

## Q&amp;A

## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Behavior

**What is Bok's discipline philosophy?**

The Bok Staff spends a great deal of time in thoughtful discussion about the culture and climate of Bok Academy. We have high expectations for student behavior, and we seek parental support every step of the way. We operate with the guiding principle that students of this age are capable of behaving in a respectful and productive manner. Restorative justice is also a guiding principle for our work; an approach to justice where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and rectify the situation. We expect students to use the rule of good judgment.

**Is a consequence given every time a student is sent to the office with a referral?**

It depends. Every situation is looked at individually. Sometimes all the situation and student need is a conversation with the administrator or a parent call home. The student's pattern of behavior DOES impact the consequence.

*"It takes a village to raise a child." ~African Proverb*

**Do you involve the parents in behavior issues?**

We do involve parents in numerous ways as we seek to help students learn about the expectations of Bok and learn how to live a productive life. We will call you, if the situation is warranted. In fact, on occasion, we have asked parents/primary caregiver, to come to school just to have a conversation with the student. In many cases, that is all that is needed for the redirection to occur. We will have parent conferences just to address a specific pattern of behavior. Sometimes, we draw up a contract for the student and parent to sign as we move forward. All of these actions are designed to make sure the student is completely aware of the problem and is guided in improving his/her efforts.

**What is the Bok Bridges program?**

This is a program designed for some students who may need daily feedback on their work and behavior. If a student is enrolled into this program, he/she will be given a Bok Bridges form to take to each teacher and return to Administration at the end of each day. The student is to take a copy of the BB's sheet home for the parents to review. It is the child's responsibility to take the form home; the parent will know to expect this each day. We have found this extremely helpful in the past. In fact, many students have successfully reversed the pattern of counter-productive behavior and no longer need daily check-up. This is a key intervention piece at Bok. In addition, we have partnerships with Warner University, LWHS JROTC program, and mentorships with many LWHS students.

**How does Bok handle the "bullying/harassment" situation?**

The staff at Bok refers to this behavior as harassment instead of "bullying." What is the reason for the language shift? "Bullying" can seem like something that all kids do; it is just the way it is at this age level. The fact is that same behavior can result in a firing or possible arrest, if that behavior is found in the workplace. The Bok staff takes this very seriously; we have spent many hours working on how to improve the climate and culture of Bok. We will work with both parties and attempt to sort through the issues that brought on the behavior. Having said that, a student continuing to target other students in a mean-spirited manner, may be asked to leave Bok. We try to work with all students, but if a student is not willing or able to redirect his/her behavior patterns, the student may not have the maturity level it takes to remain at Bok.

We encourage all students to report this negative behavior to any Bok staff member. We also encourage students who witness this behavior to let us know in order to sort through the situation in a healthy manner. Many of these situations will not escalate, if we work to untangle them early on in the process. We also expect Bok students not to just stand by and let mean-spirited behavior continue. Most students, rarely, if ever, behave this way when they are one-on-one with other students. Most need an audience; we ask Bok students to help us make the culture and climate much better by not providing an audience for anyone who behaves in a harassing manner.

We have created a program, Knights of the Roundtable, to address the overall atmosphere at the school. We hold these seminars about 5 times per year; they teach students how to recognize this behavior and how to break the pattern that is sometimes found in individuals and communities. We also conduct climate surveys to determine the health and well-being of the community. This work is ongoing and the staff seeks to make Bok a place emotionally safe for students. The good news is our Bok student body has certainly risen to the occasion. The bottom-line is Bok has the expectation; middle school students will be civil and kind to one another. We also subscribe to the notion we are our brother's keeper and as community members we need to make sure all students are valued and respected.

If you need to report this type of behavior, inform the Bok front office staff and fill out a report as soon as you are concerned. We will help students work through this complicated issue.

You may also check the website for links to sites to help you better understand this behavior. At Bok, we are attempting to create a community that takes the time to help middle schoolers work through these issues.

**Do you ever release a student from Bok?**

Yes, there are some infractions so extreme that the student is released immediately. (See the Code of Conduct-LWCS. Other students may be released, if after working them and intervening on many levels, they still cannot reverse the negative behavior pattern. Unfortunately, this does happen. If a student isn't able to bring about the change needed after our interventions and the involvement of the parent, it may be necessary for the student to find a more suitable environment. If it becomes necessary, the Bok staff will help in finding a proper placement for the student.