receive a copy of the school's anti-hazing policy.

Boston Higashi School's Anti-Hazing Disciplinary Policy

The Boston Higashi School (BHS) will operate in full compliance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Anti-Hazing Law Chapter 269 Sections 17-19 and 603 CMR33.00 in its efforts to promote and support a safe school environment for all students.

The Boston Higashi School will fully investigate any allegation, complaint, or concern regarding this law. Any violation may result in disciplinary action up to an including termination if the school determines that an employee has failed to meet the school's standards of conduct outlined in the BHS Personnel Policy Handbook.

Please contact Michael Kelly, Executive Director or Deborah Donovan, Director of Programming at 781-961-0800 if you need additional information about the anti-hazing law and regulations.

**BOSTON HIGASHI SCHOOL
BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

1. **Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:** _____
(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. Check whether you are the: Target of the behavior ☐ Reporter (not the target) ☐

3. Check whether you are a: ☐ Student ☐ Staff member (specify role)
 ☐ Parent ☐ Administrator ☐ Other (specify)

Your contact information/telephone number: _____

4. **Information about the Incident:**

Name of Target (of behavior): _____

Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: _____

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible): _____

5. **Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: _____ • Student • Staff • Other _____

Name: _____ • Student • Staff • Other _____

Name: _____ • Student • Staff • Other _____

6. **Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.**

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

7. **Signature of Person Filing this Report:** _____ **Date:** _____
(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

8. **Form Given to:** _____ **Position:** _____ **Date:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date Received:** _____

II. INVESTIGATION

1. Investigator(s): _____

Position(s): _____

2. Interviews:

☐ Interviewed aggressor Name: _____ Date: _____

☐ Interviewed target Name: _____ Date: _____

☐ Interviewed witnesses Name: _____ Date: _____

 Name: _____ Date: _____

3. Any prior documented Incidents by the aggressor? ☐ Yes ☐ No

 If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously? ☐ Yes ☐ No

 Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION ☐ Yes ☐ No

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

III. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:

☐ YES

☐ NO

☐ Bullying

☐ Incident documented as _____

☐ Retaliation

☐ Discipline referral only

2. Contacts:

☐ Target's parent/guardian Date: _____ ☐ Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: _____

☐ District Equity Coordinator (DEC) Date: _____ ☐ Law Enforcement Date: _____

3. Action Taken:

☐ Loss of Privileges ☐ Detention ☐ STEP referral ☐ Suspension

☐ Community Service ☐ Education ☐ Other _____

4. Describe Safety Planning:

Follow-up with Target: scheduled for _____ Initial and date when completed: _____

Follow-up with Aggressor: scheduled for _____ Initial and date when completed: _____

Report forwarded to Director of Programming : Date _____

Report forwarded to Executive Director: Date _____

(If Director of Programming was not the investigator)

Signature and Title: _____ Date: _____

SERVICES AVAILABLE

“The all-important aim of school education is to guide each individual child to attain their maximum development. No less important is how education activities for the whole school are planned, how the plans are put into practice daily and how these activities are used to foster the growth and development of each individual child.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

The Boston Higashi School, utilizing the methodology of Daily Life Therapy® (Seikatsu Ryouhou), delivers all of its educational services to students in a holistic group-dynamic program. Daily Life Therapy® provides a unifying set of principles by which all aspects of a student’s education can be guided so that the whole child is learning and developing to his/her potential. According to Dr. Kitahara, Daily Life Therapy® is a “systematized program of guidance” taking into account each child’s individual needs; a program that enhances learning by having students learn through the real and meaningful experiences of daily living activities and community experiences within a normalized classroom setting. Daily Life Therapy® demands “an appropriate education following a consistent policy within a controlled environment.”

The major tenets of Daily Life Therapy® include the use of vigorous physical exercise to reduce anxiety and increase concentration, the establishment of stability of one’s emotions through a predictable, manageable, loving environment and intellectual stimulation encouraging the natural motivators for learning of interest, praise, mastery, and pride. Group education aims for the development of the individuality of each child within the group, helping the child grow through becoming self-reliant.

At the Boston Higashi School, our students are children first and foremost, and then children who have Autism Spectrum Disorders. Thus, they are not defined by their autism. The education they receive and their opportunities to have a fulfilling and productive life are not limited because of their autism. Daily Life Therapy® is defined by mission and responsibility to develop and educate the whole child.

The Boston Higashi School, utilizing Daily Life Therapy®, offers an integrated service delivery model to address the developmental needs of its students. This means in practice that specialized services for students to meet deficits in various developmental domains are integrated and addressed throughout the entire day rather than offered on a 1:1 or “pull out” basis. The advantage of the Boston Higashi School model is that these services are provided on a full-time, in-context basis throughout the entire day so that learning is continuously reinforced and practiced.

Moreover, therapeutic services are delivered in an educational model. The goal is not remediation of deficits but new learning appropriate to developmental level. The teaching style and the subject matter address these areas in functional meaningful contexts rather than as “exercises” to be practiced. For example, a child does not get “vestibular stimulation” in a “therapy swing” but learns to swing and pump in and out on a playground swing with peers as models and motivators. Children get proprioceptive and vestibular feedback (for example: about the spatial orientation of their bodies, the rate and timing of movements, the amount of force their muscles are exerting, how much and how fast a muscle is being stretched, their postural tone and equilibrium, and the stabilization of their eyes (focusing) in space during head movement) by learning to bounce on a bouncing ball, jog, ride a bike and to roller blade.

Classrooms are arranged in order to foster natural social interactions with peers, taking advantage of a group milieu approach to learning. Pragmatic skills such as body positioning, eliciting attention, and turn taking are thus naturally addressed. Speech and language skills are enhanced as a functional aspect of each of these activities within the group context. Behavior management is also an integral aspect of all activities and is approached in a uniquely proactive way through the use of bonding, group dynamics, basic postures and the

3Ps of Prediction, Proaction, and Prevention. Gross motor movements during vigorous exercise and the simultaneous sensory processing of kinesthetic and other bodily/sensory information assist in the social and emotional self-regulation of behavior.

Similarly, motor skills are delivered and sensory sensitivities are addressed during meals and dressing/undressing as well as in art, writing, computers, PE, music, play and leisure activities; sensory integration is promoted through daily activities of play, art, P.E. and music as well as in activities such as stage performances where children wear costumes, experience stage lighting, and perform music and athletic events in front of clapping and cheering audiences.

Other services which are specifically provided in the integrated and meaningful context of daily educational activities are detailed below.

Individualized Education Program

The Boston Higashi School provides educational services under IDEA following the guidelines of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks as determined for each student by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process which are then included in the IEP document. The Director of Special Education certifies that the Boston Higashi School is able to provide the services stated in the IEP.

Academics

Dr. Kiyo Kitahara's teaching methodology provides students with systematic education to achieve social independence and dignity through their overall cognitive and intellectual development by providing a broad range of activities and experiences. Students are taught academics in an applied and functional way. The term "applied academics" means that within each curricular topic the teacher skillfully employs those portions of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks that have meaningfulness (immediate relevance) for each individual student, while maintaining grade/age level appropriateness. Academics are taught through monthly thematic units that utilize experiential learning activities. The strengths of each student's learning style are utilized to enhance access to the materials presented in a multi-sensory format. In addition to promoting enhancement of knowledge through academics, the classroom setting allows students to practice essential life skills. These include development of proper body mechanics, promoting attention and listening skills and building fine motor skills. During academic lessons, in addition to learning content, functional communication skills are also targeted through the expansion of vocabulary and concepts related to the monthly thematic units. Additionally, during all lessons and on many occasions throughout the day, students are encouraged to communicate with staff and each other by greeting, commenting, responding, requesting, protesting, and using humor among other communication intentions created or occurring naturally.

Physical Education

Physical Education is the cornerstone of Daily Life Therapy®. Exercise underlies the establishment of an appropriate rhythm of life in eating, sleeping, and being alert and motivated to learn. It is the foundation for discharging excess energy while enhancing directed energy and stamina, developing focus and concentration, feeling a calm and relaxed sense of well-being, and enabling participation in group activities. It underlies the development of an integrated sense of self and a feeling of competence and mastery leading to pride and self-confidence. The Physical Education curriculum incorporates a comprehensive developmental approach, which addresses the students' needs to gain strength, agility, balance, coordination, endurance, flexibility and body awareness. Through developmentally appropriate activities and equipment, students develop gross motor skills which are essential for daily movement activities such as walking, running, climbing and jumping as they learn to acclimate to the stimulating world around them. A secondary benefit of the Physical Education curriculum is the opportunity for students to develop their fine motor skills, as activities and equipment promote the use of bilateral coordination, grip strength and force modulation. Using a Total Communication approach, students have the opportunity during group PE activities to make requests, give peers compliments, make comments, show enthusiasm (cheer), and later describe their experiences. PE also gives students the social opportunity to adjust to various size groups, learn to play appropriately and to have fun.

Art Education

Learning art activities encourages children to express their feelings, thoughts and knowledge in non-verbal ways as well as to gain an appreciation and understanding of the beauty of art and the world around them. The process of creating by oneself leads to awareness of the creations of others, generalizing to heightened sensitivity to one's spatial orientation and place. In addition, art promotes neuro-motor planning and organization, concentration and joint attention, sensory integration, and cognitive development. Through varied curricular activities fine motor skills are attained, sensory defensiveness is overcome while tactile, visual and perceptual sensations are experienced, and attention to part/whole relations are developed. Many cognitive skills ranging from perceptual matching and discrimination to imitation and copying and personal characteristics from persistence and care to making choices and decisions for oneself are gained through art education.

Music Education

Music is motivating. As students develop an appreciation of music, they learn experientially about harmony, rhythm, and creating something beautiful with others. Music education in Daily Life Therapy® focuses on singing, instrument play, movement to a beat, and music enjoyment. The curriculum is geared toward development of the child in a number of key areas. Through singing and instrument play students develop and demonstrate breath control and improved awareness of their oral motor skills. These skills, along with repetitious practice of motor planning movements, are all components that contribute to the development of speech and language.

Through instrument exploration and rhythm activities the students improve their fine motor coordination and dexterity, bilateral coordination and visual motor integration. Students participate in music that encourages whole body movements such as dancing, marching, jumping and clapping, in order to diffuse energy in a constructive fashion, while providing proprioceptive input to the bones, muscles and joints to promote body awareness, motor learning, coordination and balance. Many of these activities (such as the drawing songs) provide opportunities to practice coordinating the executive functions (listening, following directions, organizing) with fine motor activities. Students learn to enjoy and understand music in their daily lives while enhancing their overall ability to communicate with others and participate cooperatively in an enjoyable group experience. In addition, they learn to overcome auditory hypersensitivity and defensiveness. Individually, they learn to be musically creative and develop another avenue for self-expression and pride. Music has been shown to awaken the entire brain and stimulate all areas of learning.

Technology

Most children understand that computers play games, computers play videos and, in general, computers are fun. When a teacher is able to build upon this motivating activity, computers become tools to enhance learning. The main goals of computer education at Boston Higashi School are:

1. To support academics
2. To expand leisure activities

Social skills, communication and vocational skills are also addressed via numerous computer activities. A variety of educational programs are used to challenge students at their own levels in alignment with their IEP goals and objectives. The selected programs develop academic skills across a range of abilities from readiness to advanced, such as matching, categorizing, completing puzzles, identifying pictures/letters/numbers, learning phonics and sight words, improving spelling, increasing vocabulary, understanding concepts and researching topics of interest using the Internet. Simultaneously, students practice fine motor skills, developing isolated finger movements, bilateral coordination, grasp, in hand manipulation and motor movements for using the mouse and keyboarding. They also learn to navigate various programs, switch between programs and work on word processing. They learn to handle the computers carefully and responsibly and are encouraged to generalize their computer skills to their home environments and the residence. Computer tablets, iPads and interactive white boards are also used throughout the entire educational curriculum. As advances are made in new technology and software, they are integrated into the program for our students as deemed appropriate.

Daily Living Skills

Basic to the establishment of individual independence and dignity, is the development of skills to meet one's own self-care needs. The foundation for this is the regulation of the basic biological rhythms of life for eating, sleeping, activity, and work. Under what Dr. Kitahara called "initial stage guidance", these patterns are taught to all students to enable them to participate in all of the various opportunities and experiences of school and life. Learning independence in each area of self-regulation and self-care creates mastery and a sense of self pride that encourages children in all of their other learning. Thus, the teaching of daily living skills in a systematic and developmental way is a fundamental aspect of the curriculum of the Boston Higashi School.

Social Education

Play is "the bridge to social development" according to Dr. Kitahara and as such reflects and expresses the child's experiences. Autism limits a child's engagement with others and therefore opportunities for experience, but learning to play is a way that experiences can be created to entice the child into connectedness. The Play and Leisure curriculum of Daily Life Therapy® is developmental, recognizing that learning play skills in a natural sequence builds a strong foundation for social relationships. Play is fun and contributes to feeling happy, successful, and self-confident. Playing helps children explore the sensory world, discharge energy, develop problem solving skills, enhance fine motor and gross motor abilities, learn social and emotional roles, express one's feelings, and be creative. Through the use of toys, games, and recreation, the components of the play and leisure program gives students opportunities to expand their interests, to join others for participation and socialization, to develop functional capabilities and basic concepts about the world, and to develop one's imagination and communication as well as learn attending and problem-solving skills that form a foundation for learning.

Clinical Services

Clinical Services are offered in a consultative collaborative model utilizing licensed specialists in their fields including a speech language pathologist, a clinical psychologist, occupational therapists and a physical therapist. Having this broad array of service providers available to consult about the individual needs of students as well as programmatic enhancements, contributes to the holistic and integrated service delivery model as well as expanding our understanding of the strong theoretical foundations of the relationship between Autism Spectrum Disorders and Daily Life Therapy®.

Employment Education

The goal of employment education is for the students to secure supported and competitive employment positions that both challenge the student and meet the needs of the employer. Students are taught skills in areas such as clerical, custodial and food service both within the school and at community work sites. Various social language skills such as greeting coworkers, opening conversations, maintaining conversations, and closing topics are also taught in natural contexts. As they gain job skills and knowledge, students move from in-school work to obtain employment in community settings. Not only do the students learn the skills to do a job but also the skills necessary to be active and productive members of the community. As a corollary of these work experiences, students learn banking and money management skills as part of this program.

Emergence Division

This division is an extension of the High School Division with a focus on the necessary intensive educational and employment outcome goals for Young Adult students who are 19~22. Employment requirements for this division will mirror those expected after graduation (20-30 hours/week). Community Connected Academics will provide students with intensive and relevant on-site based learning in the community. The frameworks that are taught to these students is that of a 24-hour lifestyle incorporating academics, hobbies, domestic activities, exercise, employment, and community participation. The social and communication practices are taught in a way to allow them to be generalized post-graduation.

Levels of Programming

217-Days Day Program, 304-Days and 365-Days Residential Program

Boston Higashi School received approval from Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary

Education for a 365-day Residential Program, which operates in addition to the existing approved 304 day Residential Program. Our goal is to work with families and assist our students to generalize skills beyond the Boston Higashi School campus. In order to help students maintain structure and routines, the school also offers vacation program during each school vacations. This vacation program is approved by Randolph Public Health and run by BHS staff.

The level of programming is determined by the student's IEP Team pursuant to Federal and State guidelines. The Boston Higashi School collaborates with school districts to ensure that efforts prioritizing the Least Restrictive Environment requirements of IDEA have been employed. The student's IEP team may afford due diligence to examination of weekend reports, audit of parent training participation, home visits by LEA and/or BHS, and Functional Behavior Assessment or other evaluations as determined by consensus of team.

Tier 1 – Day Program, 217 Days

Students may also participate in our vacation day programming at parent discretion and funding, or IEP recommendation with district funding. Parents must submit the forms sent out for each vacation session. A student may attend the full session or for designated days.

Tier 2 – Residential Program, 304 Days

The purpose of the Boston Higashi School Residential Program is one of education, teaching daily living, community, and social skills to Higashi students through the utilization and adoption of the pedagogical techniques of Daily Life Therapy®. The residential program curriculum complements and reinforces that of the day program, allowing generalization of learning to this supportive, homelike yet highly structured environment. Students may also participate in our vacation day programming at parents' discretion and funding, or IEP recommendation with district funding. Parents must submit the forms sent out for each vacation session. A student may attend the full session or for designated days.

Tier 3 – Residential Program, 365 Days Extended School Year

The IEP team has determined that substantial regression and problems with recoupment will occur in the absence of the structured environment of Daily Life Therapy® implemented by Boston Higashi School staff with fidelity and integrity. Parents are not required to fill out vacation session forms.

Parents Collaboration Programs

We offer many types of parent training options with topics developed through the Program Committee, often suggested by staff or parents to address the home/school partnership. In collaboration with parents, we continually review and develop new ideas.

A variety of parent-staff trainings and interactive programs are utilized to enhance general learning about the Boston Higashi School, and Daily Life Therapy®, Autism Spectrum Disorders and other various issues of interest pertaining to our students and their families.

These programs are conducted in a variety of formats including panel presentations forums, workshops, study meetings and specific goal-focused training sessions, interactive materials-making meetings, participatory events and school festivals and celebrations.

Every student and family is different in the amount of structure and support required. The Boston Higashi School offers individual observations and hands-on training, on-going focus group meetings to explore and develop in depth understanding about specific areas of interest, and home visits. With our Parents Association, we have coordinated joint events. We also offer activities for siblings that support family cohesion and functioning.

Respite

Respite services are not directly provided by the Boston Higashi School. The Boston Higashi School coordinates with other agencies or enlists the support of the Boston Higashi School staff on a voluntary basis. Funding is provided by other state agencies or by parents. Boston Higashi School does not fund respite.

Educational Emergency

Emergency services may be requested by the parents while Boston Higashi School is in session by contacting the day school or residence as indicated in this book.

Inclusion

Students have many opportunities for inclusion activities with peers with typical development in either academic or community settings depending upon their needs and schedules. Older students have reverse mainstreaming or may join integrated clubs such as drama, lunch or sports clubs where students from neighboring schools come to our campus. In addition, individual students may attend classes at local cooperating schools or their home school for selected periods as appropriate to meet their individual needs. Students in the Emergence Division hold community jobs, working alongside typical peers and access community facilities in many other areas such as health clubs, stores, banks, and the library. Residential students, and all students in the summer, take frequent trips into the community to enjoy recreation and to interact with others in enjoying all of the facilities available to the public. The goal of social education is to provide many opportunities for natural inclusion for students to learn the social skills needed for self-regulation so as to enjoy themselves in lifelong inclusion.

Transition

Transition support is developed and outlined through the IEP and transition planning process. The transition plan will be implemented by all designated team members as per the guidelines developed in the transition meeting. The detailed planning process will ensure a collaborative and effective transition for the students.

EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM

APPLIED ACADEMICS

“From its very beginnings the school has striven to provide its own unique education along with a place for a life of study adapted to the needs of the child..... The result of this effort is that the children without exception find school enjoyable and are full of life and vigor.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Curriculum

The Boston Higashi School provides a broad and balanced educational curriculum combining the holistic approach of the philosophy of Daily Life Therapy® and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Dr. Kiyo Kitahara’s teaching methodology provides children with systematic education through the development of their physical, emotional and intellectual being. The Daily Life Therapy® teaching methodology promotes the students interests by providing a variety of curricular activities and life experiences. The educational curriculum addresses the major development areas and academic content areas from the Frameworks, which includes English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Technology/Engineering, History and Social Studies. The curriculum content areas are divided into skill sequences that move a student through the educational curriculum at each student’s skill level. Educational instruction is organized to facilitate learning through thematic units, which rest upon a foundation of instructional methods addressing problem solving techniques, literacy strategies and the development of resources for sharing and communicating knowledge and ideas. Additionally, areas within the educational curriculum are designed to meet the individualized learning styles and needs of all students as developed on each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Literacy Across the Curriculum

Literacy is incorporated throughout all content areas, tying together reading, writing, listening, and communicating (through speech or non-verbal means) across all subjects, including the special subjects of music, art, and physical education. Students utilize the 3,500 sq ft Mitsubishi Library to further their enjoyment and exposure to reading opportunities in both the day and residential programs.

A starting point for literacy instruction for many students at the Boston Higashi School is developing their concepts about print, including how to appropriately interact with books, and that words carry meaning. Throughout instruction, students are encouraged to communicate concepts, content, and their overall knowledge base by using the means of communication (e.g. verbal, pointing, gestures, voice output devices, sign) most appropriate for meeting the student’s individual needs.

Word Instruction is a key component of literacy instruction. Word instruction encompasses skills in the areas of: letter identification, automatic word recognition, phonics, spelling, and phonemic awareness. In addition to the use of a Word Wall to support students in their recognition of common letter patterns and words, other methods of direct word instruction include “making words” activities, sorting words based on phonetic patterns, using letters to make words, and spelling instruction.

Comprehension instruction is the ultimate goal of literacy instruction in all areas. The goal of literacy instruction is that students will be able to comprehend a variety of texts at their level to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in a manner that is best for them. Comprehension instruction at the Boston Higashi School utilizes appropriately leveled books and teacher made materials across topics and grade levels. Each unit of study, whether it is science, social studies, or current events, has several books to support

comprehension in that area. Instruction varies according to students' developmental level. For example, instruction may focus on concepts of print and identifying the repeated line in a text, and move to more complex levels of comprehension including answering questions, sequencing events, and making inferences. Students are also encouraged to demonstrate comprehension and respond to their reading through writing.

Writing instruction takes several forms: free writing, prompted writing, and writing in response to a particular topic or book. Classrooms utilize a "Please Sign In" strategy to support and engage all students in writing each day. This strategy is multi-level in that students who are learning to write their own name can participate along with students who can respond to journal-style questions when they sign in. Technology is utilized to support writing when appropriate at a student's individualized level in the classroom and/or during computer lessons.

Self-Selected Reading gives students an opportunity to independently interact with a text of their choice. A range of texts and topics are available, including books that support all areas of the curriculum. For some students who find this activity a challenge, teachers will engage students in teacher read aloud or shared reading. Books on tape and CD are also available and used at this time.

Areas of Focus by Division

Early Childhood

Initial Guidance is the main focus in Early Childhood in order for students to increase participation in a variety of family, school and community activities. The basic categories consist of: eating, dressing, toileting, showering and sleeping/ exercising. Equally important is the development of the students' communication abilities. The categories of communication skills consist of: gaining attention, requesting basic needs, asking for help, rejecting, following directions, answering yes/no questions, and greetings. (See "Language and Communication" of this book for a more detailed explanation). In addition to these areas of instruction, "Play" and "School Work" are taught. Dr. Kitahara stated that "Play for a child is not just something it does, but it is life itself." The sequence of play development includes: building interest, imitating play, independent play, parallel play, cooperative play and lastly creative play. Although play is a difficult area of learning for most children who have autism, it is rich in opportunities for social development. The teacher provides an environment to stimulate play and socialization in the form of play centers and engaging activities.

"School Work" involves teaching readiness skills for the Primary Elementary Curriculum. Readiness skills include attending skills, listening skills, and demonstrating an interest for learning. The curriculum also provides children with instruction for the development of pre-academic skills, which include literacy, reading, and listening skills, concepts about print and writing, and exposure to basic concepts of numbers, patterns and shapes. Early Childhood also promotes an introduction to the art curriculum giving an opportunity for fine motor development, an introduction to the physical education curriculum with an opportunity to use bouncing balls to develop gross motor skills, and an introduction to the music curriculum with enjoyment of songs and movement and learning about rhythm.

Elementary (Kindergarten through Grade 6) & Middle School (Grades 7-9)

The main academic focus of the Elementary and Middle School divisions is to engage students in a wide variety of experiences in the five curriculum areas; Language Arts, Mathematics, Science & Technology, Health, and History & Social Science. The teacher utilizes the strength of the students' learning styles to promote a greater understanding of the world around them through these topics. The development of daily

living skills and communication continue to be a focus in this division. The Scope and Sequence of all the curriculum areas are segmented into “Topics” and “Steps.” For example, in the Language Arts Curriculum the focus of topics incorporate literacy skills, such as word identification, reading comprehension, concepts about print and writing as denoted in the standards set forth in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The “Steps” are uniquely designed to provide detailed systematic learning for students with autism. A combination of the Topics and Steps are utilized to provide our students with individual experiences in our heterogeneously grouped classes. Topics are also introduced to classes to promote interest. However, a balance between introducing grade-appropriate topics from the Frameworks and the achievement of specific goals set out in each Individualized Education Program (IEP) is continuously maintained.

Younger High School (Grades 9-10)

The main academic focus of the Younger High School division is to engage students in a wide variety of interrelated experiences in a thematic format that promotes independence in life skills as they approach adulthood. The thematic units center around academic, pre-vocational or community-based themes. Some examples of this are culinary arts, gardening, shopping and current events. Within each theme, specific educational content is addressed, such as, literacy rich activities in reading and writing, mathematics, science, health awareness, utilizing reference materials, understanding personal information and social skills.

Students are exposed to selected age-appropriate topics from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks that are intertwined into thematic units, which are deemed appropriate for their individual educational needs. Applied academics utilize the state standards to truly benefit our students’ learning through real- world information they can use. A balance between topics from the Frameworks, prevocational skills and the achievement of specific goals set out in each Individualized Education Program is continuously addressed. The continuation toward daily living skills proficiency and communication skill development remains an additional focus in this division.

Older High School (Grades 11-12+)

The main goals of the Older High School division are to engage students in a wide variety of job experiences that will increase their employment opportunities after graduation (Please refer to “Employment Education” for a more detailed description), and to promote independence in life skills for the transition into a supported living arrangement. Employment opportunities in the Older High School division are located primarily on campus. Students develop employment routines and are able to apply literacy and numeracy concepts specifically to job-related tasks. Functional Academic units center around employment and community-based themes that widen student interests and allow for application of functional academic skills in a meaningful context. An example of applied academics in this division is a thematic unit on baseball as a leisure activity. There is coordination between the physical education department, which teaches students how to play the game, and classroom teachers who teach students how to use literacy skills to read about the game, learn the skills of the game, and follow the game, along with learning appropriate social skills necessary to attend the game. This prepares the students for a community trip to Fenway Park to see the Red Sox play, which gives the students experience and adds to the quality of their lives within their community. A balance between topics from the Massachusetts Curriculum

Frameworks and the achievement of specific goals set out in each Individualized Education Program is continuously addressed. Opportunities are given to individual students who are able to benefit from more in-depth study as described in the Younger High School section. The mastery of daily living skills and communication skills continues to be a focus in this division.

Emergence (Young Adults)

This division focuses on intensive educational and employment opportunities for Young Adult students. Employment requirements for this division will mirror those expected after graduation (20-30hours/week). Community Connected Academics will provide students with intensive situational based learning in the community. These students work to develop a 24-hour lifestyle framework incorporating academics, hobbies, domestics, exercise, employment, community partnerships, with social and communication practices to be transferred post-graduation.

Human Sexuality Curriculum

The Boston Higashi School addresses Health and Human Sexuality as part of the school curriculum to students in our Middle School, Younger High School, Older High School and Emergence program. Topics for instruction include, Understanding Body Changes, Human Sexuality: Understanding Sexuality, Relationships, The Reproductive System and Healthy Bodies and Healthy Lifestyle.

The Boston Higashi School works, together with families, on addressing the needs of our students in understanding health and human sexuality. Parents will receive a letter each year that will discuss the curriculum program(s), texts, and materials that will be used. The Boston Higashi School modifies and adapts the curriculum, so that all students have access to materials and content at their individual level.

Parents may opt out of any single lesson or unit about Human Sexuality. Parents can do this by writing a note or letter to the Director of Curriculum requesting that your child not participate.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Curriculum

The Boston Higashi School is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all our day and residential students. To ensure that all students learn in a safe school environment, the Boston Higashi School has adopted Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum and MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention. Both curricula are modified in accordance with each student's learning style, method of communication and student specific accommodations, as stated on the Individualized Education Program.

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)

The Boston Higashi School ensures that all Massachusetts students participate in MCAS testing at his/her grade equivalent as identified on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The Boston Higashi School recognizes the Individual with Disabilities ACT Federal law which requires "full participation of students with disabilities in state and district testing" and, in addition, "students with disabilities are provided the opportunity to participate and make progress in the general education curriculum with the emphasis on being provided the supports and services necessary to ensure success."

The IEP TEAM determines how each student will participate in the MCAS testing. The identified student will participate in the MCAS testing on a year-to-year basis according to the grade level of the student. Typically, students at the Boston Higashi School participate in the MCAS-Alternate portfolio process, which tests a student's knowledge base in content areas at each grade level according to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. A collection of student work samples provides "evidence" that each student is learning, demonstrating, and generalizing learning standards in relation to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The completed portfolios are collected and submitted to the Department of Education each spring.

Prior to the Boston Higashi School's submission of the MCAS-Alternate Assessment, we invite and encourage parents to view the student's work samples and comment on the portfolio. Each year the school holds at least three scheduled opportunities for portfolio viewing, as well as the opportunity to make an individual appointment to view student work.

For out-of-state students we are required to follow the sending state's requirements as they relate to state and district testing. The Boston Higashi School ensures that all requirements are met in accordance with states' and districts' mandates.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

*“There is a saying that body and spirit are one, and that
if the spirit is weak then the body too will be weak. On the other hand,
if the body is weak the spirit too will become weak.”*

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Overview

Vigorous physical exercise is a cornerstone of Daily Life Therapy®, as it is one of the three central principles, or pillars, upon which Dr. Kitahara’s philosophy is based. Through vigorous physical exercise, and without medication, students become able to learn to regulate their biological rhythms of life and thus gain the many other benefits in health, stamina, mood, awareness of one’s surroundings, and concentration that result. A good Rhythm of Life promotes the smooth and balanced development of the child. Daily appropriate physical exercise, allowing for the diffusion of energy, essentially enhances appetite during meals, creates a need for restful sleep at night, and enhances overall physical health and mental alertness. By regulating this Rhythm of Life, vigorous physical activity therefore contributes to each student’s ability to grow and learn across all areas of the curriculum.

Aspects of Physical Education in Daily Life Therapy®

Overall health-related physical fitness, which is embedded in physical exercise, consists of body composition, aerobic capacity, flexibility, and muscular capacity. In an effort to obtain a baseline status of our student’s physical fitness level, Boston Higashi School administers annual physical fitness assessments to determine students’ overall physical fitness levels. These assessments provide important information about our students overall fitness level and helps to identify our student’s strengths and weaknesses. It is also useful later, for evaluating the effectiveness of our program’s design, and provides a guideline for progressing the students through physical activities. Additionally, the outcome of the assessment gives us an opportunity to measure how much improvement or decline the students have made. The students are tested with appropriate activities in the areas of aerobic capacity, muscular strength/endurance, flexibility, and body composition.

Component of Health-related Fitness	Definition	Fitness Test
Aerobic Capacity	The ability to perform large muscle, high intensity exercise for prolonged periods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-Mile run
Muscular Strength	The ability of the muscles to exert an external force.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Static Pull-up• Curl-ups• Trunk lift
Muscular Endurance	The ability of muscles to exert themselves repeatedly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Static Pull-up• Curl-ups• Trunk lift
Flexibility	The range of motion available in a joint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sit and Reach
Body Composition	The relative percentage of muscles, fat, bone and other tissues that comprise the body	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Body Fat %• Skeletal muscle %• Height/Weight

1. The Jogging Program

The opportunity to exercise is provided daily for all students, consistent with their developmental level and health condition, through the morning jogging program. Before sitting down to study, students get moving, which is healthful, fun, and stimulating to mind and bodies, preparing them for other learning activities to come. All students should be equipped with appropriate running shoes and socks. In the Early Childhood division, preliminary jogging and gross motor skills are fostered by the use of bouncing balls to build endurance, in a motivating manner. Mastery of this activity is built upon by participation in a group walking program. With time and age, as students enter the elementary division, walking progresses to jogging as tolerated by each student. Students are given the opportunity each day to jog indoors or outdoors as a group. With the encouragement of their peers and teachers, students become motivated to jog greater distances and increase speed as their physical stamina improves. In this way, students are not only able to diffuse energy and condition their bodies aerobically, but they learn lessons of perseverance and determination, which ultimately enhance self-esteem. Students may also jog at various times throughout the day to help regulate their emotions or behaviors. Jogging may reduce stress and anxiety, increase concentration and alertness, reduce stereotypical or obsessive behaviors, and help raise mood. It is an activity that students enjoy, particularly after working at their desks.

For those students with physical concerns that prevent them from jogging, either temporary or long-term, alternate exercise activities for energy diffusion will be offered. This may include indoor or outdoor walking, walking on the treadmill, use of stationary bicycles, upper extremity exercise or other options as available and appropriate to the student's individual circumstances. Return to jogging after injury or illness will be gradual and tailored to the student's needs with guidance from physicians, the Health Room and the physical therapist as indicated.

Each year, students are able to use the skills that are learned during the daily jogging program at the school-wide Higashi Road Race, an event that builds our own community while it enhances self-esteem by encouraging students to reach for and achieve personal goals. Resulting from the successes that are achieved at the Higashi Road Race, students are often inspired to participate in other road races held in the wider community. Students and staff who enjoy running participate in local road races together on a small group basis. An off-shoot of this has been the ability of our students to participate in local races for charity, raising funds for others in need through their own ability to run. Jogging is a sport our students can enjoy throughout their lifespan as a personally fulfilling and healthy leisure activity but it is also a way in which they can participate in and make a contribution to their community in a positive and valuable way.

2. The Physical Education Curriculum

Built upon the foundation of conditioning and bodily coordination developed through jogging, the physical education curriculum exposes students to numerous developmentally and age-appropriate activities and pieces of equipment through classes and lessons.

The Physical Education Curriculum focuses on the following 6 components:

(1) Acquisition of Physical Skills and Abilities

The physical education curriculum stresses the development of physical skills, taking into account each individual student's age, developmental level and learning style. The activities and equipment incorporated into the physical education curriculum have been carefully selected based upon their potential to promote the development of physical skills essential for athletic performance and enjoyment, leisure time activities and activities of daily living. Skills are taught so that students can go home and join in the play and exercise with their siblings and families in recreational activities because they will know how to ride a bike or swim or rollerblade. Learning skills allows students to engage productively in a wide variety of enjoyable activities indoors and out.

Through the basic physical education curriculum, areas that are challenging for students are focused upon, including promoting body awareness, motor planning skills, spatial relations and body coordination as well as learning to follow directions, showing perseverance, and having goal-directed activity. In addition, the activities taught in physical education, such as bicycle and unicycle riding, yoga and gymnastics foster the development of high-level gross motor skills including refining balance and postural stability, promoting muscle flexibility, improving strength and building stamina. Developing these areas is important for all children, especially for those who may not exercise independently or who may otherwise have muscle tone issues, because, to some extent, muscle tone can be normalized by consistent, anatomically correct use of muscles, allowing for increased functional ability. Thus, the acquisition and mastery of physical skills allows students to improve environmental access, increases safety, spurs recreational interests and develops an affinity for physical activity and the skills to participate socially in recreation activities.

Our aquatic program provides a fun environment to gain functional skills in the area of flexibility, strength, balance, and endurance. The warmth of the water provides a calming effect to the sensory system and allows students time to enjoy a different therapeutic medium to learn new motor skills. Additionally, water provides resistance and buoyancy to promote muscle strength, and muscle tone, and assists in improving body awareness. Our program varies from swimming to fun games with an emphasis on promoting physical, recreational, cognitive and social opportunities. Specific benefits can be achieved including improved body awareness, enhanced range of motion, increased mobility skills and enhanced sensory integration.

For those students who demonstrate issues which interfere with their safe, appropriate use of certain PE equipment, modifications will be made and/or additional support will be provided so that the student can still benefit from the group dynamic with his/her peers.

(2) Stimulation of Intellectual Abilities

Through physical education, students learn intellectual skills crucial for academic learning and daily living both directly and indirectly. Many activities of physical education challenge students to develop problem-solving skills, as they must find ways to move their bodies in conjunction with exercise and athletic equipment so that they can accomplish desired physical actions. As students listen to instructions to perform activities and learn new skills, they must follow directions, which can often become quite complex. They must sometimes sequence and remember verbal and physical instructions doing different actions with different parts of their bodies simultaneously, coordinating their actions with others. Visual spatial skills are developed, as students must determine where their bodies are in relation to other students, staff and equipment as well as hand-eye coordination through various activities. These perceptual skills carry-over directly into academics in such areas as handwriting as do certain physical education activities that involve shapes, counting, colors and patterns. Indirectly, the energy diffusion provided by physical exercise promotes focused attention and positive mood, preparing students generally for classroom academic learning.

(3) Stimulation of Emotional Development

Physical exercise plays a key role in the emotional and behavioral regulation of students at the Boston Higashi School. Through the foundation of proper physical exercise, excess energy is diffused, and students are able to establish a basic Rhythm of Life, consisting additionally of proper nutrition and adequate sleep. From this basis, students are more likely to feel better emotionally. In addition, their levels of arousal/mood are normalized through the exercise provided by the physical education curriculum. For example, if a student is in a state of low arousal (appearing sluggish or disinterested), the endorphins (natural mood enhancers) released during exercise can help to boost the student's energy level. Conversely if a student is in a state of high arousal (appearing overexcited or hyperactive), exercise can help the student burn excess energy and thus has a calming effect. In either case, vigorous physical exercise regulates mood and arousal (high or low), thus regulating emotions and with it behaviors to a significant extent.

The physical education curriculum also encourages persistence and enhances the development of self-esteem. Students work hard to master the skills learned in physical education classes and are constantly encouraged by staff and peers to strive to achieve their personal physical goals. The skills and abilities learned through the physical education curriculum are highlighted throughout the year during various school-wide events at which students are able to demonstrate their accomplishments with pride, which further encourages persistence and enhances self-esteem.

(4) Stimulation of Social Development

The group dynamic teaching approach is a key component of the physical education curriculum and is crucial to the stimulation of the students' social development whether they are learning individual skills or group games and sports. In physical education, students are able to model positive behaviors and learn proper techniques by watching their peers. They also have ample opportunities to enhance communication with their peers by providing and acknowledging encouragement in verbal and non-verbal ways, such as by giving and receiving "high fives". In addition, students learn leadership skills from physical education and to be flexible from a social perspective, adapting to the dynamics of games and activities, by developing an understanding of concepts such as turn taking, sharing and teamwork.

(5) Exploration of the Sensory World

The physical education curriculum provides students with rich sensory experiences, while helping them to enhance body and environmental awareness. These are areas crucial for the development of children with autism, as one of the hallmarks of autism is altered sensory processing. Thus children with autism require intense sensory experiences in order to help them regulate this system. The physical education curriculum addresses the sensory needs of the students by stimulating all areas of the sensory system. The curriculum encourages such sensory experiences as feeling deep pressure input through muscles, bones and ligaments provided by jumping on a pogo stick, experiencing the motion provided to the vestibular system by swinging on a gymnastics bar, feeling the wind on their faces while riding a bicycle or seeing the world moving quickly by while rollerblading across the parking lot. Meeting the sensory needs of students with autism by using physical exercise has also been shown to reduce common stereotypical or self-stimulatory behaviors, such as hand flapping. By learning the skills to participate in a variety of activities and use a variety of sports equipment, students can choose to have a wide variety of sensory experiences and regulate them for themselves.

(6) Generalization of Skills into Leisure and Life Skills Activities

The skills that are developed in the physical education program can be generalized into various other activities including daily living skills and chores, leisure and recreational activities, and community participation. This is because the physical education program offers opportunities, in a fun and engaging environment, for the students to develop motor skills, strength and stamina that are crucial to accessing the world in which they live. Students develop coordination and body awareness, gross motor and fine motor skills, perceptual, visual-motor and hand-eye coordination skills that help them move through their lives in a safe and effective manner. Supporting Dr. Kitahara's philosophy that exercise is a crucial component of the students' lives, in addition to the physical education curriculum, the residential students are given various opportunities to exercise recreationally in the community and day students are urged to exercise at home. Ultimately, the goal is to allow students to discover joy in movement and lead them to experience a lifetime of good health and maximized independence through all the benefits that exercise can provide.

Goals By Division:

Elementary:

1. To promote the development of balance, strength, stamina, coordination and body awareness, in order to lay the foundation for age-appropriate gross motor skill acquisition, so that students may easily and safely access their environment
2. To promote energy diffusion, alertness and mood regulation
3. To provide stimulation to the senses in order to regulate the student's level of arousal
4. To introduce skills in team building, direction following, imitation, problem solving, and social cooperation
5. To encourage perseverance and determination in order to enhance self-esteem
6. To introduce physical exercise as an enjoyable, lifelong activity to promote general health and well being

Middle School/Younger High School:

1. To enhance a student's balance, strength, stamina, flexibility, agility, coordination and body awareness to refine fine and gross motor development
2. To promote energy diffusion, alertness and mood regulation
3. To provide stimulation to the senses in order to regulate the student's level of arousal
4. To promote skills in team building, leadership, direction following, problem solving, and social cooperation
5. To encourage perseverance and determination in order to enhance self-esteem
6. To learn enjoyable skills that can serve as leisure activities throughout a lifetime to promote general health and well being

Older High School/Emergence:

1. To refine a student's balance, strength, stamina, flexibility, agility, coordination and body awareness to develop and utilize athletic ability
2. To promote energy diffusion, alertness and mood regulation
3. To provide stimulation to the senses in order to regulate the student's level of arousal
4. To refine and generalize skills in team building, leadership, direction following, problem solving and social cooperation
5. To encourage perseverance, determination and self-fulfillment in order to enhance self-esteem and maximize independence
6. To generalize enjoyable skills that can serve as leisure activities throughout a lifetime by skill performance outside of physical education class to promote general health and well being

ART EDUCATION

“Learning drawing meant that the autistic children were able to break through the walls which confined them. This was not only a great joy to each individual but also was instrumental in giving them great confidence in themselves.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Overview

The Visual Arts program fosters self-expression, creativity, and an understanding and appreciation of the beauty of art and our world. The process of creating leads to a greater awareness of the creation of others and to a heightened sensitivity to one's surroundings. Art Education in Daily Life Therapy®, focuses on the areas of drawing, color application and two and three dimensional works across a varied program using an assortment of media and tools, building sequentially on the student's developmental level. All students participate in the diverse program, which challenges students to develop individually and as a group by building their persistence, care, choice making ability and team work skills while enhancing their feelings of self-esteem and creativity.

Components of Visual Arts in Daily Life Therapy®

Art Education focuses on the following 5 components:

(1) Acquisition of Art Skills

The art education program stresses the development of artistic skills at each individual student's developmental level, incorporating a wide variety of techniques and media. At the same time as they develop these artistic skills of drawing, painting and sculpting, each student also works on the skills they must achieve to reach their own fine motor, gross motor and sensory objectives. This allows them to create an art project that has meaning while developing individually, artistically, and aesthetically. Art projects tend to be theme based. Art lessons often integrate classroom themes from language arts, social studies and science while exploring different materials and techniques and incorporating aesthetics, art history and art appreciation into the lesson.

Students are presented with an assortment of tools/ materials such as pencils, crayons, paint, scissors, glue, wood and clay in order to practice and develop their artistic skills and dexterity used for drawing, color application and the creation of two and three dimensional sculptures, collages and murals. Through the various art projects, students learn concepts such as color, form, shape, texture, proportion, pattern, line, shading, space and perspective.

(2) Stimulation of Intellectual Abilities.

In addition to the intellectual gains from learning about art itself, the visual arts curriculum is inherently valuable for acquiring and developing the functional and cognitive skills that enhance academic learning. During drawing, color application and 2-D/3-D works, students acquire and develop readiness skills such as learning the basic concepts of shape, size and color. They learn about boundaries and how to differentiate objects and see things in perspective. Math skills that involve cognitive problem-solving, pattern recognition and visual-spatial reasoning are all enhanced through the art curriculum.

In addition, many basic reading skills, language development and writing skills ranging from matching and discrimination to copying and imitating are enhanced and reinforced during the lessons. The visual arts program also provides a great opportunity for the students to explore other cultures and gain an appreciation for various artists and their styles. Furthermore, personal characteristics from persistence and care to making choices and decisions for oneself are gained through art education.

(3) Stimulation of Emotional Development

Becoming aware of art helps develop a greater awareness of one's environment and surroundings, that is particularly important in helping students with autism participate in their community. Stimulation of emotions encourages the students to become more creative and expressive, allowing them to communicate their feelings, thoughts and knowledge in nonverbal ways as well as to gain an appreciation and understanding of the beauty of art and the world around them. Participation in the art curriculum enhances their feelings of self-esteem, competence and creativity. The curriculum is skill based, teaching students how to develop the artistic skills they need in order to express themselves better. Students are taught how colors can be used to represent different moods/emotions. They then engage in projects where they learn to choose colors to reflect their own mood or represent the mood of a particular artist's style. In addition, students participate in art activities that encourage whole body movements involving gross motor skills that allow for the diffusion of excess energy in appropriate enjoyable activities, helping to reduce mal-adaptive and self-stimulatory behaviors, while increasing attention levels and relieving stress and anxiety. For example, students are involved in large mural projects and life-size 3-D works on the floor or walls that involve kneeling, squatting down or stretching up on their toes. They use their shoulders, arms, legs and trunk muscles to produce large painting movements. The visual arts program also provides a great opportunity to integrate our student's lives and interests within the wider community. Students have the opportunity to be recognized as artists and participate in community art exhibits with other local artists. The public display of an art project is an ideal chance for the students to improve their self-worth and confidence.

(4) Development of Sensorimotor Skills

The skills that are learned in our art education program can be generalized to various other activities such as daily living skills, writing, leisure/ recreational activities, chores and other areas of functioning. This is because the art education program offers opportunities for students to engage in a range of activities in a fun and lively approach while building and enhancing their fine motor abilities and perceptual skills. The fine motor and perceptual skills learned during the highly motivating art activities are then generalized to less preferred activities such as changing clothes and handwriting activities. Through the art activities, students develop their postural control and muscle strength, dexterity, motor planning skills, body awareness and body scheme, visual-motor coordination, grasping & pinching skills, manipulative skills, inhibitory control, spatial organization, graded force/pressure, hand preference and bilateral coordination. Therefore, the visual arts lessons provide the perfect venue to develop the motor and perceptual skills crucial for academic learning, functional independence and leisure/ recreational activities.

(5) Exploration of the Sensory World

Art stimulates the senses. The various curricular art activities in the visual arts program offer opportunities to promote the development for stimulation and exploration of the sensory system, which is often altered among children with autism. The visual arts curriculum is developed very carefully to provide a range of visual, tactile and olfactory experiences to challenge and help students overcome sensory sensitivities. For example, sensory stimulation can come from the touch of clay against the palms of the hands or between the fingertips. In addition, the deep pressure provided through the joints of the arms/hands/ fingers when pounding, rolling, pinching and molding clay also provides the occasion to promote body awareness and diffuse excess energy in an appropriate enjoyable activity. Furthermore, art activities that involve using one's hands to manipulate and explore various textures help those students who may be hypersensitive to sensory input, raise their tolerance to the feel of different textures, such as glue, chalk, paint, crepe paper or paper mache. Students who may be hyposensitive to sensory input learn through exploration and practice how to use the media in appropriate ways to create projects. Tolerance for and then the enjoyment of various sensory experiences are learned during art and increase one's ability to participate in the community.

In addition, students have the opportunity to use materials appropriately in their lessons, so sensory experiences are used in meaningful contextual ways. For example, by learning to clean and put away the materials, students practice such skills as hand washing, using water appropriately to clean the tools and their hands. Furthermore, sensory integration is developed during the various school wide “performance arts” events.

During Bon Dance and Annual Celebration and various other occasions students wear costumes and make-up, experience lighting and perform dance, music and athletic presentations. Even culinary arts contribute to these richly, culturally diverse performance arts events that are part of Art Education in Daily Life Therapy®.

Goals For Each Division

Elementary

- To express what one sees, feels and experiences
- To use materials effectively and complete the projects:
 - (1) Learn to draw simple images composed of basic shapes
 - (2) Learn to color/ paint inside the lines of simple meaningful images composed of basic shapes using rhythmic up & down strokes
 - (3) Learn to create collage/ 3-D works with a variety of materials
- To develop & enhance sensorimotor, fine motor and perceptual skills
- To provide opportunities for sensory exploration and to move about in space involving different body positions, thereby experiencing body awareness, coordination and social interactions while creating art projects.

Middle School

- To express what one sees, feels, experiences and imagines
- To use materials effectively to create projects:
 - (1) Learn to draw simple images with more features, accurate proportion/ scale, composed of more complex meaningful images
 - (2) Learn to color/ paint inside the lines of more complex images composed of more complicated shapes using rhythmic up & down strokes
 - (3) Learn to create collage/ 3-D works and acquire different techniques to work with materials of varied textures
- To develop & enhance sensorimotor, fine motor and perceptual skills
- To provide opportunities for sensory exploration, eye-hand coordination and integrated body awareness and coordination experienced through individual and group art projects.

Younger High School

- To express and develop one’s personality through one’s artwork
- To use materials effectively to plan, create and appreciate projects:
 - (1) Learn to draw meaningful images/scenes with detailed features and accurate proportion/scale including shading, perspective and contour line
 - (2) Learn to color/paint inside the lines of more complex meaningful images composed of more complicated shapes using expressive strokes
 - (3) Learn to create collages/3-D works and acquire different techniques to work with materials of varied textures

- To develop & enhance sensorimotor, fine motor and perceptual skills
- To provide opportunities for sensory exploration and experiences that will enhance awareness of oneself within one's surroundings both socially and in terms of movement/body coordination.

Older High School

- To express and develop one's personality through one's artwork
- To use materials effectively and promote motivation to create a project and be recognized.:
 - (1) Learn to draw meaningful images/scenes with detailed features and accurate proportion/scale including shading, perspective and contour line
 - (2) Learn to color/paint inside the lines of more complex meaningful images composed of more complicated shapes using expressive strokes
 - (3) Learn to create collages/3-D works and acquire different techniques to work with materials of varied textures
- To begin to learn about the process of selling the crafts one creates
- To develop and enhance sensorimotor, fine motor and perceptual skills
- To provide opportunities for sensory exploration and experiences that will enhance awareness of oneself within one's surroundings both socially and in terms of movement/body coordination.

Emergence Program

- To express and develop one's personality through one's artwork
- To enhance leisure repertoire through opportunity to choose individual art mediums
- To use materials effectively and promote motivation to create a project and be recognized.:
 - (1) Learn to draw meaningful images/scenes with detailed features and accurate proportion/scale including shading, perspective and contour line
 - (2) Learn to color/paint inside the lines of more complex meaningful images composed of more complicated shapes using expressive strokes
 - (3) Learn to create collages/3-D works and acquire different techniques to work with materials of varied textures
- To learn more about the process of selling the crafts one creates
- To develop and enhance sensorimotor, fine motor and perceptual skills
- To provide opportunities for sensory exploration and experiences that will enhance awareness of oneself within one's surroundings both socially and in terms of movement/body coordination.

MUSIC EDUCATION

“Music is a subject which affords the autistic child parity with typical children.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Overview

Music education in Daily Life Therapy® helps enhance children’s creativity through music activities. The curriculum is designed for children to help them become well rounded individuals. It focuses on (1) vocalizations, (2) singing, (3) instrument play (percussion instruments such as the tambourine, bell, drum and wind instruments such as the keyboard harmonica and alto recorder) (4) movements in rhythm and (5) music appreciation. This curriculum was originally designed for both typical and special needs students, however for children with special needs the individual learning pace is carefully monitored and skills are broken down into smaller steps. The students learn to enjoy and understand music in their daily lives. In addition, they learn to concentrate and cooperate in a group as well as express themselves individually through music.

Components of Music Education in Daily Life Therapy®

(1) Acquisition of Musical Skills

The music education program stresses the development of musical skills at each individual student’s developmental level, age and learning style. Music lessons help motivate the young children of kindergarten and elementary age, and in addition make them familiar with the fundamentals of music. Our perception of young children is that they are born with the ability to listen to music and express themselves. Music lessons help enhance the children’s abilities, through singing songs about their daily life and moving their bodies in rhythm with the music. They learn rhythm instruments and simple beats and progress towards learning to produce sound by blowing into an instrument and to use a short keyboard harmonica. For the elementary aged students, music lessons are designed to help promote interest in music activities so that music will become a part of their lives. The older students are encouraged to appreciate the beauty of music and learn about different forms of musical expression in order to enhance their sensibilities. Usually children in this age group start to acquire preferences in music. Therefore, it is important to expose them to a variety of musical styles and forms from an early age.

(2) Stimulation of Intellectual Abilities

Throughout the day, music is used naturally. The music curriculum has a positive and valuable academic benefit that affects many aspects of learning. Cognitive problem solving, pattern recognition, sense of rhythm and development of literacy skills, math, visual spatial reasoning and creativity are all enhanced by music. Memory training, listening, attention, concentration and recall are all skills developed in music that transfer to academic areas. In addition, music gives students the opportunity to express themselves freely and creatively. Therefore, music supports a student’s expressive communication skills.

(3) Stimulation of Emotional Development

It is known that people with autism have great difficulty in expressing their feelings. Music plays a key role in the emotional and behavioral regulation of students at the Boston Higashi School. Through music experiences and participation students become aware of a range of emotional expression and can learn to use music to regulate their emotions. Music in Daily Life Therapy® teaches students to sing with emotion by singing songs with different volumes or tempos as well as by learning the meaning of the lyrics. In addition, students participate in musical activities that encourage whole body movements that allow for the diffusion of excess energy in appropriate enjoyable activities, helping to reduce mal-adaptive and self-stimulatory behaviors, while increasing attention levels and relieving stress and anxiety.

(4) Development of Language and Motor Skills

Through singing and instrument play students develop and demonstrate breath control and improved awareness of their oral-motor skills. These skills, along with repetitious practice of motor planning

movements, are all components that contribute to the development of speech and language. Through instrument exploration and rhythm activities the students improve their fine motor coordination and dexterity, bilateral coordination and visual motor integration. The coordination and motor skills developed by playing a musical instrument carry-over into academics in such areas as handwriting and self care skills. Students participate in music that encourages whole body movements such as dancing, marching, jumping and clapping in order to diffuse energy in constructive fashion while providing proprioceptive input to bones, muscles and joints to promote body awareness, motor learning, coordination and balance.

(5) Exploration of the Sensory World

The music program provides multi-sensory stimulation (auditory, visual and tactile). The wide range of sensory exposure in the music classes leads to students to become more tolerant generally to noise and to group activities. In addition the rhythmic component of music is very organizing for the sensory system. Because of the multi-sensory demands, music contributes to helping the students learn how to both process and react to sensory stimulation.

(6) Generalization of Skills into Leisure and Life Skills Activities

The skills that are developed in the music education program can be generalized into various other activities including daily living skills and chores, leisure and recreational activities, and community participation. For each individual student, music appreciation is fostered and developed through the rich music education program supported by the school wide performance musical events. During Winter Music Festival and Annual Celebration and various other occasions students display their musical achievements. In addition some students develop high levels of skill in music, opening exciting opportunities. For example the BHS jazz band, composed of middle school, high school and emergence students across the entire autism continuum has played in community establishments and events. Performing in the community is an ideal opportunity for the students to demonstrate their talent while improving their self-esteem and confidence. Through the music education program the students can thoroughly enjoy, participate and contribute to community life in the same way as their peers and siblings.

Boston Higashi School Music Lessons Hierarchy

Grade Level	Singing	Instrument
Early Childhood	Vocalization Training Songs Monthly Songs Drawing Songs Hand Manipulative Songs	Rhythm instruments Drum, Tambourines, Bells, etc.
Elementary	Vocalization Training Songs Monthly Songs Drawing Songs Hand Manipulative Songs	Rhythm instruments Keyboard Harmonica
Middle School	Vocalization Training Songs Monthly songs	Rhythm instruments Keyboard Harmonica
Younger High School	Vocalization Training Songs Monthly Songs	Rhythm instruments Alto-recorder
<p>Older High School/Emergence Listening Appreciation</p> <p>gaining knowledge of a variety of musical genres</p> <p>following and singing billboard and top hits / popular music</p> <p>learning pattern danced steps to be generalized to formal and casual dance parties</p>		
<p>Jazz Band (Selected Students who are talented and need more challenges)</p> <p>Trumpet, Trombone, Alto-Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, Bass Guitar</p>		

TECHNOLOGY

“Autistic children have a characteristic trait of concentrating on anything that attracts their attention. If this tendency is conversely utilized in guidance methods, and an interest in study is aroused the child exhibits a power of concentration, responds well to repeated training and can attain the aimed –atresults.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Components of Technology Education in Daily Life Therapy®

The use of technology is embedded within the school’s curriculum and is used to support communication, academics and recreation. Technology is used to enhance, expand and enrich student learning in both the day and residential program. All students have access to desktop computers, iPads, and interactive whiteboards, computer-based software programs and iPad applications that support communication, education and leisure activities both at school, the residence.

Technology focuses on the following components:

1. Academic Enhancement/Communication/Enhancement of Interest

A variety of educational programs are used to challenge the students at their own levels and align with the individual students’ academic goals and objectives. The selected programs encourage students to match, categorize, complete puzzles, work on literacy and mathematic skills. The technology is used to build background knowledge and content knowledge within all areas of the curriculum. Technology is used to provide visual supports to increase expressive and receptive language. The visual supports are used to aid in word retrieval, expand sentence length, improve syntax, build vocabulary, and increase comprehension. Many of the devices and programs selected are widely used by typically developing students with the intention and belief that students with autism spectrum disorder can expand their interests and learn from these programs when provided support and guidance. The programs are easily accessible to their parents and can be used at home. When observing their siblings, and other children, playing similar programs it motivates the student to use the same devices.

2. Acquisition of Skills Required for Leisure Activities

One of the most important goals is for the students to gain a level of independence using the technology. Students are encouraged to carry over the leisure skills that they have acquired at school to their home environments. Establishing a routine of using the technology and generalizing skills learned at school to the home environment helps to develop life long skills that can support their interests.

The iPad/hand-held devices: The Boston Higashi School has iPads for student use in both the day and residential programs to support education, communication, and recreation. For parents wishing to send in personal hand held devices for communication they should contact their child’s Speech Language Pathologist. For students who have personal hand-held devices, we will work to personalize the device to the student’s individual needs to support communication. Day and residential instructors can be contacted regarding personal devices for academics and leisure. We work with parents to provide professional development and training on accessing appropriate apps and programming the devices as needed. Please be sure to label your child’s device as well as the cords and case.

PLAY TIME

“Play is the bridge to social development.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

OVERVIEW

The importance of play in childhood cannot be overestimated. As Dr. Kitahara and other leading child development experts have understood, play is the work of childhood, reflecting and expressing the child's experiences with his or her world. Play is the basic way children interact with others, turning out from self-absorption to find interest and stimulation and fun in the experiences of life. Play is natural for children. Inherently through play, skills develop, motivation is captured, curiosity stimulated, interest shared, mastery gained and the ways of the world understood. As Jean Piaget, the respected child developmental theorist, noted, for children “play is in reality one of the aspects of any activity.”

For children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), play does not occur naturally in its place in the normal developmental sequence. Autism limits engagement with others and with the environment, and therefore reduces opportunities for experience. By teaching autistic children how to play, they are taught how to join in and how to enjoy the many experiences of life. In addition, according to Dr. Kitahara, play will coordinate the establishment of a healthy rhythm of life for a child, foster imitation and thereby human relationships and self-confidence, and replace fixations with genuine and productive interests.

“Normal play arouses in (autistic children) an interest in their fellow playmates especially, and others in general (which) builds an ability to adapt to a group. They also learn patience, how to put up with things, in the give and take with fellow playmates. They begin to show interest in all sorts of things and become able to think of others. Daily Life Therapy® thus promotes the development of the emotions through play. This enrichment of experience in life broadens the life of the autistic child and enables growth to proceed more smoothly.”

In Daily Life Therapy®, Playtime is used to teach 1) play itself, 2) language acquisition, 3) social interaction, 4) basic cognitive concepts and 5) motor skills and sensory exploration.

- 1) A wide variety of toys are used to develop a basic interest in play, selected according to individual interests and developmental level. From individual sensory-motor exploratory play to shared “pretend” play, functional use of manipulatives is taught to encourage children to use their senses, overcome defensiveness, engage in simple cause-effect activities, learn leisure skills, enjoy novelty, develop creativity and emotional expression and relate to peers and society. In addition to toy play during Playtime, other forms of play are developed throughout the program. The use of sports equipment, such as tricycles, bikes and scooters is learned, as well as how to play on the playground. This type of play develops physical competence, self-confidence, discharges energy, and provides activities to share with others. Learning how to play games, such as board games or team games, further develop many of the abilities necessary to participate in peer play. Overall, throughout all play, children learn how to have fun.
- 2) Playtime is a natural opportunity for children to learn, practice and expand on a variety of communication skills. Playtime is highly motivating to young children and within play many opportunities naturally arise for students to communicate their wants, needs and feelings with others. In addition to natural communication opportunities, the environment and/or toys can be manipulated to specifically create

additional opportunities for communication. These opportunities can encourage children to anticipate, request objects and actions, obtain help, gain attention, protest, comment and respond to others. Whether children communicate verbally or non-verbally, situations can be utilized within play to enhance and develop their skills. During play, teachers naturally model appropriate language use individualized to the students' developmental and language level. Through direct and indirect language stimulation, children are exposed to a variety of language concepts in a motivating and pleasurable way.

- 3) During Playtime, all forms of play are taught in the context of social interaction. In order for a child with ASD to develop appropriate interest in a toy, it must be presented in a highly motivating and stimulating way that engages the child and models its use. Individual attention to the toy develops from teacher-initiated joint-attention and then progresses to other forms of interaction through sharing and reciprocity. Similarly, in Daily Life Therapy®, other forms of play also involve socialization goals inherent in the group-dynamic approach. When generalized, some play modalities lend themselves either to social or individual play (i.e., puzzles, bike-riding), however, these are all best learned during peer play activities.
- 4) Extensive cognitive learning takes place during play. This includes general learning about the physical and social environment and also specific pre-academic and academic skills. In play, through direct teaching and incidental learning, basic concepts about literacy, numeracy, classification, comparison and sequencing are learned.
- 5) Through Play/leisure, students develop essential skills of movement involving both larger muscle movements and smaller muscles of their hands used for manipulation of small objects, fine motor skills. Play/leisure activities are a natural opportunity for children to develop muscle strength, dexterity, coordination, motor planning, understanding where the body is in space, grasping/manipulation skills and bilateral coordination. In addition, play/leisure time provides endless opportunities to be exposed to a variety of sensory experiences.

By experiencing play as fun, children become motivated to play and then become able to attain all of the many benefits of play. Play can be taught where it does not occur naturally. Playtime reflects the systematic and developmental approach to teaching that is part of the Boston Higashi School curriculum.

COMMUNICATION

“Through communication we understand and develop expectations, recognizing and respecting others.”

~Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Overview

Communication at its most fundamental level is a social behavior whose main function is to have an effect on others. Therefore, communication skills and language acquisition are integral parts of Boston Higashi School’s educational philosophy, Daily Life Therapy®. The key to teaching communication to students with autism is consistency. Here at the Boston Higashi School, a total communication approach is embedded within our educational philosophy and curriculum of Daily Life Therapy®. This affords all of our students, regardless of skill level, the opportunity to access various forms of communication to enhance their understanding, increase their ability to express themselves as well as help build interpersonal relationships.

In Daily Life Therapy®, pathways to communicate are embedded in all curricula activities. Children who arrive at school with limited communication skills are quickly exposed to a wide variety of communicative temptations and other means of active participation. When these activities are used within a group, they create a need or purpose for communication. Over time children begin to explore the world around them and develop interpersonal relationships with their teachers and peers. As these relationships form, opportunities to communicate naturally arise. Since this communication occurs in the context of a real experience, it is natural and functional.

Throughout the curriculum positive group dynamics are stressed. By learning to coordinate and cooperate with others, the child’s sphere of relationships increases, thus building a bridge for establishing the purpose and meaning of communication. In Daily Life Therapy®, the development of a comprehensive communication system that promotes social independence is a primary goal. This system is not taught in isolated sessions; rather it is built throughout the student’s day in all classes and activities including physical education, art, music, and general academics as well as lunch, toileting and play.

Methodology

In order for students to become effective communicators, they must first be active participants in the world around them and realize the importance of social relationships. Thus, the communication program places a strong emphasis on comprehension. The approach to teaching communication is developmentally based and students participate in a variety of age-appropriate activities to increase their skills. During group lessons, core vocabulary (high frequency words) and concepts are taught to the students in organized, thematic units. Targeted core words are taught throughout the school day, giving students repeated exposure to vocabulary in many different contexts and across functions. As the student’s understanding develops, he/she is encouraged to express that knowledge in a variety of ways.

Daily routines and predictable activities are essential to the Boston Higashi School program. Through a predictable schedule, the use of pictures, symbols, voice output devices, gestures and spoken language students learn to associate activities, people, places and objects with language. Students are assessed on an ongoing basis as to their level of understanding and are, in turn, provided the appropriate level of support to continue to make progress.

The classroom teacher consults with the speech-language pathologist, communication teacher as well as with other teachers daily. This allows for all those involved in the student’s education to know about his/her strengths, weaknesses, progress and difficulties. All teachers use the same consistent approach and have the same high expectations.

Collaborative and consultative speech and language services are provided to monitor the student's progress, participate in the development of lessons, consult with teachers as needed, provide ongoing trainings and participate in the development of a student's Individualized Educational Program. These services ensure that the most current speech and language interventions are incorporated into the students' overall program.

Some purposes of communication are to make requests, seek attention, get help, protest, comment, participate in class and socialize with others. At the Boston Higashi School, students are encouraged to communicate for all of these purposes and in naturally occurring situations throughout the day. Staff members are trained to respond to students in ways that are specifically designed to encourage these types of interactions. The Boston Higashi School uses a multi-modal approach to teaching communication, meaning students are encouraged to use a variety of means to communicate. These include eye contact, gestures and body language, photographs and symbols, voice output devices, sign language, vocalizations and verbalizations. Regardless of the method a student chooses to communicate his/her message, constant reinforcement is provided through modeling and turn-taking to help support the pragmatic aspects of language.

Strategies used to Enhance Communication

Throughout the school, various forms of augmentative and alternative communication are made available to the students. These include the use of objects, photographs, symbols and voice output devices. They are used across all settings to both enhance the students understanding as well as to aid them in expressing themselves. Teaching and clarifying the sequence of activities, providing choice-making and requesting opportunities and having the students engage in experiential learning are just a few of the ways pictures, symbols and augmentative communication devices are used within our whole language approach within Daily Life Therapy®. Students carry personal communication systems and bring them to all classes and activities. These systems are recommended, created and managed based on the specific needs of each student.

Core word grids are available to both verbal and nonverbal students. They are used to increase the student's vocabulary and support them with word retrieval, sentence expansion and sentence formulation. Teachers' use a technique called aided language stimulation to provide students with an expressive model. Aided Language Stimulation is a communication strategy where a communication partner (e.g. teacher, parent, friend) teaches symbol meaning and models language by simultaneously speaking while touching the vocabulary on the talker (e.g. child's device, communication book).

Sign language provides another visual alternative form of communication. When sign language is used, the corresponding verbal language always accompanies it. It provides both our non-verbal as well as those verbal students who may have auditory processing difficulties a way to access both receptive and expressive language.

Inherent to autism are the decreased abilities to engage in joint attention, relate socially to others and read non-verbal communication cues. Therefore, exaggerated social cues, facial expressions and body language are used with our students to enhance their awareness of these crucial aspects of communication. Modeling, imitation, role-playing and repetitious practice are just some of the ways students are taught these skills and helped to generalize them across settings.

In the end, communication is not limited to how children with autism and others use words, gestures, pictures or signs. Communication is a way to regulate others, meet our needs and wants, form interpersonal relationships and interact with our environment. Through communication we understand and develop expectations and recognize and respect each others identities. Communication is not only a way of expressing our wants and needs, but a way of expressing the rhythm of our daily lives.

EMPLOYMENT EDUCATION

“If children become used to work from the time they are small they grow up with a sense of responsibility. When they become adults they not only do not try to avoid hard work, but they also can be trusted to do fine work.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Employment Education provides students the opportunity to acquire and apply work skills in order to be able to hold jobs out in the community. Because work is such an important part of our adult lives, exposure to various career paths enables students to pursue endeavors that suit their interests and abilities.

The students can learn the necessary job skills at a wide variety of 22 simulated vocational sites on campus and 22 community-based job sites off campus. While working at the simulated on-campus job sites, our students are enabled to acquire the concept of “working” and entry-level vocational skill sets at a familiar location with familiar teachers.

Students in the Older High School Division are taught job skills within the school in the general areas of clerical, custodial, greenhouse/landscaping, and food service. Students have four (4) hours of vocational classes per week, which are conducted in the natural environment within the school setting. For example, food service is practiced in the kitchen preparing salads for lunch or clerical work such as collating, stapling and mail preparation is taught in the office area. These basic areas serve to introduce employment skills, work stamina, flexibility and responsibility. These foundational skills enable the Older High School students to be prepared upon entering the Emergence Program to also enter the world of community employment.

On-Site Employment Education



Higashi Store and School Gift Shop (retail, packaging/wrapping, inventory): During special school events, throughout the year, our students open and manage the store, selling artisan ceramic products, collectable annual T-shirts, our own lavender soaps, and other novelties. This enhances money mastery, shop-keeping/management, packaging and wrapping, shipping, and social skills through customer interactions and service. Our students derive great pride from selling the wares. The students have started working for the School Gift Shop since November 2017. Their designed store logo can be seen on the store “Thank You” bags.

Bike Shop: At this job site, our students are expected to acquire basic vocational skillsets for the maintenance and repair for bicycles, unicycles, rollerblades®, and job-site tools (e.g., lubricating the wheels of a push-barrel). The Auto Detailing garage is shared with the bike shop job site so that the students can engage in their vocational assignment without being affected by inclement weather. The students also take orders from the customers in the community. This job site started in May 2012.

Laundry: This site can help prepare students for future vocational opportunities at dry cleaning and warehouse type environments. Our students help prepare for swimming lessons by loading and unloading towels into/from the washer and dryer, located in the on-campus Aquatic and Recreation Complex. Folding and restocking fresh towels are also our student’s vocational responsibility at this site. Additionally, EP students are responsible for laundering their own gym clothes.

Building Maintenance: Since June 2002, our students have been learning how to maintain the Boston Higashi School facility by replacing bin liners, washing classroom desks, chairs, and whiteboards, vacuuming corridors, cleaning banisters and door knobs, and sweeping drive paths around the school buildings. The skills students acquired at this job site are transferred to other off-campus job sites, such as Grace Church, DoubleTree Hotel, Corcoran Company, Source One, Snappy Kitchen, and the Food Pantry at the Brockton Salvation Army. Since moving to Holbrook in February 2021, EP students have added the tasks of maintaining water coolers, disinfecting and setting up music equipment, sweeping the gym and corridor, and setting up and cleaning up the cafeteria to the list of maintenance tasks.

Trail Maintenance: As an introduction to Friends of the Blue Hills and Community Landscaping jobsites, our students experience trail maintenance work at our on-campus nature trail. This on-campus nature trail has also been used as our on-campus Road Race running course since May 2016. For the event, our students are responsible for leveling the trail by raking, clearing the trail of branches and debris, and checking trail signs. Throughout the school year, students also help maintain the school grounds by collecting and removing debris. In the fall, students assist in maintaining the “golf course” on the front field.

Ceramics: At this job site, our students build upon the skills learned within their art classes and produce ceramic items that may be sold at the school store as well as to local restaurants and gift shops. Some of the items produced include: plates, mugs, bowls, platters, vases, and planters.

Clerical: At this job site, students collect confidential documents from select bins around the school building. Students then process, sort, shred, and recycle the collected material. Students are taught practical sorting skills, get to practice fine motor skills, maintain their own workspace, and carefully monitor their own equipment. Additionally, students may take on special office projects involving stapling, copying, and collating.

Auto Detailing: Students work at the on-campus detailing garage area. Students begin by practicing a variety of cleaning skills (washing, drying, vacuuming, window cleaning, waxing, tire dressing) on school vehicles. Later, they have the opportunity to complete jobs for paying customers within the school community. Students benefit from the opportunity to use a wide variety of tools and learn skills that can be useful outside of the school setting.

Recycling: At Higashi, students work to recycle a wide variety of items throughout the campus. Students move throughout the campus collecting paper, cardboard, miscellaneous plastics, plastic cups, redeemable bottles and cans, before processing them, and disposing of them in on-campus dumpsters. Periodically, students visit off-campus redemption centers, giving them the chance to practice money skills as well.

Soap Making: At this job site, students complete the steps needed to produce the lavender soap bars that are sold in the school gift shop and at our school events. Students harvest lavender on-site from the plants in our gardens. They process the lavender, grind it down, and infuse it into our soaps. This job site allows students to use a variety of tools and offers our students a chance to manufacture goods, observing the transformation from raw materials to finished products.

Greenhouse: Beginning in 2018, our students work at the newly constructed greenhouse on campus. The Higashi Greenhouse is a year round job site where students learn how plants grow and how to maintain healthy plants. Some job tasks include planting seeds, pouring soil to planters, transplanting plants to larger planters or directly into soil, watering and fertilizing, and using pruners. There is quite a variety, from hanging baskets to unique rare plants. We also work closely with the Ceramics job site to make planters, which can be purchased with or without our plants in them.

Off-Campus Employment Education: Emergence

All students in the Emergence Program will work toward obtaining community employment. Exploration is the first step in the employment seeking process. Students may visit companies and local businesses in

order to gain background knowledge about various jobs or occupations. Students may then participate in job shadowing and volunteer work to encourage hands-on experiences without the commitment of full employment. Once a student has a foundation of experiences he/she is better able to tailor his/her likes and dislikes and train for a job in a preferred field. Each step in the employment process is carefully planned to ensure a student's success. Students are scheduled to work on a part time basis and gradually increase their hours and responsibilities over time.

Boston Higashi School Employment Education teachers work to develop a team environment at each work place to the greatest extent possible, cognizant that the level of involvement for each employment site varies. For instance, students who work delivering newspapers have less opportunity to interact with co-workers than the students who work in a kitchen at a restaurant given the pre-existing environment. It is essential that the teachers educate the co-workers so our students can be viewed as contributing members that may be relied upon and to have the same high expectations for them. Everyone within the work environment has opportunities to be both educator and learner. As important as the student-teacher relationship is for educational change and development, student-coworker relationships are vital to support employment education and future success in the community. Securing employment and providing a variety of community experiences builds a strong educational and practical foundation for the students as adults.

Moving up to the Emergence Program, our students are focused more on devoting their learning time to Employment Education. The younger EP students have two (2) morning and two (2) afternoon lessons per week. For the older EP students, more focus is on their training off campus for three (3) morning and three (3) afternoon lessons. For some of the students who would benefit, there are opportunities to work at all-day job sites, which means leaving school after their Morning Homeroom and coming back to school by their Afternoon Homeroom. The lessons are presented within small-ratio groups. This is specifically designed to facilitate the student's learning and skillset acquisition. The ratio of the students to the job coach is mostly one (1) teacher to two (2) or three (3) students and two (2) teachers to five (5) to seven (7) students.

All of the Emergence Program students experience Employment Education at local businesses and volunteer positions. Job placement is organized by supervisors and experienced teachers, and is based on their evaluation and observation. The mission of Employment education is "work as a responsible adult as part of the community." The employers associated with Boston Higashi School are extremely supportive of the Emergence Program students and appreciate their commitment to hard work.

Boston Higashi School students who hold employment positions before graduation will be encouraged to maintain their positions after graduation if possible. These positions are not "owned" by the school. Students graduating from Boston Higashi School will transition from school to adult life with many work skills and community experiences. The students graduate with an employment history, including a resume and employer references or letters of recommendation. These tools will enable the students to secure employment positions competitively in the future.

Boston Higashi School Employers / Volunteer Positions



Chartwells (Randolph, MA)

Students work for the Boston Higashi School's own food service provider. They are involved in setting up the cafeterias, washing dishes, and cleaning up after lunch. Students are also involved with checking inventory of food items in the stock room.



DoubleTree By Hilton (Downtown Boston, MA)

Established in 2001, student employees work in housekeeping, and room service sites in the hotel facility. The Employment Education teachers provide close supervision and act as a liaison between students and hotel staff. This experience expands future jobs in the hotel business.



Community Landscaping

A seasonal job-site where students work along-side a job-coach in a 1:3 ratio to perform basic landscaping tasks such as weeding, raking, pruning, and general upkeep of local residential properties. Currently we have a small group of loyal customers. Advertising is done by word of mouth.



Quirk Auto Parts (Braintree, MA)

Our newest off-campus job site, this work opportunity began for our students in April of 2019. Here students work in a large, modern warehouse filling on-line orders for auto parts and putting away returns. This exciting opportunity allows the potential for future tasks involved with shipping, packaging, and using computer programs.



Boston Golf Club (Hingham, MA)

A new addition to our current community-based job sites in May 2016 is Boston Golf Club, located in Hingham, MA. Throughout the vocational training at this scenic naturally landscaped golf club, the students are expected to acquire the skill set to professionally maintain the golf course, performing such tasks as fixing divots and raking bunkers. A wide variety of future vocational opportunities are available.



Meals on Wheels (Milton, Quincy, Randolph, MA)

Working alongside elder volunteers, our students assist with the preparation and packaging of lunches. After the meals are ready to be transported, job coaches and students deliver the meals to those in need at over fifty homes throughout the community. This affords the students great opportunities to interact with the customers and establish their social connections while increasing their traffic awareness and vocational readiness for the delivery business. This job site was established in 2004.



Simon C. Fireman Community (Randolph, MA)

Established in 1997, this employer gives the Boston Higashi School students long-term vocational opportunities in a full food-preparatory situation. The head chef, his assistants, and the Boston Higashi School Employment Education staff work closely with the students. This job site is positioned as the entry-level-community-based job site for the students to transition from on-campus sites. It is located right next door.



The Salvation Army Brockton (Brockton, MA)

The students work in a food pantry section of this volunteer site in Brockton assisting with the stocking and organizing of shelves with non-perishable food items. The students are able to work side-by-side with Salvation Army employees and volunteers. These food items are then made available to the community free of charge and serve as many as 100 individuals in need. Additionally, during holiday seasons the students participate in creating decorative food baskets.



White Magdalena House (Hingham, MA)

White Magdalena House is an antique and craft shop, located at a beautiful scenic location by the water in Hingham, MA. For almost a decade, White Magdalena House has been selling our artisan ceramics that are hand-made by the students. For vocational training, our students produce and deliver the orders to this store.



Queen Anne's Gate Apartments (Weymouth, MA)

Established in 1995, the students work on building maintenance vocational tasks at Queen Anne's Gate apartment complex in Weymouth, MA. Job tasks included cleaning the workout room and equipment, vacuuming residential building hallways, laundry room, and maintaining the tennis court.



Toll Road Auto Body (Whitman, MA)

Toll Road Truck & Trailer Corporation of Massachusetts is one of the leading truck equipment distributors in Southern New England. They specialize in supplying and installing quality products from over 35 major manufacturers. They are located in Whitman and East Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Our students' main job is to use safe hydraulic sanders to prepare vehicles for painting. They are responsible for putting on all safety gear, sanding specific areas, changing sandpaper discs, and cleaning up once finished. Higashi students are familiar with using sandpaper due to experiences with the Ceramics on-campus job site. They complete these tasks in a garage bay apart from other work areas (welding, detailing, grinding). The vehicles worked on vary from town maintenance vehicles to trolley buses.



LifeWear

UNIQLO (Chestnut Hill, MA)

We established a partnership with UNIQLO in March 2017. UNIQLO is a modern, global apparel brand with origins in Japan. Our students work at their store at The Shops at Chestnut Hill. Responsibilities include merchandise replenishment and gaining necessary skills in merchandise classification and inventory control.



Friends of the Blue Hills (Milton, MA)

Beginning in 2009, the Boston Higashi School adopted trails at Blue Hills, located in Milton MA. We help with the maintenance and clearing of trail paths in the Ponkapoag area. Students work in conjunction with the Friends of Blue Hills Adopt-A-Trail Program and the Department of Conservation and Recreation with the upkeep of the local hiking/ walking trails throughout the Blue Hills area. Skills include raking, weeding, pruning, and trimming the overgrowth within the forest. Our task is to keep trails safe and clean for joggers and hikers. Instructed by BHS teachers who have been professionally trained in trail maintenance from the Friends of Blue Hills staff, our students are motivated to accomplish more and look toward expanding their work to help with other areas of maintenance throughout the park.



Grace Church (Avon, MA)

In February 2016, our students started working at Grace Church, located in Avon, MA. This facility is similar to a theater design, with a long hallway, large function rooms, nurseries, and a cafe. The students are expected to acquire the necessary skills to set up the function rooms with tables and chairs in the designated format as well as wash windows and vacuum the corridor and Day Care rooms. Working at this facility offers our students opportunities to not only develop vocational skills, but also contribute to the operation of a community institution.



Brookwood Community Farm (Milton, MA)

The Brookwood Community Farm is an 8-acre working farm and education center located in Milton and Canton, MA. Since July 2016, Boston Higashi School students have been working at this farm. Extending the skill-sets the students have learned while working at our on-campus lavender hill and cold frames, they will develop the necessary vocational skills in agriculture by interacting with the farm staff at this job site. The farm is dedicated to preserving historic farmland through sustainable agricultural production that improves access to healthy, affordable, freshly grown fruits and vegetables in urban communities. The farm operates a community supported agriculture (CSA) program, sells produce at local farmers markets and provides on-farm employment, educational and volunteer opportunities to members of the surrounding communities.



The Salvation Army Family Store (Hanover, MA)

Working at a retail store setting is one of the training needs for our students so that they can acquire practical vocational and social skills. In February 2016, our students started working at The Salvation Army Hanover Family store and have been developing their necessary skillsets for merchandise classification and inventory control.



VERC Enterprises, Inc. (Randolph & Stoughton, MA)

VERC Enterprises, Inc. operates 26 convenience stores-gas stations and Car Washes in Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. Starting in June 2016, this became one of our community-based job sites, and our students work at the Gulf station in Stoughton, MA, and the Mobil station in Randolph, MA. This practical vocational opportunity enables our students to acquire the skillset for facility maintenance and beverage inventory as well as traffic safety awareness at a structured setting. In the summer of 2019, VERC made a generous donation of beverages to help supply the Boston Higashi Snack Store at the Annual Celebration.

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

“Daily Life Therapy® can be said to be the obtaining of a deep understanding of the individuality of an autistic child through the growth of that child during the 24 hours of each day. The giving of special training according to a minutely worked out plan to strengthen those areas in which growth had lagged behind, and thus causing the child to overcome disability by their own strength so that they can stand on their own feet in general society.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

The purpose of the Boston Higashi School Residential Program is one of education, teaching daily living, community and social skills to Higashi students through the utilization and adoption of the pedagogical techniques of Daily Life Therapy®. The residence operates at two levels of programming, that is, 304 and 365 days respectively as determined by a student’s IEP. In order to provide residential programs that are individualized and address the age and capabilities of each child, activities are selected that allow the child to experience maximum success and to challenge his/her level of competency. This is accomplished by the careful introduction of increased degrees of difficulty in various residential/educational activities and the selection of student groupings that allow each child to experience a balance between educational challenge and emotional support. Utilization of the group fosters interdependence with the ultimate result of personal independence. Through group activities the students are taught to cooperate with each other and to develop skills to benefit from each other.

The residential curriculum covers life skills, leisure/recreation and community skills. Social skills and communication are also fostered in the residence through a variety of approaches, including utilization of technology, visual supports, and embedding them within routines and activities. The life skills domain includes dressing, showering, brushing and flossing teeth, daily chores etc. Also included are eating, toileting and sleeping domains. Learning independence in self-care creates mastery and a sense of self-pride, which encourages our students in all facets of learning. The residential program also offers a wide range of recreation and community activities. These programs provide students with opportunities to expand their interests, participate and socialize with their peers, develop functional capabilities and basic concepts about the world. They also expand their imagination and communication as well as learn problem-solving skills that form and develop a solid foundation for learning. Thus, they acquire the abilities to contribute to the community as a whole. The repertoire of skills addressed include:

Life Skills

The teaching of life skills in a systematic and developmental way is a fundamental aspect of the curriculum at the residence and all students are held to high expectations for better learning outcomes. The goal is to establish individual independence and dignity. Gaining independence in self-care skills creates a sense of pride that motivates each child in all other area of learning. The following life skills sub-domains are covered:

Initial Stage Guidance: Dr. Kitahara believed that learning self-regulation and self-care provides the foundation for independence and dignity. The residential curriculum, therefore, focuses on what she called “initial stage guidance” covering the regulation of the basic biological rhythms of life, such as, eating, toileting and sleeping.

Dressing and undressing: The scope and sequence of skills are tailored towards fostering independence with regards to dressing and undressing skills. Skills such as being able to identify the front and back as well as inside and outside of clothes, matching socks properly, buttoning and unbuttoning shirts or pants, tucking in shirts to pants, fixing the collar of a shirt appropriately etc. Students learn to identify the right and the left shoes and to independently tie shoelaces. They also learn to check their appearance and to maintain neatness and cleanliness at all times, including dressing for work, formal events, etc.

Eating: Students learn to eat a variety of nutritious and healthy foods. They learn to use the appropriate utensils according to the food served, for example, holding the fork properly to gather food, using a knife to cut food into proper sizes. They also learn to use a napkin to maintain a clean appearance while eating, eating food at the appropriate pace as well as cleaning up after their meal. They learn to generalize these skills in the community when they go for out-to-eat trips in different types of restaurants.

Toileting: Students learn how to ask or identify their bathroom needs, use the bathroom facility independently or with little assistance and clean themselves after each use. They also learn to wait for their turn to use the bathroom. Boys learn from an early age to choose the urinal or toilet appropriately. Students learn after-bathroom use skills such as, proper hand washing, drying hands, applying lotion to hands etc. Teaching toileting skills is carried over from the day to the overnight hours with the instructors keeping in mind the toileting needs of each student such as remaining dry throughout the night. Overall, the residence has been very successful in teaching toileting skills.

Brushing and flossing teeth: The goal is to ensure the students gain skills to maintain good oral hygiene at all times. They are taught to follow the predetermined sequence for brushing including preparing the toothbrush and toothpaste, brushing thoroughly, switching sides while brushing, and rinsing properly. They also learn to floss their teeth as well as appropriate use of mouthwash. A variety of systematic approaches are utilized to ensure students master all the requisite skills.

Showering: Students learn to follow the pre-set showering routine. Most of the students quickly learn and are able to adjust the water temperature on their own, wash/rinse their hair and wash their body independently. The shower routine also covers drying their bodies thoroughly following the predetermined sequence as well as applying lotion and deodorant. Students learn to set and clean the environment at both the beginning and end of the showering process. Students learn to brush their hair after a shower as part of the grooming routine. They also cut their fingernails and toenails at least once a week or as appropriate. Girls learn grooming skills such as styling their hair, polishing their nails etc.

Sleeping: Students go to bed between 8:30-10:00 p.m. every day depending on their divisions. Daily activities are structured in such a way that they prepare students for sleep as a part of maintaining a good rhythm of life. The students are actively engaged throughout the day and activities slow down after dinner with students engaging in a variety of leisure activities that prepare their minds for bedtime. They learn bedtime expectations such as remaining silent in bed through bedtime rules, which reinforce positive behavior.

Homework: Students do homework every evening at the residence, mainly focusing on math, reading, and writing. The homework aims at supplementing what the school does during the day in a homelike setting within the residence. The students continue to benefit immensely from this program, which is implemented by residential staff and master teachers, working closely with division directors and the Residential Academic Director, in collaboration with the Director of Curriculum and Training and classroom teachers.

Daily chores: Students engage in a variety of daily chores, such as doing their own laundry, bringing dirty clothes to the laundry room, putting their laundered clothes into designated cabinet shelves and drawers, preparing a set of pajamas for the night and clothes for the next day, and making their beds. They are also engaged in other daily chores such as changing their bed linens, vacuuming their living spaces, watering plants, washing their hygiene baskets, among many other related tasks. During each activity, each student learns in a structured manner to follow the sequenced routines.

Vocational Activities: The students participate in a variety of vocational activities as a prerequisite to employment education opportunities. The goal is to complement the school's employment education department. Students engage in vocational activities such as cafeteria set up, culinary arts, movie theater set up, recycling, clerical activities, auto detailing, baking, gardening, and many other activities. The employment skills gained have served to introduce our students to the world of employment.

Community Involvement

Community involvement ranges from everyday activities such as shopping, library visits, restaurant outings, swimming, and bowling to field trips, scheduled every weekend, which are coordinated by the Residential Directors in charge of Administration, Program, Academics, Division Directors and Recreation Coordinator, and include many seasonal events such as apple picking, watching parades, and viewing holiday decorations. The students learn in a structured way to integrate in the community and to transition smoothly to and from each destination, including independent use of a seatbelt. Each student is taught to follow safety and emergency directions while crossing the street, among other requisite skills, which are part of the residential curriculum.

Recreational/Leisure Activities

In the residential program, the students engage in a variety of recreational and leisure activities, such as music, art, culinary arts, reading favorite books, rollerblading, swimming, computers and enjoying age appropriate movies, during structured group and individual leisure times. Recreation/Leisure activities are also an integral part of the key residential events such as, dance parties, Fun Day and Family Day etc. The Recreation/Leisure Curriculum is developmental and learning follows the natural sequence while building a strong foundation for social skills and relationships.

Activity Leaders

To ensure systematic and effective implementation of the residential curriculum, highly qualified activity leaders are in charge of various key areas of the curriculum. These include, physical education, art, recreational music, social skills, communication and technology as well as vocational education. Their roles are designed to nurture students' talents and maximize on their best efforts. They work together with residential teachers, their master teachers and directors in developing and implementing high quality, age appropriate and fun activities. They also foster collaboration between the day and the residential program for the benefit of the students.

There is strong emphasis on communication between the Higashi day program and residential program staff. Communication between the day and residential programs is greatly enhanced because the location of the residence is the on same site as the school. All staff have the opportunity to communicate not only electronically but also face-to-face to discuss student issues, plan interventions, and to solve problems. Day and residential staff have a clearer view of all segments of the students' lives, 24 hours a day.

Yearly, monthly and weekly plans are created for the residential students to elaborate and reinforce the school curriculum, as well as provide a well-rounded home-like environment. Activities are planned to provide for students' individual needs. The weekly plans are carefully coordinated with the Directors to ensure the optimal amount of integration into the community.

The atmosphere at the residence is home-like with a strong educational base. Residential instructors, Assistant Master Teachers, Master Teachers, Activity Leaders, Division Directors, Asst. Director of Residence, Residential Academic Director, Residential Program Director and the Residential Administrative Director, all work together to create a warm, but structured environment so the students get a consistent 24-hour education. Everyone who works at the residence is given an orientation and monthly in-services on Daily Life Therapy®, safety, wellness and on the latest teaching techniques, policies, etc. In addition, each division of each shift meets daily at a formal meeting to plan implementation of instruction. The best possible care for the students is every staff's primary goal.

Parent involvement is a key element of the students' program. Parents are encouraged to regularly call and speak with their children, visit when possible, engage in IEPs and side-by-side training with the residential teachers, correspond through the mail or electronically and send family pictures. Open Houses are scheduled throughout the year for the purpose of parent training, observation and involvement. Additional parent training is available to those who request and schedule it through the Education Office.

The residential staff work together to create IEPs that correspond with the school's IEP, as well as in the areas of self-care and recreational community outings. The Residential Administrative Director, Residential Program Director, Residential Academic Director, Assistant Director of Residence, and Division Directors, meet daily to discuss student issues and to ensure efficient operation of the residential program.

In summary, the goal of the residence is to provide development in independent or assisted living skills and social areas in order to facilitate a smooth transition to the students' homes, communities and schools. The residence is a starting point for optimizing life-long inclusion in the community and not a place to provide long-term living arrangements.

PARENTS & STAFF PARTNERSHIP

Parents' Expectations, Responsibilities & Support

"The cooperation of parents and teachers nurturing a child's spontaneous desire to learn is necessary."

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Daily Life Therapy® is an educational approach that focuses on student learning 24 hours a day. It emphasizes stabilizing daily routines in order to maintain a balanced daily rhythm of life. Areas of growth for individual students will be addressed daily using repetitious practice until the respective goals are accomplished. Our philosophy promotes the belief that as one learns to overcome difficulties and becomes self-sufficient, one can function as a true member of his/her family and community.

Expectations

The Mission Statement of the Boston Higashi School states in part, "The purpose of our educational approach is for children to achieve social independence and dignity". A close partnership and collaboration between parents and the school/residence is essential to the student's growth and progress. ***The school/residence and home must have the same expectations to help students grow to their full potential.***

The family is the critical element of influence on the child's life-long development. Student progress is optimal when parents and teachers work together to provide the best quality of life for the children. Parent involvement is essential for happiness and learning. Parents are expected to participate in training and collaborations, attend school events and maintain ongoing and open communication with Boston Higashi School staff. This enables parents to support and carry over the key elements of Daily Life Therapy® thereby promoting independence and building confidence and competence in children.

The goal for all students and their families is to experience a high quality of life. We expect our approach to be followed through at home so that the child will receive consistent guidance throughout the day and night. With this in mind, the Boston Higashi School has developed a process for parents to become closely involved with their children's education, and for the teachers, Case Managers and Master Teachers to assist and support families at home.

Parents' Responsibilities

The initial relationship between the family and school begins during the admission process through the sharing of information, letters, records, videos, interviews, on-site visits, evaluations and discussions with the Admissions Committee. Upon admission parents or guardians will have the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss their child or the program. During this time a complete orientation to the school and residence (if applicable) will be conducted. A staff member will contact the parents via telephone to discuss the student's adjustment at the school/residence. Follow-up will continue as needed.

Communication Between Staff & Administration

At the Boston Higashi School, the Director of Programming and Administrative Staff interact with students on a daily basis in many ways, such as greeting students upon arrival, visiting class lessons, observing group assembly and participating in school-wide events with students and their families. Knowing the students well allows for a successful and open rapport between Administration and Staff.

Administrators guide the staff in all phases of Daily Life Therapy® methodologies. The Division Directors along with the Master Teachers advise teachers on the tenets and implementation of Daily Life Therapy®.

Teachers communicate and report to them on a daily basis. The Division Directors in turn report to Administrative Staff daily and in the formal meetings of the Program and Child Safety Committees.

Similarly, Residential Instructors meet daily to report on their students' condition to their Master Teacher, who in turn, report to the Division Directors, Assistant Residential Directors and all information is shared and provided to the Residential Director.

The Residence and School Staff maintain close communication through daily communication logs, and direct reporting during transitions to and from the residence and school. The Administrative Staff review all student communication logs.

Communications between parents, districts and collateral agencies are documented in Boston Higashi School Brains student database for reference and retrieval purposes.

Communication with Parents

Ongoing communication between the parents and Boston Higashi School is the cornerstone of the parent/school partnership. The school website has updated information posted throughout the year. "Higashi Highlights", the school newsletter is published quarterly and is distributed to parents, districts and friends of the school.

The Daily Life Therapy® Guidelines are given to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year. Boston Higashi staff will discuss the goals for the academic year and explain the policies listed in the Daily Life Therapy® Guidelines in general. However, it is the parents' responsibility to thoroughly read and become knowledgeable about all the details within the guidelines book.

The School Activity Schedule is distributed monthly to all parents and staff. It consists of the monthly goals and a calendar including upcoming events for the month.

Daily Communication Notebook (Day Students Only)

A daily journal will travel back and forth between the school and the home for all day students. The teacher will report about the activities of the day and include any special notes about the student. Similarly, parents are expected to write daily about their child's condition at home. This log is vital in keeping the teacher updated about the students. Parents are expected to write about daily events either positive occurrences or difficulties no matter how insignificant the event may have been. Early detection of difficulties are easily resolved and larger problems are prevented in the future.

Phone/Email Updates

Both the school and residence are committed to maintaining a meaningful dialogue between the parents and Higashi staff. Teachers and residential instructors are happy to speak with parents when they are not working with the students.

Please call 781-961-0800 and you will be directed to either the day or residential program.

Day Program

Parents, who wish to speak with their child's teacher, may leave a message with the Education Office, or call after 4:15pm to speak directly to the teacher. Parents may also direct questions or concerns to their child's case manager.

Residential Program

Telephone calls between parents and children are part of the educational process and serve as a tool in learning an important life skill. Therefore, in order to best foster this skill, we request that phone calls between parents and children be kept to an appropriate length of time. This will allow as many parents as possible to communicate with their children. Telephone calls via video phone/computer are now available upon request. It is requested that parents call in the evening after 7:45pm following dinner and shower time. You can arrange a convenient time to call by speaking with your child's instructor.

The staff is available to discuss a child's progress or to address questions. Parents may call the

residence to speak with staff after 9:00pm. Residential Instructors and Master Teachers cannot be called away from their student groups. The Director, or the Supervisor on duty, will accept your calls. If you would like to speak with a specific Supervisor, Master Teacher or staff person, leave a message with the receptionist and the staff person will return your call as soon as possible.

Particularly for parents who live long distances, the staff will arrange to contact the parents to provide, updates on their child's progress, review plans and goals for visits/vacations and review information.

IEP Meetings/Progress Reports

Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings are held annually, and re-evaluations are completed every three years. IEP meetings will be initiated by the school district and the educational plans will be established within the framework of Daily Life Therapy®. Progress reports are sent to parents and school districts three times a year. Students 14 years or older may be invited to participate in TEAM meetings.

Parent Training

Boston Higashi School is invested in helping parents support learning at home. Research regarding the effects of family involvement on educational outcomes has shown that parent involvement makes a difference in children's achievement. Every family functions as a learning environment, which means that the family makes critical contributions to a child's successful growth and development. When parents have high expectations for their children and understand the fundamentals of Daily Life Therapy®, they are supporting their child's success at school. The founder, Dr. Kitahara was a firm believer in ensuring that the parents and teachers of each child worked in solidarity to support the unique learning style of every student. Communication and collaboration are essential for us to support our founder's mission.

In order to facilitate the home-school connection, a variety of interactive parent trainings are offered at Boston Higashi School. These programs are conducted in a variety of formats including panel presentations, workshops, hands-on trainings and participatory events such as school festivals and celebrations. These training workshops are one avenue to assist the parents with skills and strategies to help their child generalize skills learned at school to the home environment. In addition, other avenues to support the parents are home visits, targeted individual observations, and on-going focus group meetings to explore and develop in-depth understanding about specific areas of interest.

Attendance is strongly encouraged for the monthly parent trainings. Parent participation sends the message that school is important and the work children do there is worthy of adult attention. Parents are valuable allies and increasing and enhancing our partnership with them is a goal Boston Higashi School is committed to achieving. The students, the families, and the school will benefit if the parents are supported in establishing environments that foster their child's growth and development using the methodology of Daily Life Therapy®.

Sibling Programs

We offer programs for the siblings (age 6 and up) that support family cohesion and functioning. Programs are interactive and provide information to promote understanding and support for their sibling. Activities also encourage support and friendships from their peers.

Open Houses, Sports Day, Annual Celebration, & Other Activities

Open Houses are held monthly for the public. Interested individuals may visit the school from 10:00am to 12:00 noon on these designated days. Tours of the residence are also available at that time upon request.

Special events such as Sports Day, Annual Celebration Bon Dance are planned throughout the year. Events are designed for participation and enjoyment by the whole family. Parents are strongly encouraged to join their children since these activities are an important part of their education. All major events are listed on the school calendar and they are important components to successful parent training. Students look forward to these events and seeing their parents. If parents cannot attend one of the events, they should notify the Education Office so that the classroom teacher can prepare their child and inform him/her of the next scheduled visit. All school events are important components to successful parent training.

Classroom/Residential Observations

The Parents' Open House and special events are scheduled for parents to see their child involved in class or residential activities. Parents are welcome to visit the residence or school at any time, such as before an IEP meeting or before vacation or if there is a specific skill or activity that they would like to see. Parents are requested to call the Education Office to schedule a visit. A planned visit is crucial to eliminate any disruption or confusion to the student's routine and to prepare the student well by maintaining consistency.

Student Mail

All parents are welcome to send letters and packages to their child. All mail will be given to the children upon receipt and a staff member will assist the child as needed in opening and reading the mail. Individual E-mail Accounts

Students may be given an Individual E-Mail Account when they demonstrate the skills and when the use of E-mail is deemed appropriate and beneficial for his/her educational advancement.

Weekends (Residential Students)

Parents are encouraged to visit or take their child home during the weekends. In order to prepare students for home visits we request parents communicate their pick-up/return plan to the Education Office or Receptionists 3 days in advance. Teachers will prepare students for the home or campus visit and should plans change, we request immediate notification to allow teachers time to redirect the student and avoid disappointment. Upon return from a weekend visit, please complete the Student Home Report. (See below).

Student Home Report (Residential Students)

Parents are asked to complete the Student Home Report prior to returning student to campus. Teachers review the information provided and will collaborate with parent(s) to plan for future weekend visits and offer support as needed (**Link to Student Home Report is emailed to parents prior to home visit**).

Home Visits

Home visits are provided by the student's teachers/Case Managers for families as needed. The purpose is to help identify areas of difficulty and offer suggestions and support to the students' families. Home visits need to follow in sequence with training at school and follow through is an on-going collaborative process between day and home.

Vacations

In order to help students maintain structure and routines, the school also offers a vacation program during school vacations. Our vacation program is approved by Randolph Public Health and is run by BHS staff. Students participate in vacation day programming as determined by their IEP, or privately funded by parents. All parents are encouraged to plan ahead for the vacations, including preparing a daily schedule, planning special activities and discussing the vacation period with the child's teacher before it begins. Weekend visits prior to vacation are an excellent way to prepare for the vacations.

Planning for Vacations

Parents planning on picking up their child for vacation period should notify the Education Office 2 weeks prior to pick-up date and indicate what items need to be packed. Residential staff will prepare the student for anticipated vacation and pack requested items. ***If we do not hear from you about the items to be packed, the residence will automatically pack for 3 days.***

If parents have concerns about the vacation, they may contact the school in advance. The Division Director/ Master Teacher, Case Manager and Classroom Teacher will discuss how to prepare for the vacation and help on weekends if needed to prepare for the vacation. Some families may feel that they need additional support during vacations. Parents may want to try a new activity that requires help or they may ask for help during a specific difficult time during the day. Boston Higashi School will provide training to respite care workers or provide family training, but will not directly provide respite care to families during the vacations.

Families should contact the school in advance if they have questions about the vacations. Parents from outside of Massachusetts can visit the school and residence during the semester to observe their child's progress and to learn how to work with their child. Staff will help parents plan a schedule for the vacation and answer any questions. Please refer to "Additional Services".

Flight arrangements should be made early enough to ensure that students are picked up at the conclusion of all school activities, and returned to the residence or school at the designated time. Dates and times of departure and return to school are listed in the calendar one year in advance. Please understand that the Boston Higashi School and Residence comprise an educational program that requires a great deal of effort and enthusiasm on the part of the parents and teachers. The goal is for the student to return to his/her family and local community, generalizing skills learned at Boston Higashi School.

Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal Law, requires that The Boston Higashi School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written permission prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student record. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Boston Higashi School to include certain information about a student in school publications, such as the school Newsletter, website and special event programs.

The Boston Higashi School will notify parents annually regarding their rights with respect to the release of directory information. *If parents DO NOT WANT Boston Higashi School to release directory information from their child's education records without your prior consent, they must notify the school in writing by October 1st.*

Parent Complaints

Parents are encouraged to keep on-going and open communication with their child's classroom teacher in order to resolve issues as they arise. Classroom teachers, Case Managers or direct care staff will consult with the child's Master Teacher to resolve an issue and will respond to the parent within 1-3 days depending on the nature of the concern. If the parents are not satisfied with the feedback from the classroom teacher, Case Manager and Master Teacher they may take their concerns to the Division Director and or Director of Special Education. A response will be made within 1-2 days. If the issue is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the parent, the complaint(s) will be brought to the attention of the Director of Special Education, Director of Programming and/or Executive Director, as needed, and a TEAM meeting will be called to work with the school district and any other agencies to support the resolution of the issue.

Parent Association

The Parent Association meets regularly to plan activities and support for school events. All association meetings are listed in the annual calendar and are open to all parents. This is a great opportunity for parents to get to know each other and develop supportive relationships.

Policies & Procedures Manual

The Boston Higashi School Policy & Procedures Manual, as required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education is available in the Education Office for parents to review upon request.

STUDENT HOME REPORT

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____
First Last MM/DD/YY

Person Filling Out: _____ Relation: _____
First Last

How was your visit?

☐ Great ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Difficult

Please describe the highlights of the visit:

Did your visit go as planned? ☐ Yes
☐ No, _____

Did you have concerns during this visit with:

☐ Eating ☐ Sleeping ☐ Self Care Skills (toileting, showering)

Did your child have a BM? (note: Information needed for the Nurse to monitor.)

☐ NO
☐ YES (☐ SM ☐ Med ☐ LG)

If there were challenges, please describe:

☐ Aggressive _____
☐ Obsessive _____
☐ Property Destruction _____
☐ Outburst in Community _____
☐ Difficulty in Car _____
☐ Other _____

Would you like a follow up call from the teacher or case manager? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Thank you for filling out this form.

VISITOR MANAGEMENT PLAN GUIDELINES

Boston Higashi School follows the following guidelines to ensure safety.

1. All visitors to BHS must check in at the school or residential reception areas.
2. Everyone will sign in and receive a visitor pass:
 - a) Family (green)
 - b) Visitor (yellow)
 - c) Contractors (red)
3. Visitors will wear this pass during their entire visit on campus.
4. The receptionist will notify staff that their visitor has arrived.
5. At the completion of the visit, the visitor will be escorted back to the reception area, return visitor pass, and sign out with receptionist.
6. BHS staff will notify the receptionist if they observe an individual on campus without a visitor pass. That individual must be escorted directly to sign in at the reception area.
7. BHS staff will not allow any visitor to proceed through secure areas (locked doors) without a pass.
8. All visitors will need to sign in and out, but if they do not leave the immediate reception areas they do not need a visitor pass, i.e., IEP meetings held in the small/large conference rooms, waiting in the Marble Hall lobby, etc.
9. The day student entry doors will only be used for student arrival and dismissal. Transportation workers can access that entry area during their scheduled drop offs and pick ups, i.e., bathroom use. **Parents picking up or dropping off their child between the posted hours 8:15 -9:00 AM and 3:15-4:00 PM may also access this area. If a parent has any other business at the school during this time (going to the health room, education office, etc.) they must sign in at Day Reception Desk and receive a parent visitor pass.** At all other times please use the main entrance. Any other visitors at that location will be redirected to the main reception area for entry.
10. Special Circumstances: Individuals that regularly come to campus with a predictable and identifiable purpose i.e., Food deliveries to the kitchen, Poland Springs delivery, WB Mason delivery, the Rabbi, pharmacy deliveries, etc. will be exempt to these guidelines at this time. The BHS school department (kitchen, health room, business office, etc.) associated with these visitors will be responsible for them while they are on campus.

RESEARCH SAFEGUARDS

Boston Higashi School is very selective in the research in which it participates. Any research that is conducted using our staff, student population, parents, families, alumni, and others who may be affiliated with the school is carefully considered. Researchers must submit their proposals to the BHS Research Team for prior approval.

We may encourage parents to participate in those select research projects that we deem to be the most important or of greatest interest to parents. Boston Higashi School seeks to assure that student identity and privacy are protected throughout all phases of research.

Informed permission/consent is obtained from appropriate parties prior to research participation. A statement of the purposes, methods, degree and type of participation required for such research must be provided for informed consent. Written research authorization is required and a copy will be kept locked separately, not in the student's education record.

Participation in any research is completely voluntary. Refusal to participate and/or withdrawal from the study at any time will have no negative implications for the student. A student/s participation in follow-up studies or other research requiring individual contact or re-contact is also completely voluntary. Continuation of service is not dependent on participation and the informed parental permission and student consent must again be obtained.

Parents and students will be informed of all potential risks and benefits that are known and/or expected from the research in order to be able to make an informed decision about their participation. If at any time it is felt that there is any risk to a student from the research, the parent and student will be informed and participation halted to allow for further consideration by the family. There is never any consequence to the student or family in their relationship to the Boston Higashi School from withdrawal from a research project at any time.

Individual student research may be conducted in private settings when necessary in order to limit educational disruptions. Classroom teachers will be generally informed of research to be conducted at school but will not have access to research data in detail. All research evaluations are completed without disclosing student's full names to further ensure confidentiality. Students are assigned identification numbers by the researcher and these are kept on file separately from the research data. Only first names are used when researchers interact with students directly and only the identification number is placed on written data.

Researchers conducting research at Boston Higashi School will be informed of and required to sign a written agreement to abide by the Boston Higashi School's student confidentiality and safeguard policies.

Research conducted by Boston Higashi School staff for programmatic purposes will follow the same safeguards, modified as necessary regarding student identity, but maintaining confidentiality of data.

OTHER INTERVENTIONS

If you wish to have your child involved with approaches beyond the scope of Daily Life Therapy®, it will be necessary for you to read this policy statement and subscribe to the conditions set forth. Please understand that your signing this form does not require that we are directly involved in the treatment or intervention requested.

In signing below, you hereby acknowledge that the fundamental mission of the Boston Higashi School is educational, and that Daily Life Therapy® is the clearly prescribed methodology based upon specific premises developed by Dr. Kiyo Kitahara, and that the Boston Higashi School may agree to respond to the requested treatment only as an accommodation to your specific request.

BY SIGNING YOUR NAME BELOW, YOU AND YOUR CHILD HEREBY RELEASE THE BOSTON HIGASHI SCHOOL, WHO MAY ASSIST IN THE INTERVENTION, FROM LIABILITY FOR ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE TREATMENT OR FOR ANY COSTS OR INJURIES (EMOTIONAL OR PHYSICAL) THAT MIGHT BE INCURRED IN CARRYING OUT THE TREATMENT, INCLUDING ANY TESTING THAT MAY BE NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE TREATMENT. ALL REQUIREMENTS DURING THE PROCESS INCLUDING TRANSPORTATION OR PRE-TESTING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE AFOREMENTIONED ARE **NOT** THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BOSTON HIGASHI SCHOOL.

In signing your name below, you acknowledge and agree that it will be necessary for you to arrange for a practitioner to describe in writing: (a) the benefits to be expected from the treatment; (b) potential adverse side effects to the treatment, including any recommended monitoring, (c) the specific treatment plan to be conducted, the frequency and the duration of treatment; and (d) a detailed plan to monitor any possible benefits or adverse side effects.

In signing your name below, you acknowledge and agree that it may be necessary for you to arrange for your child to undergo monitoring, other necessary or desirable testing in accordance with the recommended monitoring plan at times when school is not in session and to arrange for the results of any such monitoring to be provided to the Boston Higashi School.

In signing your name below, you acknowledge and agree that the Staff of the Boston Higashi School can cease the support of other treatment at any time it appears that such treatment may be exerting an adverse effect upon the child. All reasonable attempts will be made to notify you in advance by telephone or in writing, circumstances permitting.

In signing your name below, you acknowledge and agree that the Boston Higashi School may charge you for the expenses involved in support of the treatment that is not part of services required under an Individualized Educational Plan.

Treatment _____ Practitioner Title _____

Signed _____ Date _____

**Prior to any intervention physical testings is the parents' responsibility.

INCLUSION

“We give them detailed guidance first and then only put them in an ordinary class when they are completely self-reliant in the things of daily life and have reached a stage at which they are able to adapt to such a group. “

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

Philosophy

The promotion of life long inclusion is the ultimate goal for each of our students. Boston Higashi School's conception of inclusion is a philosophical position rather than a placement option. There are many means to promote life long inclusion. Mainstreaming, reverse mainstreaming, community movement and employment in the work place are all avenues that Boston Higashi utilizes to ensure life long inclusion.

Mainstreaming means that a student spends part of his/her day in a regular education setting. This can be an effective method if the student is ready to perform in ways that will allow him/her to profit in a regular education setting. Dr. Kitahara explains her view in Volume One; Daily Life Therapy®:

“Frequently people have the impression that mixed education means placing autistic children in classes with healthy (typical) children from the beginning. However, we never do that. We give them detailed guidance first and then only put them in an ordinary class when they are completely self-reliant in the things of daily life and have reached a stage at which they are able to adapt to such a group. Unless this is done the autistic child is like a fish out of water. He is all confused, his emotions do not stabilize and the healthy (typical) children too are upset.”

Criteria

The criteria to determine if a student could benefit from a mainstream setting, are discussed at the annual team meeting. These criteria include but are not limited to; the students' ability to maintain self-control in different environments with different people, interest in other students and the ability to imitate others, independence in daily living skills and a means to communicate. Mainstreaming opportunities are not limited to those students with high academic levels or verbal ability. Mainstreaming opportunities are also determined by the school district's ability to support the placement.

Ideal learning opportunities in the mainstream setting are carefully researched. The placement must help the student to progress toward his or her optimal physical, social/emotional, behavioral, and cognitive potential through group instruction. The student must be involved in active learning experiences in a nurturing environment that encourages independence and self-esteem. The placement should be a positive, noncompetitive atmosphere that fosters an acceptance of the uniqueness of self and others. It should have opportunities for contact both socially and educationally with children from the appropriate age group. The placement should benefit the student in areas in which the student may need more stimulation, i.e. socialization or vocational training. The placement must have the ability to provide the supports and services necessary to allow continued growth of the student.

Regression can occur if there is an absence of systematic, careful planning. The student will continue to need a degree of structure regardless of his/her level of functioning. There is also the consideration of which staff are prepared to educate and support the student in the regular education classroom. Training of these public school staff can be supported at the Boston Higashi School.

Mainstreaming is most effective and beneficial when conducted in the student's home community. Building relationships in their own community is one of the main purposes. If the student's home community is a great distance from the Boston Higashi School the team will try to find an alternative school that would be willing to participate. Boston Higashi school continues to try to increase the network of placements in local schools each year. Although we have schools which are willing to assist, their placements may not match with the students needs, therefore, a placement is not always guaranteed. When considering the option of mainstreaming, parents must carefully investigate the long range plans for their son/daughter.

Reverse Mainstreaming

Reverse mainstreaming is a mutually beneficial activity for both our students and the students from a typical school when they visit Boston Higashi School. These interactions provide several opportunities; they give students the opportunity to interact with their typical peers in a familiar environment, and showcase activities that allow the Boston Higashi School students to demonstrate areas of mastery and to present themselves as people with skills not individuals with special needs. The visiting students also learn more about autism and will be more knowledgeable about human diversity.

Community Experiences

Community experiences are important for life long inclusion in society. Our residence provides varied and meaningful activities in the community. The students have a multitude of opportunities, including functional learning experiences, i.e., visiting the local library, shopping for groceries and experiences that promote quality of life such as attending concerts, museums and ball games.

In addition, the employment education promotes life long inclusion. Many students over the age of sixteen work in the community. Job coaches systematically prepare students to interact with co-workers at the work site.

Life Long Inclusion

Inclusion, in its many forms, is a philosophy that Dr. Kitahara embraced. Integration, the involvement of our students with special needs with typical peers is a methodology to enhance life long inclusion based upon the skills of the individual and the preparedness of the community.

SUSPENSION

The Boston Higashi School is committed to helping children who manifest behavioral difficulties by assisting them to remain in the school or residence while learning self-control and independence and has subsequently, never exercised the use of suspension. However, in the unlikely event that a student was suspended the school would ensure the following:

3-5 Day Suspensions

Upon admissions of a student, the private special education program provides a written policy on suspensions to the parents, and the school district and human service agency that placed the student. Such policy shall also contain the following:

- a. When a student is suspended, the school shall immediately notify the parents and the public school or human service agency responsible for the placement. Within 24 hours, the school shall send a written statement explaining the reasons for suspension to the parents and public school district.
- b. No student will be suspended and sent home unless a responsible adult is available to receive the student.
- c. Once a student has been suspended for three (3) consecutive school days or five non- consecutive school days in a school year, the school, parents, and public school district, consistent with federal requirements, shall explore together all possible program modifications within the school in an attempt to prevent more lengthy suspension of the student from the program.
- d. The Boston Higashi School will record and track suspensions in the same manner as student absences. The classroom teacher will inform the Education Office via the individual student attendance records. The Education Office will be the communication to all necessary parties.

10-Day Suspension

Boston Higashi School will implement the following procedures when suspensions exceeds 10 consecutive school days, or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative school days:

- a. A request is made of the student's responsible school district to convene an IEP Team Meeting, which includes representation from the private school, prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities;
- b. The private school participates in the Team Meeting:
 - (1) to develop or review a functional behavioral assessment of the student's behavior and to develop or modify a behavior intervention plan;
 - (2) to identify appropriate alternative educational setting(s); and
 - (3) to conduct a manifestation determination (i.e. to determine the relationship between the disability and the behavior).
- c. If the Team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, the school may suspend or terminate the student consistent with policies applies to any other student in the program. The responsible school district must, however, offer an appropriate educational program to the student with disabilities that may be in some other setting.
- d. If the Team determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, the Team takes steps to modify the IEP, behavior intervention plan, and/or the placement.

TERMINATION

The Boston Higashi School does not terminate the enrollment of any student, even in emergency circumstances, until the enrolling public school district is informed and assumes responsibility for the student.

The program has developed a written termination policy that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Proposals for terminating a child will be discussed internally among members of the school's Program Committee and Executive Committee, and dialogue will be conducted with the student's teachers and instructors.
- b. At the request of the public school district, the program delays termination of the student for up to two (2) calendar weeks to allow the public school district the opportunity to convene an emergency Team meeting or to conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's termination.
- c. With mutual agreement between the private special education program and the placing public school district, termination of enrollment may be delayed for longer than two calendar weeks.
- d. The Boston Higashi School will make every effort to continue the child's enrollment while the LEA, the parents, and appropriate human service agency seek alternative arrangements.
- e. The Boston Higashi School will facilitate the student's transition to another placement according to the process set forth in the Transitional Planning Policy.
- f. For planned terminations, the private special education program notifies the public school district of the need for an IEP review meeting and provides notice of this meeting to all appropriate parties ten (10) days in advance of the intended date of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to develop a clear and specific termination plan for the student that shall be implemented in no less than thirty (30) days unless all parties agree to an earlier termination date.
- g. For emergency terminations, which are circumstances where the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others, the program follows the procedures required under 603 CMR 28.09(12)(b) and immediately notifies the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Boston Higashi School shall not terminate the enrollment of any student, even in emergency circumstances, until the enrolling public school district is informed and assumes responsibility for the student. At the request of the public school district, the special education school shall delay termination of the student for up to two calendar weeks to allow the public school district the opportunity to convene an emergency Team meeting or to conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's termination from the special education school program. With the mutual agreement of the approved special education school and the public school district, termination of enrollment may be delayed for longer than two calendar weeks.

TRANSITION PLANNING

“The curriculum gains its power from the fact that teachers, children and parents share the same premises regarding the incentives for growth and development.”

~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

There will come a time when the young adults of Boston Higashi School will leave the school and enter the adult world. Transition, which involves moving from one stage of life to another, will be an extremely challenging event in their lives. Individualized team planning, well in advance of a transition date, is essential for each young adult. Parents and families need to play a primary role in the process of transition for their family member. It is parents who will lead the team through the course of the child's life. Schools, staff and agencies undergo constant change, therefore it is crucial for families to stay informed on issues such as their child's education progress, adult service programs, Turning 22 funding, transition planning and legal changes.

Transition planning can begin as early as elementary school, as parents introduce their child to activities and people in the community. When the child enters the High School division it will be important for vocational and functional curricula to be introduced. Future planning will be discussed during IEP meetings as the child moves through his/her Middle School and high school years. From the age of 14, students may become active participant in this process to ensure their interests and desires are considered. Parents, at this stage, should begin communication with their contact agent at the Department of Mental Retardation to inform them about their son/daughter.

When the student enters the Emergence division, the focus will be on employment training, community participation and functional academics. The Department of Developmental Services will be invited as a new team member to the IEP meetings, which will foster discussion around transition planning. As the student reaches the age of 18 he/she should have an Individualized Transition Planning meeting. Boston Higashi School will work with parents, the school district, and DDS to develop a dynamic and detailed individualized transition plan for their child. It is necessary for parents to frequently observe their son/daughter at their current community work site, at school, in the community and to visit adult programs in order to have the necessary information to best advocate for their son/daughter in the future.

Detailed planning and preparation by a team of supporters is vital to the success of a student's transition. As the transition team develops an “action plan,” assistance by Boston Higashi School may be incorporated according to each student's individual needs. Support options may include but are not limited to staff training for the new program on-site, at Boston Higashi School, Residence or employment sites, training by Higashi staff at the new site, training videotapes and communication between staff. Transition plans will be an on-going and integral part of the young adults' lives and will change and develop, as they do, to meet their individual needs for the future.

Graduate students and their families are encouraged to continue their friendship and communication with Boston Higashi School after graduation and to join in the special events throughout the year.

TRANSITION GUIDELINES CALENDAR

Age 14	Age 15	Age 16
<p><u>Parents</u> Introduction to Transitional Services guidelines.</p> <p>“Vision Statement” developed by the team for the IEP. This will focus on the next 5 years and outline the vision upon discharge from BHS.</p>	<p><u>Parents</u> Begin meeting with the Transition Service Coordinator at BHS.</p> <p>Update “Vision Statement” for the IEP meeting.</p>	<p><u>Parents</u> School LEA can make a referral to the appropriate adult service agency. This enables the child to be identified by the DDS (Dept. of Developmental Services) system or student’s local adult service agency, if not Massachusetts.</p> <p>Introduction to Employment Education curriculum once student enters the High School Division.</p> <p>DDS will not participate in transition process until adult eligibility is complete (usually age 18).</p> <p>Attend Parent Collaboration Meetings.</p> <p>Attend DDS workshops.</p> <p>NETWORK!!</p>
<p><u>Boston Higashi</u> Students begin basic in-school employment education skill development, by developing basic chore routines.</p> <p>“Vision Statement” is developed for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Review Transitional Guidelines Calendar.</p> <p>Complete Transition Planning Form outlining the progression towards 22.</p>	<p><u>Boston Higashi</u> Student continues to develop basic vocational routines.</p> <p>Student will participate in functional academics that will apply to daily life.</p> <p>Update “Vision Statement” for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Update the Transition Planning Form for the IEP meeting.</p>	<p><u>Boston Higashi</u> IEP Meeting 688 or related referral should be made by the school district.</p> <p>BHS may host DDS for in-school intake and eligibility.</p> <p>Update “Vision Statement” for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Update the Transition Planning Form for the IEP meeting.</p>
<u>Goals for year</u>	<u>Goals for year</u>	<u>Goals for year</u>

Age 17	Age 18	Age 19
<p><u>Parents</u> Make a request to school district to invite DDS to next IEP meeting. (DDS may want to wait until 18th birthday)</p> <p>Guardianship preparation begins prior to child turning 18.</p> <p>BHS can complete Psychological portion of a clinical team report and parents will obtain physician's signature and a social worker's signature.</p>	<p><u>Parents</u> Age of Majority. You can obtain legal counsel or present the clinical team report yourself at your local Probate Court.</p> <p>Final Guardianship must be completed within 6 months of the date on the Clinical Team Report.</p> <p>Complete eligibility for adult services, and begin communication with DDS transition coordinator.</p> <p>Complete application for SSI (Supplementary Social Income). this benefit will help fund adult services and provide health insurance.</p>	<p><u>Parents</u> Inform BHS once guardianship has been obtained and send copies to Education Office.</p> <p>Schedule visits through your DDS coordinator to observe various adult programs.</p>
<p><u>Boston Higashi</u> Student continues in-school Employment Education.</p> <p>Student will participate in functional academics that will apply to daily life.</p> <p>Update "Vision Statement" for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Update the Transition Planning Form for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Prepare student for transition to Emergence Program.</p>	<p>Boston Higashi BHS can assist in the completion of the Psychologist Evaluation section of the Guardianship papers.</p> <p>Student continues in-school Employment Education.</p> <p>Student will participate in functional academics that will apply to daily life.</p> <p>Update "Vision Statement" for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Update the Transition Planning Form for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Student will transition to Emergence Program.</p>	<p>Boston Higashi Student will complete transition to the Emergence Program.</p> <p>All programming is community connected and the student will increase time in Employment Education and Community Education.</p> <p>Update "Vision Statement" for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Update the Transition Planning Form for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>BHS can accompany you to various adult programs once you have narrowed your choices down to 2 programs. Contact the Transition Coordinator.</p>
<u>Goals for year</u>	<u>Goals for year</u>	<u>Goals for year</u>

Age 20	Age 21	Age 22
<p><u>Parents</u> Review Transition strategies before IEP meetings with Transition Coordinator.</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss Transition topics at IEP meetings, such as programs visited, program design, potential parent partners, etc.</p> <p>Visit child's work site, classroom and residential group. Get a clear picture of the student's needs upon graduation.</p> <p>Work closely with DDS transition coordinator and communicate with them regularly.</p> <p>Schedule on-going meetings with the Transition Coordinator. at BHS.</p>	<p><u>Parents</u> Finalize adult provider choice or provider plan.</p> <p>Update Transition plan and visit adult providers on an on-going basis.</p> <p>"Action Plan" to be determined by the Transition Team.</p> <p>Create final "Vision Statement" for IEP meeting.</p>	<p><u>Parents</u> Students may stay through their 22nd year (until August) if approved by their funding agency.</p>
<p><u>Boston Higashi</u> Individual parent meeting to begin with BHS Transition Coordinator.</p> <p>Update "Vision Statement" for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Update the Transition Planning Form for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Student's time in the community will increase.</p>	<p><u>Boston Higashi</u> BHS staff will continue site visits to adult providers with parents to narrow down choices, or program development options.</p> <p>Final Program choice: Team Meeting to be held at BHS. Parents, adult program and DDS to develop an "Action Plan" to determine timeline of transition responsibilities.</p> <p>Student Portfolio and video initiated.</p>	<p><u>Boston Higashi</u> BHS completes the discharge summary.</p> <p>Follow up for the first year after transition (1 month, 3 month, 6 month, and 1 year). Transition Coordinator to contact you.</p> <p>Update "Vision Statement" for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Update the Transition Planning Form for the IEP meeting.</p> <p>Communication with family and new program staff will be on-going as needed.</p>
<u>Goals for year</u>	<u>Goals for year</u>	<u>Goals for year</u>

DISCHARGE

Upon discharge a Discharge Face Sheet, Planning Sheet and Transfer Sheet will be completed on each discharged student. Copies will be placed in the student's record, a copy will be given to the family and to the receiving placement. Within one month following discharge a "Discharge Summary" describing the student (current performance, teaching approach/methods etc.) will be written and sent to the above mentioned parties. Following discharge, follow-up correspondence will be initiated as needed by the Director of Special Education or her designee and documented on the Face Sheet which will be in the child's record.

Records for students discharged will be kept in a separate area from active files.

PLAN FOR FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

The Boston Higashi School will utilize correspondence as the primary procedure to gather information to determine follow-up services.

The Director of Special Education or her designee will be responsible for follow-up.

DISCHARGE PROCEDURE

Educational Team Meeting: When a student has successfully met the criteria set forth in the IEP movement to a less restrictive setting is determined. If the child fails to progress, a more appropriate setting is discussed. A formal discharge meeting is set to include members of the TEAM including parent(s) and LEA or SEA.

Discharge Meeting: Participants may include but are not limited to Boston Higashi staff, parents, school liaison, and specialists closely involved with the student. During the meeting the student's progress is discussed, reviewing the progress reports, educational assessments, and other pertinent information. The participants will work together to determine an appropriate placement and or alternative for the student.

Review Meeting: The Director of Special Education together with the Division Director(s) will schedule a review meeting for the student. Representatives from the responsible agencies and the parents will participate to develop a transitional plan.

Transitional Plan: A formal recommendation is made regarding a new program including plans for trial visits, parent support, orientation of new faculty, and time-lines. Plans are outlined for post discharge follow-ups with new agencies serving the student.

The Director of Special Education or her designee will consult periodically with parents and new teachers regarding progress or problems and continue to be available for communication/consultation as needed.

Emergency Discharge: In case of an emergency discharge, such as circumstances in which a student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others, the school will send a written summary explaining the reasons for the discharge to the parents, student(if over 14 years of age), local administrator of special education and officials of appropriate agencies along with the Form 2: Chapter 766 Approved Private School Incident Report.

OFF GROUNDS

Boston Higashi School acting virtually as parents in absentia **does not** encourage or endorse off grounds visitation of students. Boston Higashi School is not supervising or sanctioning these activities and is in no way responsible or liable for any persons involved or anything that might occur during these activities.

Both Boston Higashi School and parents share the goal of providing the best and safest services for each child. For each child in the care of Boston Higashi School, we have legal responsibility to exercise extreme caution and to avoid any potentially unsafe situations.

While parents often have trust in certain individuals to provide care for their child, our concern is focused on the fact that without proper monitoring and supervision, even the best-intended individuals may not be able to provide the care necessary for the child.

Parents have demonstrated confidence in the services we provide, including the establishment of a caring environment to enhance a student's emotional well-being. The staff are increasingly concerned that if children in our care are allowed to visit with non-custodial, and unsupervised caretakers, the students' educational process could be disrupted.

As a result of these concerns, Boston Higashi School will be enforcing its policy that students **will not** be placed for visitation when there is not a parent and guardian or direct family member present. This policy is designed not only to prevent the disruption of educational services and to promote positive experiences during the weekends and holidays, but is also designed to enhance our ultimate shared goal of returning each child to live with his/her family and enjoy a high quality of life.

PRIVATE STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

Parents will sometimes contact staff directly to provide off grounds direct care services without seeking authorization from the School Management and Administration. Please be advised that the School strongly discourages any private staffing arrangements between parents/guardians and any staff person employed by the school. The School's insurance coverages do not extend to any private staffing arrangements.

It must be understood that when staff work as private individuals they are NOT employees of the Boston Higashi School. The Boston Higashi School insurance policies do not provide any of the critical insurance coverages of any sort in these situations. Therefore in the event that an employee is hurt or injured while working under such an arrangement the (staff) person is technically employed by the parent and therefore would typically have no worker's compensation insurance available to them. The employed person's only recourse would be to take legal action against the parent. Parents/Guardians should check with their own policies (auto/homeowners) to determine if there is any coverage in those situations.

Likewise, if the parent's son or daughter is hurt or injured at any time while under the care of the staff person under a private staffing arrangement with parents/guardians it must be understood that there is typically no liability insurance coverage (possibly with the small exception of the staff person's auto insurance). Those employed by parents/guardians directly should check with their own policies (auto/homeowners) to determine if there is any insurance coverage in those situations. A parent or guardian's only recourse would be to take legal action against the staff person employed.

Again the School Management and Administration strongly discourages these private staffing arrangements.

ALLOWANCE

Boston Higashi School shall provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of the value of money through earnings, spendings, giving and saving.

Boston Higashi Staff will maintain an accounting for individual and personal allowance funds for students. The accounting will be maintained following standard accounting practices. Individual student bank accounts will normally be established under the students name and social security number for students who are employed and receive paychecks. Parents will be contacted for permission to establish a weekly spending allowance for these students. Bank statements will be mailed directly to parents. A journal of the bank account transactions will be provided to the parents upon request.

Upon discharge or transfer of the child to another facility all unencumbered funds will accompany the student.

Medical Policies & Procedures

MEDICATION PHILOSOPHY

The legacy of Dr. Kitahara provides a model of education that views the individual with autism as a person who should be nurtured through education and relationships. Dr. Kitahara believed *“within every living child exists the most precious bud of self-identity. To search this out and foster it with loving care; that is, the essence of education of the autistic child.”*

Dr. Kitahara believed that medication as a behavioral intervention is incompatible with the methodology of Daily Life Therapy®. Daily Life Therapy® is a holistic approach which promotes learning and development through the creation of the bond between teacher and child, providing an environment of safety and security in which learning can occur.

The basic tenets of Daily Life Therapy® establish an implemented pattern of daily living, sufficient daily exercise for health and stamina, and intellectual stimulation. Together these activities help children focus attention, diffuse energy, feel calm and relaxed, and create a stimulating environment, which opens the doors for learning.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS & FORMS

Without completed and up to date school health forms/emergency consent forms, your child may not attend school.

Forms are completed online, yearly. The link to complete the health forms are emailed to all parents before the start of the school years (over the summer before), and is also accessible on our website.

If you are unable to complete forms electronically, a printed packet is available upon request.

In addition to completing health forms, parents must submit annual physical and dental exams, immunization records, physician's orders for medication (if applicable), and copies of health insurance. These can be emailed, faxed or mailed:

tracy.shepherd@bostonhigashi.org

fax 781-961-9393

Your child's School Health Record must be updated throughout the year if information changes. We need to be kept informed of all medical issues and medications, even if not taken at school. This is essential to providing quality care for your child. Please forward all necessary documents to the Boston Higashi School Medical department.

If your child is prescribed medication during the school year, the BHS Health Department must have signed permission from a parent/guardian, as well as a doctor's order before the medication can be administered. Consent is included in the online health forms, and is signed electronically

We ask that parents list all medications on the health forms. This should include prescribed, over-the-counter, vitamins, or supplements, whether taken during school hours or at home. It is the parents' responsibility to update the Health office promptly of changes in health status and /or changes in medications throughout the school year to ensure your child's medical record is kept current.

DANGEROUS SITUATIONS CAN OCCUR WHEN MEDICAL PERSONNEL ARE NOT FULLY INFORMED. A COMPLETE CURRENT MEDICAL RECORD IS ESSENTIAL IN PROVIDING CARE FOR YOUR CHILD.

OVERVIEW OF MEDICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of the students, and to promote safe handling of medication; they are in compliance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Regulations 105 CMR 210.000. **Policies apply to any medication or topical treatment, including those prescribed by a physician and over the counter remedies administered or applied by the school nurse.**

- **School nurses cannot administer medications (prescription or over the counter) without a physician's order, and orders are valid for one year from original date.**

- Parents are responsible for obtaining orders from physicians and submitting them to the Health Room.

The physician's order MUST contain the following:

1. The child's name and date of birth
2. Name of the medication
3. Dose
4. Frequency
5. Method or route of administration
6. Duration of time it is to be administered
7. The condition the medication is treating/reason for administering
8. Any side effect/adverse effects to watch for
9. The prescriber's signature and contact information

- All medication must be signed in and out by the parent or designated adult. Parents should plan ahead and allot extra time if medication is being picked up or dropped off. **Medication should not be left at the reception desk or with other non-nursing staff.**

- When you (or a designated adult) pick up your child, you are responsible for making sure you have all needed medication and supplies before leaving campus. **If medication is left behind, Boston Higashi School staff will not be held responsible, and parents/guardians are expected to make alternate arrangements.**

- Signed parental consent is required for each medication to be administered, and this includes over the counter medications. Consent for medication is included in the online health forms. A printed medication consent form is also available from the health office upon request.

Over the Counter topical treatments

At the discretion of the nurse, some over-the-counter topical remedies (i.e. acne treatment) will be allowed for use in the residence by students; these remedies must be deemed safe and will be used with the assistance of residential instructors. Parents must agree to the plan, and if deemed appropriate, the treatment will be maintained in the residence for use. In these cases, a physician's order will not be required.

MEDICATION SUPPLY:

DAY STUDENTS:

- **Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping track of medication supplies, and for providing an adequate supply each month.** Please keep track of when you need to send in medication; nursing cannot monitor medication counts for students due to volume. *Many pharmacies offer a service that will notify you when meds need to be refilled.
- Medication must be delivered in their original pharmacy or manufacturer containers to render them safe and effective. The School cannot accept medication that is not delivered in its original pharmacy or manufacturer container with labels intact.
- Do not write on or tamper with medication labels at any time. If there is a change in dosage, a separate written order should be submitted by the prescriber, and we will make note via an 'order change' label. *Always follow up medication changes with a phone call to the Health Room in addition to sending in a new order.*
- Controlled substances must be packaged in blister packs to provide for both safety and precision of tracking. Please request this when having your child's medication filled at the pharmacy. *We also welcome blister packs for non-controlled substances as well.*

RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS:

- **All residential students are required to utilize the school's contracted pharmacy for medication supply.**
- Parents are responsible for contacting physicians when prescriptions or refills are needed. These can be given to the BHS Health Office for processing, or physicians can send them electronically to our pharmacy.
- Controlled substances require new prescriptions each month. Parents are responsible for notifying physicians monthly to ensure that they send prescriptions to the pharmacy.
- Parents are responsible for tracking and supplying an adequate amount of over the counter medication/medication if not supplied by our pharmacy.

ILLNESS/INJURIES

“What does a patient want from his doctor? Our work is something similar. We must be able to perceive the voiceless voice of the autistic child saying he/she wants his/her weak spirit strengthened and made healthy.”
~ Dr. Kiyo Kitahara

The school provides 24 hour on-site nursing coverage. If your child becomes ill/injured while at school:

- 911 Emergency Services will be implemented in the event of an emergency. In most cases, Randolph Rescue will transport to either South Shore Hospital or Milton Hospital. The nurse on duty will notify parents immediately; if unable to reach a parent, emergency contact numbers will be utilized.
- General illness - It is at the discretion of the nurse, in consultation with the Nurse Practitioner and/or Medical Consultant, whether or not a parent will be asked to pick a child up from school.
- Residential students will be monitored by the school nurse, on campus, as long as it is safe to do so.
- The nurse may call the student's primary care physician and/or emergency contact if the situation warrants.

Steps taken in the event of illness/injury:

1. The teacher/residential instructor notifies the nurse on duty of the student's condition (vomiting, seizures, fever, rash, etc)
2. The nurse assesses and treats the student accordingly
3. The nurse determines the next course of action, i.e.: notify parents for pick-up, monitor at school, send to ER/refer to own physician, etc.

Parents may not be notified for every minor sniffle/illness/injury that can be easily tended to by the school nurse unless the condition becomes chronic or increases in severity. Please speak with the school nurse if there are certain situations where you always want a phone call.

As you know, it can be very difficult to assess illness in children with ASD. Our licensed Nursing staff use their professional assessment skills and judgment to best determine the course of action for ill students, and do their best to work with families to achieve the best outcome for all involved. It is recommended that all parents have a back-up plan in place in the event you are unable to pick your child up when asked. Don't forget to notify the Education Office if you will be away from home so that a plan can be put in place to keep you up to date in the event of an emergency.

Please understand that it is the school's responsibility to protect the health of the entire student body, as well as staff. **We do not have the ability to house and care for a large number of ill students on campus. The acuity of illness, number of those ill, and the nature of the illness are all taken into consideration when making decisions to send students home.** In the event of a communicable or infectious disease/outbreak, BHS follows state regulations. We will consult with our Medical Consultant, as well as local and state Boards of Health for guidance regarding exclusion.

COVID-19 and other Infectious illnesses: Please contact the Health Office for the most up to date policies and procedures, as they change to be in line with current CDC recommendations, as well as to meet state specific mandates and regulations. As a congregate care facility, with many students unable to tolerate masks/face coverings, our campus policies and procedures may be more strict than those for the general public.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Parents are responsible for facilitating and coordinating routine and non-emergency appointments, such as yearly physical exams, lab diagnostics, evaluations with specialty providers, and follow up appointments.

Non-local families may opt to seek routine/primary care from a provider local to school. Case Managers are available to assist families with facilitating this, and to answer questions. Be advised that appointments should be scheduled when you will be available to travel to Massachusetts to attend.

Parents may request staff assistance in managing their child's behaviors during appointments. The expectation is that parents will pick their child up at school, along with the support staff, and return their child and staff to school after the appointment. We do our best to accommodate requests, but staffing issues beyond our control may arise. Be advised that we are unable to accommodate requests for support for non-urgent appointments during our vacation programming. To inquire about assistance, contact your Case Manager at least **2 weeks in advance**.

Parents are required to be present at appointments in order to provide important medical and family history, to consent to any needed diagnostic testing, and to establish and maintain relationships with medical providers. For urgent-care appointments, if a parent is not available to attend due to distance or other circumstances, parents are expected to be in contact with the medical provider directly for questions related to care plans, to obtain physician reports, and to coordinate any follow up.

In emergency situations if a child is hospitalized during the school year, the staff at Boston Higashi School will initially accompany the child to the hospital. However, parents/guardians need to assume on-going responsibility thereafter. Please be advised that the Boston Higashi School bears no financial responsibility for students' medical bills. Any bill remitted to the school will immediately be remitted to the parent/guardian for payment.

Virtual Appointments

Logistics around virtual appointments are treated the same as in person appointments. Please reach out to your Case Manager to request assistance in coordinating virtual appointments on campus, and specify if staff assistance is required during the appointment. While we are able to provide the space, the expectation is that a parent/guardian will be present to facilitate the appointment on campus - unless special circumstances/distance prohibit this, in which case the parent is expected to attend virtually.

WHEN TO KEEP DAY STUDENTS HOME FROM SCHOOL

Be advised that guidelines are subject to change amid a community outbreak/epidemic/pandemic.

FEVER	Temperatures above 100.2 degrees F. Fevers are usually a sign of infection. Your child should not be sent to school with fever, and should remain home until fever free for 24 hours , without the use of fever-reducing medication. <i>*During COVID-19 outbreaks in the community, the threshold for fever is above 100 degrees</i> <i>i.e.: if your child develops a fever at noon on Monday, he/she cannot return to school on Tuesday. If fever free all day Tuesday (without Tylenol/Motrin) he/she may return on Wednesday. Please consult with the school nurse when in doubt.</i>
VOMITING/ DIARRHEA	A child with vomiting and/or diarrhea should be kept home until symptoms have resolved for 24 hours. The child must have demonstrated that he/she is able to keep down food and liquid.
SORE THROAT	For a sore throat for more than 24 hours, please consult your doctor.
STREP THROAT	If positive for strep throat, the child may return only after he/she has been on antibiotic treatment for 24 hours, and is fever free (see above re: fevers).
CHICKENPOX	Children with chickenpox should stay home 5-8 days after the last crop has appeared. Your child may not return to school until all lesions have crusted over completely. In the event of an outbreak at school, <u>all susceptible students</u> (including those with medical or religious exemptions) are subject to exclusion.
MISC. INFECTIONS	Ringworm, scabies, conjunctivitis, and impetigo are contagious. In most cases, your child may return to school 24 hours after treatment has started.
HEADACHE	Your child should be kept home for severe headaches that do not resolve with acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Consult your doctor for persistent or recurring headaches.
RASH	At the discretion of the nursing staff, rashes of unknown origin must be evaluated by a physician before it can be determined if the child should be in school. A doctor's note will be required to return, and it must indicate that the rash is not contagious, and/or proper treatment has been started.
INFLUENZA	The school will adhere to the State's Department of Public Health exclusion orders issued each influenza season, if applicable. In general, your child cannot return to school until symptoms have resolved, including fever free x24h.

If your child will be absent due to illness, please notify the Education Office. If your child is absent for 3 days or more, a physician's note may be required for him/her to return; please consult with Nursing prior to returning your child to school to determine if a note is needed. The School also reserves the right to request a physician's note in other circumstances, at the nurse's discretion – i.e. if a child presents with a rash of unknown origin, a note may be needed stating it is not contagious.

If your child becomes ill while at school, the school nurse will contact you. At the discretion of the nurse, you may be asked to pick your child up. Prior to returning your child to school, please call the health room to review his/her condition with the nurse.

HOSPITALIZATION & MEDICAL/SURGICAL PROCEDURES

Please notify the Health Room in advance when your child is scheduled for a medical procedure (diagnostic or surgical) so that we can safely prepare.

Prior to procedure, Health Room Requires:

1. Any pre-op/pre-procedure instructions from the physician.
2. Any anticipated restrictions or instructions expected after procedure.

Post Procedure, or post hospitalization, Health Room requires copy of the discharge instructions in order for him/her to safely return to school, including:

1. Specific restrictions, including those related to physical education participation
2. Any required prescriptions/physicians orders; whenever possible, prescriptions should be faxed to the Health Room *prior* to discharge.

Maintaining communication with nursing is of utmost importance to ensure proper preparation and a smooth transition back to school. **The school reserves the right to delay a student's return to school after careful review, and based on safety.** The Health Room will consult with our Medical Consultant, and delays would be based on the school's inability to accommodate special instructions and/or the inability to provide a safe environment for recovery. Case Management is available to assist parents with planning in these situations.

BITE PROTOCOL

In the event that a student bites a staff member or another student, the student (biter) may be requested to submit a blood sample to test for blood borne illness. This is determined by the treating physician, and typically based on CDC recommendations and individual risk factors. Parents/guardians will be duly notified of the incident and authorization for testing will be requested, if it is recommended. ***BHS will NOT arrange for lab testing without parental consent.***

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION AND TREATMENTS

Definition: Any medication or topical treatment, including those prescribed by a physician and over the counter remedies administered or applied by the school nurse.

A physician's order is mandatory for ALL medications administered in school, including over the counter medication. This is legally required by the state of Massachusetts, and there can be no exceptions.

The doctor's order **MUST** contain the following:

1. The child's name and date of birth
2. Name of the medication
3. Dose
4. Frequency
5. Method or route of administration
6. Duration of time it is to be administered
7. The condition the medication is treating/reason for administering
8. Any side effect/adverse effects to watch for
9. The prescriber's signature and contact information

All controlled substances (i.e.: Ativan/lorazepam, Adderall) sent in by parents must be packaged in "blister packs" by your pharmacy. State law requires that controlled substances be counted each shift, and blister packs provide for both safety and precision of tracking. Please consult with your pharmacist when having these filled for school.

All non-urgent laboratory work related to medication monitoring should be scheduled during vacation periods. Parents are responsible for coordinating these services.

Signed parental consent is required for each medication to be administered, and this includes over the counter medications. Consent for medication is included in the online health forms. A printed consent form is available from the health office upon request.

Over the Counter topical treatments

At the discretion of the nurse, some over the counter remedies (i.e. acne treatment) will be allowed for use in the residence by students; these remedies must be deemed safe and will be used with the assistance of residential instructors. Parents must agree to the plan, and if deemed appropriate, the treatment will be maintained in the residence for use. In these cases, a physician's order will not be required.

Medication Pick-up and Drop-off

When picking your child up for a home visit, the designated adult picking up the child is responsible for making sure they have all necessary medication before leaving campus. Notify reception upon arrival and he/she will direct you to the Health Room to sign out the medication. If medication is left behind, BHS staff will not be held responsible and parents/guardians are expected to make alternate arrangements. When the student is returned by the parent/guardian, medication must then be signed back in.

ALLERGIES

Only allergies diagnosed by a physician will be included on the school's allergy list. If a student develops a new allergy, the student's physician is to provide the Boston Higashi School Health Department with documentation of such allergy to keep our records up to date.

If your child has a **medically diagnosed** food allergy, we will restrict the item. An allergy action form must be completed in order to prevent situations which might cause an allergic reaction in your child. The Health Room reserves the right to request supporting documentation and/or laboratory results related to diagnosed food allergies.

FOOD & NUTRITION

Boston Higashi School provides 3 nutritious meals/day for our residential students, and daily lunch for our day students. Meals include fresh fruit options, and a salad at lunchtime. In addition, a mid-morning snack, typically fruit, is provided to our younger students, and all students receive a mid-afternoon snack (with the exception of our Emergence Program students).

Food services are provided by our contracted vendor, Chartwells. Chartwells Food Services Director is responsible for oversight, in consultation with the School's Registered Dietician.

The Registered Dietician reviews menus, reviews food allergies and dietary restrictions, monitors the weight of students as needed, and is also available to consult with parents and outside providers.

Boston Higashi School currently offers the following diets based on medical necessity, or religion:

1. Gluten Free
2. Dairy Free (whey/casein)
3. Lactose Intolerant
4. GERD diet
5. Vegetarian
6. Religious (specified)
7. Kosher
8. Weight Management ("Healthy Choice" or "High Calorie")
9. High Fiber

Restrictions related to documented allergies and/or medical conditions will continue to be strictly adhered to. Allergies must be listed on a students' physical exam, and a completed Allergy Action Plan must be on file in his/her record. For restrictions related to a medical condition, documentation by a physician must be on file in the students' health record; BHS may require supporting lab documentation related to reported restrictions or intolerances. The school does not support diets for the sole purpose of behavior modification. The School employs Daily Life Therapy to address and support behavior, and encourages students to eat a wide variety of foods.

To protect our students with life-threatening allergies, the school does not permit outside food and baked goods being brought on campus. Case Management is available to offer alternative suggestions in lieu of food.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

All students attending Boston Higashi School **MUST** have medical insurance coverage. If your insurance does not cover all medical bills, you will be responsible for the balance.

Please provide the Health Office with *a copy of the front AND back of insurance cards* yearly, or anytime there is a change in his/her insurance plan.

MEDICAL INSURANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

In the past, we have found that international companies have been difficult about international coverage and payments. For information about enrolling your child in a local plan used by the school, please contact the Health Office at extension 755.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

The Boston Higashi School conducts screenings for the following on an annual basis:

- Dental *
- Hearing
- Posture (on children ages 10-15)
- BMI (by the student's 7th, 10th, 13th, and 16th birthday for un-graded classrooms)

The purpose of the screenings is to find early signs of possible problems. These are not diagnostic services, but programs to identify young people who may need further evaluation.

If you do not want your child to participate in any of the screenings, please indicate so in writing. Otherwise, all students will participate.

* In addition to the dental screenings, Visiting Dental Associates of MA will offer preventative dental care, on site, for those who wish to participate. The optional preventative care will be administered by a Registered Dental Hygienist, and may consist of cleanings, fluoride treatments, sealants, and x-rays, as needed. For the optional preventative services, VDA accepts MassHealth, or private pay. Information regarding this service is sent out to parents twice yearly, in the fall and spring, and it will include all necessary information for your child to participate.

Please note, regarding **VISION Screenings**, effective 9/22/22: we no longer conduct vision screenings on campus. New guidelines Per DPH state that students within neurodevelopmental delays, or students who cannot test visual acuity using LEA or Sloan Letters, should obtain yearly comprehensive eye exams by an eye doctor. Newly admitted BHS students will be required to show proof of a comprehensive eye exam performed by an eye doctor within the past 12 months.

Parents Association

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

The Parents Association supports the school and families through attending and actively participating in the main events of the school year: Sports Day, Road Race, Annual Celebration, Family Day and the Bon Dance. It is very important that the parents support open houses at the school and residence and participate in the parent training sessions held throughout the year in order for progress to be made with the student in the home environment. The staff work very hard to share with the parents their efforts with each student.

The Parents Association meets regularly at the school. The ultimate goal of the Parents Association is to involve all parents in the Boston Higashi School Community and to help them understand Daily Life Therapy®.

We invite all parents to get involved in the Parents Association. You can do so by attending the scheduled meetings or by contacting the Director of Programming or one of the officers. Please show your support by becoming involved in our many activities.

Frequently Asked Questions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What does HIGASHI mean?

Higashi literally means "East".

The school was named by its founder Dr. Kiyo Kitahara who established the Musashino Higashi School in Tokyo 50 years ago and the Boston Higashi School 30 years ago. Dr. Kitahara chose the name "Higashi" because the sun rises in the east and each new day brings hope.

2. What is Daily Life Therapy®?

The major tenet of Daily Life Therapy® is that education should be conducted in an environment of normality. It is an educational philosophy and approach that is based upon three "pillars", or principles, that foster the development of human dignity and self-esteem in the growing child allowing him/her to contribute to and benefit from society. Recognizing the social isolation and emotional instability of children with autism, our approach seeks to help children form bonds, relate to others, communicate and control their anxieties so as to master tasks and learn skills for doing and thinking which will allow them to relate to others at the same time as they develop independence. The Musashino Higashi and the Boston Higashi Schools are the only schools that use Daily Life Therapy®

*Vigorous Physical Exercise - regulating biological rhythms of life and gain benefits of health, stamina, mood, awareness of one's surroundings and concentration.

*Emotional Stability - establishing strong bonds with students and creating a known and predictable environment in which the child can master the skills for independence and thus feel accomplishment and pride.

*Intellectual Stimulation - implementing a broad, age-appropriate and varied curriculum, including the arts, which allows the individual talents and interests of each individual child to flourish so they may reach their true potential as necessary for each individual child.

3. What is your schedule of operation?

We offer three tiers. The level of programming is determined by the student's IEP Team pursuant to Federal and State guidelines. The Boston Higashi School collaborates with school districts to ensure that efforts prioritizing the Least Restrictive Environment requirements of IDEA have been employed. The student's IEP team may afford due diligence to examination of weekend reports, audit of parent training participation, home visits by LEA and/or BHS, and Functional Behavior Assessment or other evaluations as determined by consensus of team.

Tier 1 – Day Program, 217 Days

Students may also participate in our vacation day programming at parent discretion and funding, or IEP recommendation with district funding. Parents must submit the forms sent out for each vacation session. A student may attend the full session or for designated days.

Tier 2 – Residential Program, 304 Days

The purpose of the Boston Higashi School Residential Program is one of education, teaching daily living, community, and social skills to Higashi students through the utilization and adoption of the pedagogical techniques of Daily Life Therapy®. The residential program curriculum complements and reinforces that of the day program, allowing generalization of learning to

this supportive, homelike yet highly structured environment. Students may also participate in our vacation day programming at parents discretion and funding, or IEP recommendation with district funding. Parents must submit the forms sent out for each vacation session. A student may attend the full session or for designated days.

Tier 3 – Residential Program, 365 Days (Extended School Year)

The IEP team has determined that substantial regression and problems with recoupment will occur in the absence of the structured environment of Daily Life Therapy® implemented by Boston Higashi School staff with fidelity and integrity. Parents are not required to fill out vacation session forms.

Boston Higashi School also offers vacation day programming approved by the Randolph Public Health Department during the school vacations. Student participation is determined by their IEP, or privately funded by parents.

Our students have a very structured schedule each the day including daily living skills, academics, special subjects including Communication, P.E., Art and Music and a daily assembly. Students do their daily activities in class/division groups.

4. What are the classroom teachers’ qualifications and student teacher ratios?

Most teachers have a Master's degree in Special Education and are licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Boston Higashi School provides a 3:1 school wide student teacher ratio. Class ratios in the Elementary, Middle School and High School are 6:1 to 8:1 respectively.

5. What kind of curriculum standards do you follow?

The Boston Higashi School provides curriculum instruction aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, a more robust set of standards than Common Core, as the Frameworks also include the subject areas of History/Social Sciences, Science & Technology /Engineering, Health, and the Arts, in addition to Math and Language Arts standards. Students in grades 3 - 10 participate in state assessments in selected content areas as part of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). Students from other states participate in their respective state assessment programs in accordance with their Individualized Educational Program.

6. How do you teach students of differing abilities in the same class?

The Boston Higashi School provides differentiated instruction throughout all areas of the school's curriculum. Differentiated instruction is based on the premise of providing instruction that meets the various needs of all students within the classroom. Under the Daily Life Therapy® educational model students are educated in a group setting. Because of this, teachers and clinical staff are experienced in modifying instruction to meet the various needs and learning styles of each student within the group. Individual needs, such as a student's readiness, background knowledge and learning style are addressed within the context of the group through differentiated instruction.

7. What approach is used to teach literacy skills?

The Boston Higashi School Literacy Specialists utilize a balanced approach when teaching reading, writing, communication and listening skills implementing a multi-modal instructional approach, which allows our special education classroom teachers to address various needs and individual differences within the group. Literacy instruction, is incorporated and embedded throughout all content areas of the curriculum.

8. How do you use technology to support writing?

The use of technology is embedded throughout the day to enhance academics, improve communication and provide leisure opportunities. Teachers incorporate interactive whiteboards and educational iPad applications into lessons in order to increase learning through fun and meaningful activities. Students that have difficulty with the graphomotor aspect of writing are encouraged to use typing applications on their tablet to express themselves and answer written questions. Technology allows our students greater access to educational, vocational and community settings.

9. How are Clinical Services delivered?

Clinical Services are offered in a consultative collaborative model utilizing licensed specialists in their fields including speech language pathologists, a clinical psychologist, occupational therapists and a physical therapist. Having this broad array of service providers available to consult about the individual needs of students as well as programmatic enhancements, contributes to meeting the needs of all students in these areas on a full-time in-context basis throughout their entire day, providing continuous practice and learning subtle therapeutic interventions may be implemented in the student's natural setting.

10. What is your approach to addressing the sensory needs of your students?

Individuals with autism often require intense sensory experiences in order to help regulate their systems. Our curriculum has been developed very carefully to provide opportunities for sensory stimulation and exploration that are integrated and addressed in a natural context throughout our student's entire day. Sensory processing is promoted during ADL's (dressing, eating and toileting) as well during academic, communication, physical education, art, music and leisure classes. The curriculum is structured to offer a range of visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, proprioceptive and vestibular input to stimulate, regulate and help our students learn to overcome sensory obstacles. In addition, student specific accommodations are used for students who have been identified.

11. What is your approach to communication?

Boston Higashi School uses a total communication approach employing a variety of strategies including gestures, symbols, pictures, basic sign language, spoken language and voice output devices to support the students' communication. Speech-language pathologists work in collaboration with classroom and residential teachers to enhance receptive, expressive and social communication on a daily basis. In addition to the wide range of visuals, all classrooms have interactive white boards and ipads that are programmed to support communication and the curriculum. Boston Higashi School has a variety of augmentative and alternative communication devices.

12. Do you use any medications to control students' behavior?

Currently there are no medications that have been shown to treat autism. All medications that are given to children with autism have been developed to treat different conditions and are given because the symptoms of autism may sometimes appear similar. However, the underlying causes are not necessarily the same. Under Daily Life Therapy®, the goal is to wean students off psychotropic medication and alternative treatments over time in order to enhance their overall learning experience. This is an individualized process done in consultation with each family and the student's prescribing physician. Students with dual diagnoses, including medical conditions such as seizures, may still take medications provided the required documentation is submitted.

13. Do the residential students go out into the community?

Yes, frequently. Acquiring community skills is one of the goals for the residential students. The students visit the post office to buy stamps to send letters to their parents, the library to check out books, the supermarket to buy their cooking ingredients. The students go swimming throughout the year. They also take many age appropriate field trips (movies, restaurants, and beaches.)

14. What is the expectation for parent participation?

The goal for our students and their families is to experience a high quality of life. Therefore, a close partnership and collaboration **MUST** exist between parents and the Boston Higashi School. Both school and home must have the same values and expectations to help each child grow to his/her full potential. The Boston Higashi School has developed a process for parents to become closely involved with their children's education including Parents Collaboration Meetings, school events, and consistent weekly updates. We also offer home visits to assist parents with the implementation of Daily Life Therapy®.

15. Can my child apply to Boston Higashi School from outside of Massachusetts? Is the Boston Higashi School licensed?

We accept students from throughout the United States and from other countries. The Boston Higashi School is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care and comparable agencies in California, Illinois, New York, New Jersey and Vermont.

This school is authorized under Federal law to enroll nonimmigrant alien students.

16. Do you have an adult program?

Boston Higashi School is licensed to educate children and young adults through the age of 22. Students between the ages of 19-22 have a specially designed community based employment in addition to functional academics to promote the development of an individual lifestyle for each student. We offer specialized transition services working collaboratively with families and adult service providers during the transition process and also provide on- going follow-up.

17. How is Daily Life Therapy® (DLT) different from Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)?

DLT was developed from the experience of Dr. Kiyo Kitahara. It is a group dynamic educational approach that is used in the context of a typical educational program structure. The approach is holistic and uses consistent routines, physical exercise, creative expression in art and music, emotional bonding, intellectual stimulation and for older students, extensive real life job experiences to help students develop their own unique individuality.

ABA was developed from research on the science of behavior. It is a way of teaching to change behaviors through the process of differential reinforcement/ consequences. It is an individually focused approach to ameliorating a student's developmental deficits. Its goals are to resolve specific barriers to learning.

These approaches have a profound difference in their fundamental philosophical bias. The main purpose of the educational endeavor in DLT is to educate the whole child, mind, body and spirit-meaning the intellectual, the physical, the social-emotional realms all of which need to be equally developed if a child is to be properly educated in society. This approach supports children to cope with life's demands and stresses by gaining self-regulation and self- confidence. DLT focuses on a strength based approach whereas ABA tends to focus on skill deficits.

18. What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as the lifelong process of learning how to better understand ourselves, connect with others and work together to achieve goals and support our communities.

19. How is SEL implemented into the curriculum at BHS?

The Boston Higashi School is committed to cultivating a school culture that encourages the unique strengths and abilities of each individual. Through the practice of Daily Life Therapy, we see emotional stability as a foundational component of holistic wellness and an integral component to growth and success. Curriculum is based on the Zones of Regulation framework, which teaches students how to identify emotions, increase self-control and how to use self-regulation strategies. Social and emotional concepts and strategies are practiced throughout all academic, special subjects, job sites and enrichment classes throughout the day and modeled repetitiously by all members of the BHS community. Additionally, SEL is taught during a dedicated class period once per week. By recognizing and supporting the social, emotional and behavioral health needs of all of our students, we aim to provide the support and resources needed for each individual to reach their highest level of achievement.

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