

Twindly Bridge
Charter School

Student Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement	Page	2
Our Commitment	Page	2
Contact Information	Page	2
Enrollment Requirements	Page	3
Non-Compliance	Page	4
Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)	Page	4
Course of Study	Page	5
Mandated Testing	Page	5
Curricular Materials	Page	5
Grade Level Placement	Page	6
Grading	Page	6
Student Allotments	Page	6
Purchasing Procedures	Page	7
Purchasing Guidelines	Page	8
Non-Allowable & Allowable Purchases	Page	9
Reimbursement Procedure	Page	11
Academic Year	Page	11
Sessions & Workshops	Page	11
Special Events	Page	11
Parent Volunteers	Page	11
High School Graduation Requirements	Page	12
Transcripts	Page	12
Special Education	Page	12
Withdrawal Procedures	Page	12
Release of Records	Page	13
Non-Discrimination	Page	13
Computer & Internet Use	Page	13
UAA Scholars nominations	Page	13
Conflict Resolution Procedures	Page	14

Mission

Our mission is to provide a program that implements support, resources, and opportunities for homeschooling families.

Our Commitment

Twindly Bridge Charter School is committed to the education of our students by building a bridge between home, school and community. As a public school, we are committed to complying with the requirements of the Mat-Su Borough School Board Policy as well as the State of Alaska and Federal Statutes.

Contact Information

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Website: www.twindlybridge.us

Principal: John Weetman

Teacher Advisors: Kim Howell
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Laurine Domke

Admin Secretary: Karen Salisbury
Registrar: Tracy Sena
Secretary: Debbie Murray
Secretary: Liz Mills
Secretary: Jacqueline Wilhour
Custodian: Kami Heisterman

Enrollment Requirements

Twindly Bridge Charter School is a public school of choice open to all school age students who reside in the Mat-Su Borough. Twindly Bridge Charter School will adhere to Mat-Su Borough School District Board Policy when considering age and residency requirements of enrolling students.

1. Completed enrollment process to include:
 - a) Online enrollment, registration opens the first week of June
 - b) Providing all enrollment forms
 - c) Providing necessary enrollment documents
 - updated shot records or medical exemption or notarized religious exemption and must be submitted annually
 - grade transcripts
 - copy of birth certificate
 - _____
 - d) Acknowledgment that the Mat-Su District's Student Handbook and Twindly Bridge Charter School Student Handbook are available electronically for my review on the school's website
2. Acknowledgement of District & State testing.
3. Completing the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) process:
 - a) Meeting with your Advisor
 - b) Parent/Advisor Contract
 - c) Finalizing the Course of Study
4. Maintain quarterly contact with advisor to include progress reviews
5. Maintain monthly contact with advisor if the student is non-proficient.
6. Attend semester grade conferences and provide student grade documentation
 - a) Parents who do not complete a grade conference in a timely manner will have allotments frozen and may be denied enrollment the following year.
7. Responsible allotment spending
8. Student participation Student Expo is highly encouraged
9. Volunteering is highly encouraged

Students wishing to enroll must enroll within six weeks of the end of the school term if space is available.

Seniors wishing to graduate must be enrolled a minimum of one quarter. In addition, seniors may earn a maximum of 4 credits in a semester. The maximum may be exceeded on a case by case basis with principal and advisor approval.

Non-Compliance

Parents and students need to comply with all conditions of the parent/advisor contract, district/school handbooks, and state/federal regulations. Examples of non-compliance are lack of:

1. Semester conference completion (deadlines, work samples, grades, signatures, meeting with advisor)
2. Sufficient academic progress (grades, timely progression)
3. Sufficient communication (contact with advisors or responding to staff requests)
4. Required documentation (enrollment forms, immunization records, ILP)
5. Participation in mandatory assessments

In an occurrence of non-compliance, the following will be implemented:

A certified letter is mailed to the parent/guardian stating the details of noncompliance which includes possible consequences.

Consequences of non-compliance may include:

1. Frozen allotment funds (no session enrollment, possible cancellation of current services thru purchase orders, no reimbursement)
2. No grades posted to official district transcript
3. Withdrawal
4. Denied re-enrollment

If parent does not meet the specified request within 10 business days after the date of the non-compliance letter:

1. A letter will be mailed stating our intent to withdraw the student(s)
2. 10 business days later official withdrawal from school will occur

Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)

The ILP provides for:

1. monitoring of each student by the assigned certificated teacher; the monitoring must include at least monthly teacher-student or teacher-parent contact for students who have obtained an achievement level that did not meet standards on the most recent administration of Alaska's statewide standards-based assessments and quarterly reviews of a student's work or progress in the individual learning plan;
2. a grade, or other determination that the student has met the standards for a course, determined and assigned by the certificated, highly-qualified teacher who is responsible for the course; the plan may provide for review and consideration of any recommendations submitted by the student or the student's parents;
3. a transcript that includes the source of any course taken by the student that was not offered or approved by the governing body of the district, or, in the case of a program that is a charter school, by the charter school, and for which no public money was provided; the transcript must note whether the student's mastery of the content of the course was approved by the district as meeting a requirement for graduation;

4. a signed agreement between the certificated teacher assigned by the correspondence study program and at least one parent of each student that verifies that the student and parent have the same right to access the district appeal process as students and parents in the district's other programs; the textbooks or other curriculum materials and the course of study are appropriate for the student as outlined in the individual learning plan.
5. a collaborative effort between student, parent/guardians, certified Teacher Advisor, and other individuals involved in the student's learning plan;
6. for a course of study for the appropriate grade level consistent with state and district standards;
7. ongoing assessment plan that includes statewide assessments required for public schools;
8. modifications of the individual learning plan if the student is below proficient on a standardized assessment in a core subject;
9. a signed agreement between the certificated teacher assigned to the student and at least one parent or the guardian of each student that verifies compliance with an individual learning plan;

Course of Study

Each student's course of study will be specified as part of the ILP. This study plan may stipulate work conducted entirely at home or may combine home and school based study. Project based studies utilizing Problem-Based Learning and Multi Intelligences Theory strategies will be encouraged. Twindly Bridge offers a variety of sessions & workshops that are supplementary or extracurricular in nature. They enhance the student's home learning and provide an opportunity for students to explore their interests. Sessions & workshops can be an element of the Individual Learning Plan but do NOT fulfill course requirements on their own and are not assigned a grade or awarded credit by the facilitator.

The Course of Study:

1. Lists the student's courses, anticipated credits, schedule, activities, curriculum, and any other materials that will be used
2. Outlines the method of assessment for each course
3. Is a working document that should be a true reflection of the current course of study. Note: Fifty percent of course work that a student takes must be taken in core courses.
4. Serves as a guideline for ensuring that purchases and reimbursements relate directly to the student's educational activities

Amendments to the Course of Study must be pre-approved by your Advisor.

******DEADLINE******

All Semester 1 Course of Study amendments: Due 2 weeks after the end of Quarter 1

All Semester 2 Course of Study amendments: Due 2 weeks after the end of Quarter 3

Mandated Testing

Students will be scheduled for State and District mandated testing. Parents may withdraw their children from a standards-based assessment or tests.

Curricular Materials

Twindly Bridge approves a wide variety of materials to support the philosophy of choice in education. Twindly Bridge Advisors are familiar with a wide variety of vendors and local resources and are available for consultation concerning appropriate curricula choices. Curricula chosen by Twindly Bridge parents must support the Individualized Learning Plan. All materials are subject to Academic Policy Committee approval.

State regulations 4AAC33.421 (g)(4) prohibit school district purchase or reimbursement of religious, partisan, sectarian, or denominational curriculum materials. Parents may choose to use the above referenced materials; however, Twindly Bridge will not reimburse parents for the purchase.

All new curricula will be submitted to be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and requires approval by the Twindly Bridge Charter School Academic Policy Committee.

Grade Level Placement

Twindly Bridge will accept Kindergarten students who are at least five years old by September 1st of each school year. Grade level placements up to and including grade 8 will be based on age and skill assessment, unless otherwise specified by the parent. High School students will be placed in a grade according to the number of years enrolled in high school.

Grading

All posted grades are expected to meet Alaska state requirements. TBCS recognizes that parents may use many different methods of grading. To ensure compliance, a certified TBCS Advisor will review documentation of each student's work and verify the final grade to be posted.

Each graded course listed in the student's course of study requires documentation of the recorded grade. Parents must report on the student's work or progress quarterly as well as attend both Semester grade conferences and submit work samples as described in the student's ILP.

Institutionally graded courses will be recorded on the student's official record as a transfer course from that institution.

Examples of grade documentation are:

1. Written samples reflecting knowledge, mastery or progress of concepts
2. Assessments such as quizzes, tests, chapter reviews
3. Report from an educational institution or vendor
4. Portfolios, Projects
5. Activity logs of volunteer time, work hours, physical education activities
6. Oral presentations

All grades will be based on completion of the standards in the Alaska state requirements for that course. In some cases, an appropriate amount of time spent learning a subject may be the basis for earning the grade.

Examples:

1. Math – Completion of the approved textbook
2. P.E. – 80 hours of approved, documented physical activity = semester completion
3. Music – based on a combination of instruction, practice and performance time

Student Allotments

We have open enrollment beginning July 1. After the 3rd week of the count period, students may still enroll; however, no allotment will be available.

1. Allotment Amount per Student is **\$2,200** Juniors & Seniors will have will have an allotment of **\$2,500**.
2. Prior to Oct. 31st, parents may access half of their student's allotment for ILP supported purchases.
3. Students who enroll for their fifth year or more of High School can use allotment funds only for courses required for graduation or to meet I.E.P. requirements. All expenditures for fifth year students must be pre-approved and subject to the discretion of the advisor. The intent of this policy is to discourage postponing graduation in order to obtain additional allotment funds.
4. The allocation may be used for resources deemed appropriate and reasonable that fulfill the curriculum requirements of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District.

5. Fund transfers between student allotments may be approved on a case by case basis. A maximum of ½ of the student allotment may be used for a fund transfer.
6. Siblings of pre-school age (4 years old by September 1 of the current school year) may utilize up to \$300/year of an enrolled student. Pre-School siblings must have enrollment forms and proof of age on file with TBCS before processing request.
7. Twindly Bridge maintains a detailed account of allotment funds available for each student enrolled. This information will be available to parents through the school office.
8. Allotment funds not expended will carry over into the next school year and continue to stay with the student as long as they are continuously enrolled at TBCS. Remaining funds at graduation and students that withdraw remain with TBCS.

Purchasing Procedures

Textbooks, equipment, and other curriculum materials purchased with state money, including money provided to the parent through a fund account, are property of the district. Materials that are not consumables must be returned to the district when the student leaves the program for any reason.

There are 3 ways that purchases from allotments are processed: purchase orders, parent reimbursements and shelf stock purchases. All purchases must align with the ILP. Each method maintains the same purchasing guidelines stated below. Please refer to the back of the Pre-Approval form and the Parent Reimbursement form for detailed instructions.

1. Purchase Orders: Parent can place an order thru TBCS. The order is placed and paid by TBCS and deducted from the student's allotment. This method requires no out of pocket expense for the parent, however does require processing time and limits vendor choice.
2. Parent Reimbursement: Parent makes a purchase and requests reimbursement from TBCS. This method requires the parent to pay out of pocket and provide documentation of purchase.
3. Shelf Stock Purchases: Parent purchases items directly from TBCS such as items from the parent resource room or the scholastic book fair. This method requires no out of pocket expense for the parent, however is limited to stock on hand.

Purchasing Guidelines

1. The academic year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30. All purchases and services must occur within the academic year. Receipts dated prior to July 1 cannot be considered for the current school year.

2. Parents acknowledge that all materials purchased or reimbursed with District funds are the property of TBCS. Appropriate use and maintenance of these materials is the responsibility of the parent.
3. All non-consumable materials will be required to be returned or purchased upon withdrawal or graduation from TBCS.
4. If an item is returned to a manufacturer/supplier, lost or stolen, TBCS must be notified or it will remain on your inventory.
5. Items purchased may not be discarded, donated or resold without written permission from TBCS.
6. Proficiency levels in core area standards are used in developing a student's ILP. Requests for purchases and reimbursements must be aligned instructionally with the student's ILP.
7. For students who are not proficient in the core areas of math, reading, and writing, a plan shall be developed by the advisor and parent for each core area in which proficiency has not been met and monthly progress meetings must be held.
8. No reimbursements/purchase requests can be considered prior to student enrollment approval and an approved ILP. Every purchase or reimbursement must be directly related to the ILP.
9. Materials purchased are intended for use in the current school year, however can be kept for use until withdrawal or graduation from TBCS.
10. Purchasing deadlines will be determined each year based on District accounting deadlines. No exceptions can be made.
11. Senior purchasing deadline will be May 1 of each school year. All Purchase order and/or reimbursement requests must be turned in by this date.
12. Final approval of all spending is subject to principal approval.

Non-Allowable & Allowable Purchases

Twindly Bridge supports the parent's individual choices for curriculum and educational materials. All purchases from student allotment funds must relate directly to the student's Individualized Learning Plan and align with the State of Alaska standards for education. Following are the guidelines for non-allowable and allowable purchases:

We cannot pay for or provide money for:

1. Services or materials that do not reasonably relate to the delivery of the students' instructional needs.
2. Partisan, sectarian (religious), or denominational doctrines may not be purchased with public funds

Following are allowable Expenses: Pre-Approval required

- Single items costing over \$100 with the exception of curriculum listed on your ILP (example: printers, graphing calculators, cameras, instruments).
- Services (example: test prep courses, tutoring, assessments, horse riding lessons)
- Parent training. A maximum of \$200 per family per year for parent instruction training and must be directly connected to their students ILP in the subjects of reading, writing or math. Training may be approved as an allotment expenditure on a case by case basis and only the cost of tuition may be allowed.
- Out-of-State receipts while on family travel. (example: museum & tour entrance fees, zoo entrance, National parks entrance)
- Repairs of equipment should always be pre-approved. Allotments cannot be used for the repair of equipment not owned by TBCS.

No pre-approval required if included in the ILP

1. Curriculums, courses, texts, Advisor manuals and/or supplements
2. School supplies (example: paper, pencils, rulers, notebooks, ink, basic calculators)
3. Curriculum Supplies (example: workbooks, references, resource books)
4. Photocopying (please be aware of copyright infringements)
5. Computer hardware & software under \$100 (example: disks, external hard drive, printer, audio headset, flash drive, photo editing software)
6. Internet Access fees (example: up to \$150 per month)
7. Instruments under \$100 (example: recorder, harmonica, keyboard)

Reimbursement Procedure

Reimbursements require approval. The parent will complete the Twindly Bridge reimbursement form and provide ORIGINAL receipts to the Twindly Bridge office.

1. A minimum of \$100 in receipts is required for reimbursement.
2. Original receipts (includes invoices, statements or other submitted proof of payment information) must support the student's Individualized Learning Plan procedures. Parents are encouraged to keep their own copies before submitting documentation to the Twindly Bridge office to facilitate reconciliation in the event of a discrepancy.
3. Sales tax cannot be reimbursed.
4. Receipts, invoices, and sales slips are ALL VERIFIED. Receipts should clearly indicate vendor name, paid by whom, amount, what it is for, and

- date.
5. Price tags, estimates, receipt copies, & check carbons are NOT acceptable receipts.

Academic Year

TBCS calendar is aligned with the Mat-Su Borough School District High School calendar.

- Advisor workdays: Building open - sessions held
- Professional Development Days: Building closed - no sessions held
- Holidays: Building closed – no sessions held
- Vacations: Building closed – no sessions held
- Parent Conference Days: Building open – sessions held

TBCS Sessions & Workshops

Twindly Bridge offers a variety of sessions & workshops that are supplementary or extracurricular in nature. They enhance the student's home learning and provide an opportunity for students to explore their interests. Sessions & workshops can be an element of the Individual Learning Plan but do NOT fulfill course requirements on their own and are not assigned a grade or awarded credit by the facilitator. They cover a wide variety of topics and content areas, vary in length and are led by parent volunteers, district staff and community vendors.

TBCS Special Events

Twindly Bridge encourages partnerships between home, school, and community. We offer many special events such as field trips, family events and school socials. Additionally, Twindly Bridge maintains several business partnerships, which may provide educational opportunities for our students. Parent involvement committee assist the school for special events.

Parent Volunteers

We encourage parents to volunteer a minimum of four hours a month at TBCS. We always have work to share and your contribution helps make our school a better place for students. Examples of ways you can help:

1. Help with lunch time such as food sales, clean-up & recess monitor
2. APC Board Member
3. Volunteer for a committee
4. We need dedicated parents to volunteer to lead sessions
5. Office help such as filing, phones, making signs
6. Cleaning of school such as windows, walls and surfaces

High School Graduation Requirements

Twindly Bridge High School Graduation requirements are aligned with those of the Mat-Su Borough School District. Please consult a certified TBCS Advisor as each graduating class may have different graduation requirements as determined by the School Board.

Seniors wishing to graduate must be enrolled a minimum of one quarter at TBCS. In addition, seniors may earn a maximum of 4 credits per semester. The maximum may be exceeded on a case by case basis with advisor and principal approval.

Those students who have completed the required credits will be awarded a high school diploma through the Mat-Su Borough School District. Please refer to the Matanuska Susitna Borough School District Student Handbook for specific graduation requirements.

Transcripts

The term “Transcript” refers to the record of courses, grades, and credits for all school students. Transcripts are based on work completed with Twindly Bridge, approved vendors, and official records received from other high schools attended. Transcripts are prepared and sent by the registrar upon request. Please allow a minimum of two weeks for transcript requests to be processed. All transcript requests must be made to the Twindly Bridge office.

Twindly Bridge is not responsible for obtaining course credit information from outside vendors. It is your responsibility to ensure that Twindly Bridge receives this information.

Special Education

Before enrolling a student in Twindly Bridge who is eligible for special education services, an IEP meeting must be held to ensure student needs are addressed completely and are in compliance with the student’s Individualized Education Plan. In most cases, special education services will be provided at the student’s boundary school unless parent chooses to provide services at home.

Withdrawal Procedures

A parent may withdraw their student from Twindly Bridge at any time by notifying our office, completing a withdrawal form, and returning or purchasing any non-consumable materials.

All non-consumable materials purchased with allotment funds must be returned to Twindly Bridge. A list of returnable items may be obtained thru the office. Parents will be financially liable for requested materials and/or equipment that are missing or damaged. If materials are not returned within 30 days, a certified letter will be sent requesting the return of the materials.

Purchase requests dated on or after the withdrawal date will not be honored. Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 1 month after the date of withdrawal (but prior to May 1) and all receipts must be dated prior to the date of withdrawal.

When financial records are clear, your withdrawal from TBCS can be processed and the new school can complete your enrollment.

Release of Records

In compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, Twindly Bridge will request records from a student's indicated previous school. Parents and legal guardians have the right to see, obtain copies from, and contest the contents of education records. Upon parent/guardian request, notice of transfer to another school, or a request for records from another educational institution, Twindly Bridge will forward education records in accordance with school district policy.

Non-Discrimination

No parent, guardian, student, applicant, or employee shall be discriminated against. Twindly Bridge and the Mat-Su Borough School District comply with all Federal and State Anti-Discrimination Statutes and Regulations.

Computer & Internet Use

All students must have a computer use agreement approved by the parent and student before school internet access will be granted. Refer to the computer use agreement in the District Student Handbook for details of user, parent, school and district responsibilities.

UAA Scholars nominations

Twindly Bridge Charter School has established the following criteria for determination of UA Scholars:

UA Scholars will be determined after the final GPA (grade point average) and rank has been completed for Semester 2 of each Junior year. A student's cumulative GPA will be used for determining rank. Determination for UA Scholars will be based on only the enrolled students who are in Junior standing at the end of the year; and are ranked in the top 10% of those students; and currently enrolled at Twindly Bridge Charter School for their Senior Year.

In the event of a tie, weighted grades will be used. Classes to be weighted are as follows:

- Upper Level High School Math Classes (Algebra II, Trigonometry, Calculus)
- Two or more years of High School Foreign Language
- Core Academic Classes graded by an outside source (Math, English, Social Sciences, Science)
- AP (Advanced Placement Classes)
- Core Academic College Classes (Math, English, Social Sciences, Science)

Important Dates and Deadlines during a student's Senior year:

- October 1 Deadline for TBCS to complete online designation process.
- May 1 Deadline for Scholars to submit an application for admission to any University of Alaska campus.

Students will be notified of this policy when they enter the 8th grade.

Conflict Resolution Procedures

Conflict resolution is an opportunity for parents, Advisors and staff to work out concerns or possible conflicts at Twindly Bridge. This procedure is meant to address the needs of all parties in a positive, respectful and clear manner. It is not a disciplinary action.

If a concern or conflict occurs that cannot be solved in an informal manner, the following progressive steps must be followed.

Step 1: Parent(s) will notify the staff member verbally, at an appropriate time to voice specific concerns and resolve issues. Parent(s) and staff member will acknowledge this as a formal meeting and Step 1 of the Conflict Resolution Procedure.

Step 2: If resolution has not occurred at Step 1: Parent(s) will schedule a second meeting to give the staff member a written statement of their concerns, as well as possible solutions. If both parties agree to the solution, the resolution will be put in writing, and signed by both parties.

Step 3: If resolution has not occurred at Step 2: Parent(s) and the staff member will schedule a conference with the principal. Both parties will present their viewpoint in writing with suggested solutions. The principal will decide upon a course of action that is in the best interest of the school.

Step 4: If resolution has not occurred at Step 3: Parent(s) will file a Conflict Resolution Form with the Chair of the APC Board. The APC Board will meet in executive session at the next regular APC Board meeting to review the Conflict Resolution Form. Any vote, action or decision taken by the APC Board will occur in public session. If attempts made to resolve the conflict through these 4 steps does meet the needs of the Parent(s), the option to transfer to another school should be considered. Twindly Bridge is a school of choice.