



River Charter Schools

Family Handbook 2023-2024

Dear River Charter Schools Scholars, Parents, and Guardians,

As the summer days slowly coming to an end, it is with great excitement that I welcome you back to River Charter Schools (RCS) for the 2023-2024 school year!

The past several years have brought unprecedented challenges to our lives, and I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for your unwavering resilience, adaptability, and support. Through uncertainty and change, our community has demonstrated its strength and commitment to education.

We stand at the threshold of a new academic year filled with promise and potential. Our dedicated team of educators and staff have been diligently preparing to provide a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment for our scholars. This year, we will continue to foster a love for learning, critical thinking, and creativity. Our curriculum will be thoughtfully designed to engage and challenge our scholars, encouraging them to explore new horizons and embrace their individual passions.

As we embark on this journey together, I encourage each of our scholars to set personal goals, forge new friendships, and contribute positively to our schools' vibrant culture. To parents and guardians, your partnership is invaluable; together, we can provide the support and guidance our scholars need to thrive.

I am confident that the 2023-2024 school year will be one of growth and achievement. Let us remember that every day is an opportunity to learn, to grow, and to make a difference. I look forward to witnessing the remarkable accomplishments of our scholars and the continued strength of our community.

Our Core values are the backbone of our school. These Core Values are:

Positive Attitude: At RCS, we exemplify empathy and compassion. We assume positive intent and pride ourselves on having a positive outlook and perspective daily.

Self-Reflection: At RCS, we strive for continuous improvement through practicing humility, listening actively, having a willingness to change, and speaking our truth.

Collaboration: At RCS, we work as a team to communicate with all stakeholders, build trusting relationships, and engage in courageous conversations. We are valued contributors who work together to develop and achieve common goals.

Parental involvement is a crucial component in creating a learning community that leads to academic success of our scholars. We ask all parents and guardians review this handbook with their scholars to ensure they have an accurate and complete understanding of our programs, procedures, and expectations here at River Charter Schools. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this handbook, we welcome you to contact your school office.

Thank you for being part of the team,

Matt Taylor



Superintendent
River Charter Schools

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I. INTRODUCTION

HISTORY

River Charter School's first school, Delta Elementary Charter School, is located in the small rural community of Clarksburg, CA. When the River Delta Unified School District announced its plans to close Clarksburg Elementary School at the end of the 2005-2006 school year, a group of interested citizens initiated a course of action that led to the creation of Delta Elementary Charter School. After a year of careful deliberation, planning, and hard work, the school opened on August 22, 2007, with an enrollment of 95 students and five teachers.

The founders had a vision of what they wanted in their "ideal" school, and they developed a 56-page charter that set an ambitious roadmap for the school. They developed a curriculum that took advantage of the local environment and stressed the community's relationship to agriculture. They embarked on a journey to develop responsible citizens who are tolerant of others, honor differences, celebrate diversity, and who become lifelong learners that embrace healthy lifestyles and are prepared for the challenges they will meet.

In 2013, these same founders set out to grow what had become such a successful model for charter schools. As many of the students at Delta Elementary Charter School were from the West Sacramento area, West Sacramento seemed a perfect place to branch out and the second campus in the River Charter Schools family, Lighthouse Charter School was opened in fall 2015.

These two schools are connected by more than just the river that flows near each of their campuses – they have the same vision and purpose to provide an exceptional education for all.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of River Charter Schools, a leading center of educational innovation, is to grow leaders and scholars, ignite a love of learning and equip each student with the knowledge, skills, character, and social emotional well-being to thrive and contribute to an evolving and increasingly-connected world, through schools which;

- Promote belonging for all members of our collaborative school communities
- Transform teaching, learning, and operations in our continuing pursuit of excellence
- Are filled with teams of talented, well-trained, adequately supported and caring staff
- Are connected with communities of volunteers, parents and business people to empower students and teachers through partnerships and positive relationships
- Rely upon responsible fiscal planning.

The mission of River Charter Schools is to grow extraordinary leaders and scholars through a collaborative culture and community. To that end, the foundation for the curriculum is standards based and:

- Community Oriented
 - All Project Based Units of Study will show a connection to the community beyond the school.
- Project-based

- All students participate in Signature Nights throughout the year to connect families with Project Based Learning Projects.
- Supports the Visual and Performing Arts
 - All students attend music and art classes, weekly.

VISION STATEMENT

The founders of River Charter Schools envision an educational program for students that will:

- Decrease the ethnic and socioeconomic achievement gaps
- Provide differentiated learning for all students including our high achieving students
- Provide a multiethnic, student-centered learning environment
- Expose them to an educational program based on the Common Core State Standards

CORE VALUES

Positive Attitude: At River Charter Schools, we exemplify empathy and compassion. We assume positive intent and pride ourselves on having a positive outlook and perspective daily.

Self-Reflection: At River Charter Schools, we strive for continuous improvement through practicing humility, listening actively, having willingness to change, and speaking our truth.

Collaboration: At River Charter Schools, we work as a team to communicate with all stakeholders, build trusting relationships, and engage in courageous conversations. We are valued contributors who work together to develop and achieve common goals.

II. ADMISSION AND ATTENDANCE

ADMISSION

Charter schools are schools of choice. Thus, River Charter Schools shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the school up to its capacity. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment in the school. Except as provided in Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of his or her parent or guardian, within this state.

The Charter School shall be nonsectarian in its admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations; shall not charge tuition; and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. The Charter School will follow the admission practices described in the school's charter.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The current calendar for the school, showing holidays, minimum days, and the first day of school, can be found on the school website at www.deltacharter.org or www.lighthousecharterschool.org. The River Charter Schools bell schedule can also be found on the website.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is the first step in ensuring academic achievement. In order for students to reach for their personal best, they must show up and make their strongest effort at school each and every day. At River Charter Schools, state law requires regular attendance. Parents/guardians/families are expected to ensure that their children are in school. PLEASE do not allow your child to miss a day of school *except for serious illnesses*. Students who have excessive absences or tardies will be considered truant.

If a student is absent, **a parent or guardian must phone the school office the morning of the absence.** (Notifying the child's teacher alone is not sufficient for attendance purposes). If the parent does not contact the school office and provide a reason for the child's absence within 48 hours, the absence will be counted as an **UNEXCUSED** absence (explained below). The student must bring a note upon return to school for our office file. After 3 or more consecutive absences, a doctor's note must be provided.

Under State of California law, students may be EXCUSED for only the following reasons:

1. The student is sick.
2. The student has a medical or dental appointment.
 - a. When a student is absent because of a medical or dental appointment, the office MUST receive a note from the doctor for each appointment. Until a note is received, the absence will be counted as UNEXCUSED.
 - b. **(If a child is brought to school late, picked up early, or is absent in the middle of the school day because of a medical or dental appointment, the parent MUST bring a doctor's note to the school office upon the student's arrival or return from the appointment.)**
3. The student goes to a funeral of a close relative (parent, sibling, grandparent). In this case, please notify the school office in advance of the absence when possible.
4. Medical quarantine. A doctor's note is required if the condition requires medical attention.
5. The student must appear in court. Please notify the school office in advance of the absence and bring documentation from the court that the child is required to attend.
6. Religious holiday. Please notify the school office in advance of these absences.

Other than for reasons listed above, any absences will be considered UNEXCUSED. Failure to notify the office to make clear the reason for a student's absence will result in an unverified absence, which will be considered an UNEXCUSED absence after one day. Numerous unexcused absences will result in families' having to attend a meeting with the (SART) Student Attendance Review Team to brainstorm various solutions to the problem and sign an attendance agreement. If attendance does not improve after a trial period, the Board of Directors will request a meeting between the family and the (SARB) Student Attendance Review Board to determine resolution.

Student attendance is a key component of student achievement and school funding. Therefore, scheduling appointments for students before or after school hours, or during curriculum development days, is *strongly* recommended. Habitual tardiness or absenteeism without proper cause may be grounds for dismissal from River Charter Schools. As a Public Charter School, our School Funding and the success of our students rely on student attendance. High rates of student absences will lead to budget cuts that can have an adverse effect on our programs. If you are having difficulty getting your student(s) to school each day, please do not hesitate to call our school office for support.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REVIEW BOARD (SARB) PROCESS

All River Charter School campuses will utilize a School Attendance Review Team (SART). The School Attendance Review Team at the school site level will support the school attendance policies and address truancy at all grade levels. The SART will convene as needed to review truancy cases. If a student is habitually truant (absent without a valid excuse for 9 days during the school year), if he/she is absent or tardy by more than 30 minutes without a valid excuse on 5 occasions in a school year, or any combination thereof, a SART hearing will be called. The parent/guardian of the habitually truant student will receive notice of the SART hearing and be required to attend. At the SART hearing, information will be provided about a student's attendance record. Parents/guardians will be asked to comment on the reasons for the student's truancy. A parent contract will be developed to bind the parent to bringing their child to school on time every day. The SART will make referrals to local agencies as appropriate. Documentation of SART proceedings will be included in the child's cumulative file.

Referral to School Attendance Review Board (SARB)

A SARB will be triggered when a student is classified as a "chronic truant," meaning a student is absent without a valid excuse for at least 10% of the school days in one school, from the date of enrollment to the current date. The SARB will meet as needed to hear cases. The SARB can consist of site leadership, RCS administration, board members, probation, local law enforcement, child protective services, county health department, and mental health providers.

Referral to Appropriate Agencies or County District Attorney:

It is River Charter School's intent to identify and remove all barriers to the students' success, and the School will explore every possible option to address student attendance issues with the family. For any unexcused absence, the Charter School may refer the family to appropriate school-based and/or social service agencies.

If a child's attendance does not improve after the SARB Hearing, or if the parent fails to attend a required SARB Hearing, the parent and child may be referred to the District Attorney's office.

These policies will be enforced fairly, uniformly, and consistently without regard to the characteristics listed in Education Code 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Independent Study is a program by which students can earn credit for the completion of independent work while absent from school for approved absences. The IS program is conducted for the educational benefit of our students as a means to encourage daily engagement in school work even during times of extended absences. The school does not receive any funding for any absences even when it is excused, which is why it is important to place your child on Independent Study.

For non-sickness or emergency related absences IS must be requested at least 24 hours in advance of the absence. Any planned absence over 3 days must be requested one week (5 school days) prior to the start of IS.

In the case of a sick child or emergency, a parent or guardian must submit an absence request by 9:00am to receive materials. In these extenuating circumstances the teacher will work with the parent to implement an IS packet in an expedited manner.

All IS materials are due within 5 days of the last school day issued of IS. There is a 10 day cumulative annual limit to Independent Study. A maximum of 10 days may be used for personal/vacation reasons.

Parents can request independent study by filling out the Absence Notification form on our website. For more information, please refer to the current River Charter Schools Independent Study Policy.

Independent study will be available beginning August 21, 2023 - May 10, 2024.

LATE ARRIVAL

A student is considered tardy after 8:30 am. **All students must report to the office for a tardy slip after 8:30 am.**

EARLY PICK-UP

Early pickup is highly discouraged. Keeping students engaged in their academic work throughout the school day is very important. On those rare occasions when a student needs to leave campus early (leaving for the remainder of the day or leaving campus for a portion of the day and then returning) the student **MUST** be signed out in the office by the parent or guardian. Students will be released only to adults listed on the emergency contacts card during school hours unless the school is notified in writing by the parent or guardian. Do not go to your student's classroom during school hours, please come to the office and we will be happy to request the teacher to send your student out of class.

COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF

Parents and staff members are encouraged to keep communication lines open. Please plan on attending our Meet and Greet, Parent Conferences, PBL Signature Nights, Principal Coffee Chats, PTC Meetings, ELAC/DELAC Meetings, as well as other events. There will also be opportunities to volunteer throughout the school year at events and on committees. Make sure you read all school communication from the teacher, principal, or superintendent. Suggested ways to communicate with members of our school's team are:

- Write a note, email, and/or telephone call or message via ParentSquare and request that the teacher (or member of our school's office staff) call/email you back. Please indicate in your correspondence, the best time and number to call/email you back. Please be mindful that a teacher or staff member may not be able to call back during the school hours. Please give our staff at least 24 hours to respond, as communication often must be completed either before or after the school day.
- When necessary to discuss a matter in person, call the office to make an appointment with the teacher or principal. It is always advisable to try to address any concerns with your student's classroom teacher first, if appropriate.
- Always assume positive intent and be respectful when communicating with staff, as we will do the same for our families.

DELIVERIES TO YOUR STUDENT AT SCHOOL/COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR STUDENT

Our staff recognizes the importance of providing students with sustained, uninterrupted instruction. Interruptions and distractions must be limited to ensure that teachers can dedicate classroom time to the instruction of students. Please make arrangements with your student before school to eliminate the need to have your student called out of class. Please do not call or text your student during school hours. If you need to deliver something to your student (including a phone message), please go through the office in order to not disrupt class. Students will be sent a notice from the office to come pick up their item(s) at an appropriate, non-intrusive time. It is the student's responsibility to come to the office and check for such things during recess, lunch, or after school. **For the safety of our students, ALWAYS take items directly to the office..**

SCHOOL NOTICES/COMMUNICATION

The majority of communication from River Charter Schools is sent home electronically. Please ensure that you keep your email contact up to date in order to receive correspondences via email and emails from your student's teacher. Messages of importance are sent out often via ParentSquare and our All Call Phone system. If you do not have access to an email account or a phone, please let the office know immediately so that we may provide your family with printed information.

III. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

CORE CURRICULUM

Standards aligned textbooks and materials, along with a variety of supplemental resources, will be used at River Charter Schools. The academic core curriculum will include reading and language arts, mathematics, history and social science, and science. The content or "key" standards will define for each subject and grade the most important knowledge that students must acquire and the skills that they must master. This listing of curriculum is not exhaustive. Teachers may supplement with additional curricular resources as needed to address student learning needs.

- Reading Wonders (McGraw Hill) and Expeditionary Learning: Students will demonstrate strong reading, writing, speaking, and language skills in multiple forms of expression (e.g., written, oral, multimedia, and performing arts) with communication skills appropriate to age, setting, and audience.
- Ready Common Core Mathematics: Students will develop abilities to reason logically and to understand and apply mathematical processes and concepts, including those within number sense and operations, functions and algebra, geometry and measurement, statistics, data analysis, and probability appropriate to their skill levels.
- Authentic Learning PBL Units in Social Science (PBLWorks for Education) Generation Genius: Students will understand and apply knowledge in the areas of history, geography, economics, civics, and government to appreciate the interrelationships that exist within our complex 21st Century. They will develop the skills of a historian through research and the use of primary sources.

- Authentic Learning PBL Units in Science (PBLWorks for Education): Students will successfully use scientific research and inquiry methods to understand and apply the major concepts underlying various branches of the sciences, including health and agriculture utilizing the newly adopted Next Generation Science Standards.

OTHER AREAS OF EMPHASIS IN CURRICULUM

In addition to the core curriculum, River Charter Schools will also emphasize several other curricular areas in its course of study, including:

1. Health, especially those elements cited in the California state standards;
2. Physical education, as outlined in the *Physical Education Content Standards for California Public Schools*; and
3. Visual and performing arts, as spelled out by grade level in the *Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools*.
4. PBL (Project Based Learning) meshes student engagement with deep level inquiry. Students are presented with a driving question that guides them into exploring a particular area of study. Through this exploration, students utilize critical thinking, collaboration with peers, and communication through public presentation. At River Charter Schools, all students participate in two PBL Signature Nights (Fall and Spring), that highlight their work in an extended 6-8 week inquiry unit. River Charter Schools students will continue to utilize the PBL strategies of critical thinking, collaboration, and communication throughout the school year during limited projects, or smaller units of inquiry.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology at River Charter Schools is a key element to the success of our programs. Through the use of programs such as IXL, Lexia, Pathblazer and other software based interventions, we are able to measure invaluable skills such as comprehension, literacy skills, critical thinking, phonics, and grammar, while capturing a love for reading. With our Curriculum based measurements (CBM) and iReady for ELA and Math benchmark testing bi-annually, we can truly know every student by name and need allowing us to use data to drive instruction and differentiate. This tool also allows us to compare our student outcomes both in district and national norms.

CBM is also used as a component in determining the proficiency of our English Language Learners and their reclassification. Taking differentiation further we have adopted the online program. With our adopted, Common Core aligned; curriculum, McGraw Hill, teacher's access online materials daily and students practice these core concepts and skills through the use of their devices.

All technology provided by River Charter Schools is for student academic use only.

All families are required to sign the take home usage agreement when RCS devices leave the school campus.

INTERNET TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **Acceptable Use:** The use of computing devices with internet access must be in support of education and research and consistent with the school's education objectives.
2. **Unacceptable Use:** Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material,

threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited. Any transmission, reception or web search of pornographic material is expressly prohibited and may result in the cancellation of all information technology access and privileges and a possible recommendation for expulsion or referral to law enforcement.

3. Privileges: The use of information technology is a privilege and unacceptable use will result in cancellation of those privileges.
4. Network Etiquette: You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.
 - These include (but are not limited) to the following:
 - Be polite
 - Use appropriate language
 - Share resources
 - Do not reveal personal information (address, phone numbers, or email)
 - Social networking (i.e. use of Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Musical.ly) is prohibited.
5. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the students' own risk.
6. Security: Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you can identify a security problem, notify an administrator or teacher immediately. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to login to any network server as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges.
7. Vandalism: Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, hardware, network or any of the above listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses or installation of software on school computers by students.

FIELD WORK (FIELD TRIPS)

Field Work experiences at River Charter Schools are designed around the Common Core State Standards and are designed to include opportunities to promote character education and team building outside of the campus, and deep level inquiry to support project based learning.

Field Work is an important part of the River Charter Schools experience and our goal is to have each class go on several excursions over the course of the school year to connect students with the community and applied educational experiences. As a public charter school, it is never a requirement for families to pay the requested donation for students to participate in the Field Work experiences; however, any amount is appreciated.

No student may go on a field trip without a parent's or guardian's signed written permission. Phone calls are not acceptable. For all bus-driven field trips, students must follow the "Bus Rules" as listed in this handbook. Siblings are not permitted to ride River Charter Schools School Bus for fieldtrips or miss school to accompany a sibling.

Your child must attend school the morning of the fieldtrip. Students will not be allowed to meet their class at the destination.

Some Field Work experiences will depend on parent transportation. In such cases, there are strict

guidelines relative to those who choose to drive. Current information regarding drivers' records and liability insurance coverage has been established by Board policy. This information can be obtained from our website under volunteer requirements.

REPORT CARDS

Our report cards in grades TK-6 are Standards-based and follow the Common Core State Standards. Students in our middle school program (7th and 8th) will receive letter grades in all subject areas (Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Science, PE, Art and Music). Report cards are available on-line through the Parent Portal, 3 times a year, at the end of each trimester. Parent conferences will take place, at least once per school year.

HOMEWORK

If homework is given, its purpose is to reinforce what has been learned in class, to prepare students for upcoming lessons, to teach responsibility, organizational skills, time management skills, and to help students develop positive study habits. The faculty and staff of River Charter Schools believe that homework is the responsibility of the students and should be completed at home. If a student participates in the after-school program and completes their homework during that time, parents are encouraged to review the homework with their child.

Listening to your child read or reading to your child on a daily basis is probably the single most important academic activity that will produce the greatest benefit for your child. Therefore, in addition to assignments given, 20 to 30 minutes of nightly reading is recommended for your student.

SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

River Charter Schools shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (IDEIA).

River Charter Schools is an independent "public charter school". A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the district and River Charter Schools outlines the official agreement between the district and the charter school. River Charter Schools complies with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education and related services and all of the Special Education Local Plan Area's (SELPA) policies and procedures. River Charter Schools is a member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA.

IV. STUDENT SERVICES

TRANSPORTATION

River Charter Schools is pleased to provide bus service for field trips. Students are expected to behave appropriately on any and all bus rides and waiting areas.

Bus Rules: Students who misbehave will be issued bus citations, which may result in revocation

of bus-riding privileges.

Bus riders shall not:

- Distract the bus driver, create loud noise.
- Deface or tamper with the bus or the property of others.
- Use language or gestures that others might find offensive.
- Eat, drink, chew, smoke, litter, spit, throw, buy, sell, trade, or gamble on the bus.
- Use electronic devices on the bus.

Delta Elementary Charter School is pleased to provide bus service to those students who need it. Seats on the bus will be assigned based on an application process and selected by random lottery.

Students must be at bus stops five (5) minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. The driver will not release kindergarten students unless a parent or guardian is there to provide for his or her child.

Delta Elementary Charter School staff will be available at the school to meet riders in the morning and supervise them in the afternoon until the bus departs. Students are expected to behave appropriately on any and all of the bus runs and waiting areas.

Bus payments are only accepted through our school website www.deltacharter.org.

DECS Bus Pick-up and Drop-off procedures:

- **Please be patient and alert during busy times at DECS. These are our kids! Safety first!** Because of limited parking at the school site, it is recommended that students walk or be carpooled to and from school. Please drive slowly and be patient and alert to students who walk to and from school.
- Students are required to always have a Zonar bus pass to ride the DECS bus. Replacements can be purchased through the schools website.
- Students must ride assigned route and are not allowed to switch unless reassigned with school office.
- If a parent is not available to pick up their student at the stop after the first bus run of the afternoon, the student will be returned to DECS and can be picked up at school or returned to the bus stop at the second bus run of the afternoon.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Meals from the Cafeteria: All students have the option to obtain free of charge, lunch, and/or milk only from the cafeteria. Menus are provided on a monthly basis and will be posted on our website. Lunch menus are available online, sent out via Parent Square or available in the school offices. Students may also bring a nonperishable sack lunch. Microwaves are not available for students. River Charter Schools asks that parents not provide fast foods, sodas, or candy for their child's lunch. This does not promote nutritional eating.

Free and reduced-priced meals are available to all families. RCS still collects applications for state compliance reasons. It is requested that **ALL families submit a new application each school year** as the formula for qualifications change. and confidential staff will process the application and notify families of qualifications.

Prices for lunches are available at the front office.

To prepay for your child's food account: Parents can set up an account by using the link on the schools home page.

NO payment for lunch accounts will be accepted in the front office. Refer to school specific fiscal policies and procedures for specific details on school breakfast and lunch payment procedures.

This institution is an equal-opportunity provider.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

River Charter Schools provides an after school program for TK-8th grade students from their dismissal time until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday at Lighthouse Charter School.

Delta Elementary Charter School provides an after school program for TK-6th grade students from their dismissal time until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, if necessary. It is being overseen by an After School Program Director.

Attendance at the after-school program is a privilege, not a right. All students must be signed out of the after-school program by a parent or guardian. Students may be picked up at any time prior to 6:00 p.m. and **no later than 6:00 p.m.** Repeated late pick-ups can result in revocation of the right to the after-school program. The same holds true for persistent behavioral problems. This, too, could lead to disallowing further participation for a period of time in the after-school program.

V. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES

MEDICATIONS

Any medication that is to be administered during school hours must be checked in to the school office (where it will be kept in a secure location), and the medication must be accompanied by a signed "Physician's Authorization for Medication at School" form. This includes all over-the-counter medication, such as Tylenol, Neosporin, aspirin, cough medicine, as well as all prescription medication, such as asthma inhalers, antibiotics, etc. Parents must bring in medication and forms, medication will not be accepted from students. Please note that a new "Physician's Authorization for Medication at School" form must be submitted each school year, as well as instructions for providing the care. We can only keep a 2 week supply of controlled substances at a time. All medication that is prescribed by a doctor, must be in its provided container with the student's identifying information on the container. All medication must be picked up by the last day of school or will be properly disposed of.

Asthma Medication: Students who need to take asthma medication prescribed by a physician during the school day may carry and self-administer inhaled asthma medication under the following conditions:

1. The school must receive a written statement from the physician, showing the name of

- the medication, how it is to be used, dosage, and confirmation that the student is able to self-administer the medication.
2. The school must receive written consent from the parent or guardian, allowing the student to self-administer his or her asthma medication; a signed release allowing the director/principal or school staff to consult with the student's physician if questions or concerns arise; and a signed release absolving the school and school personnel from civil liability if the self-administering student suffers an adverse reaction.

EMERGENCY FORMS

It is important that the parents or guardians complete the emergency form for their children. River Charter Schools must have the names and phone numbers of reachable relatives or other adults who can assume responsibility for the student if the parent cannot be reached when necessary. Please update each student's emergency form when there is a change of information.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

Students are expected to make every effort to keep ALL school property (including, but not limited to, furniture, books, supplies, hallways, restrooms, and garden and lawn areas) as neat and clean as possible. As a courtesy to others and out of respect for the environment, students should make every effort to conserve paper and water and to dispose of litter appropriately. Gum is not permitted in any form at River Charter Schools. Students are financially responsible for all books, technology and other instructional materials that have been issued to them.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

The teacher is the front-line authority for discipline. Teachers and students should try to handle problems first through the classroom disciplinary plan. Serious infractions of the rules will be referred to the Principal and/or Superintendent for discipline. The principal will determine appropriate measures in disciplinary matters, based on several factors, including, but not limited to, the *California Education Code* and the policies of the school's Board of Directors.

River Charter School's behavioral expectations are as follows:

- Show respect to self and others at all times
- Make decisions that reflect health and safety at all times
- Solve problems proactively, fairly and respectfully
- Show respectful, responsible and safe behaviors aligned to our positive behavior intervention system (PBIS)

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

In order to help ensure a respectful, responsible learning environment, it is expected that a student shall:

Academics:

- *Come to school every day, ready to learn.*
- *Work hard every day.*
- *Participate and be engaged in class discussions and learning.*
- *Do their personal best to complete all assignments.*
- *Ask questions if something is unclear.*

Attendance:

- *Come to school every day ready to learn.*
- *Come to school with a positive attitude.*

Citizenship:

- *Be safe*
- *Be kind*
- *Be respectful*
- *Be productive*
- *Be a good listener*

Homework:

- *Complete all homework assignments as assigned by the classroom teacher.*
- *Have a parent look over homework before turning it in.*

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified and respectful manner. This requirement refers to their actions toward other students, teachers, and adults within the school including their language, dress and manners.

We believe self-discipline is key to individual success. Students have a responsibility to know and respect the policies, rules and expectations of the school. Violations of such policies, rules and regulations will result in disciplinary action. School authorities have authorization to employ probation and suspension and to recommend expulsion, if necessary, to enforce this policy.

Application of the policies contained in this handbook regarding student conduct are in effect during the following times and in the following places:

- On school grounds during, and immediately before or immediately after school hours
- On school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group
- Off school grounds at a school activity, function or event
- En route to and from school/school activity on a school bus or other school vehicle
- At any time or in any place that impacts the school's ability to maintain order and discipline

DRESS CODE

In order to meet the goals of River Charter Schools to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all students, River Charter Schools requests that students dress in such a way that it remain appropriate to the educational environment. The following dress code guidelines apply to all regular school activities and field work.

Elementary School TK – 6th Grade

- Students must wear shoes with a back strap.
- Shirts and blouses must be appropriately buttoned/zipped.
- Shorts and skirts must be of decent length (midthigh).

- The following **may not be worn**: Clothing, which is controversial/obscene or any clothing that promotes or displays substances that are illegal for minors (such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or is sexually suggestive).
- Hats are not allowed inside.
- Make-up materials, combs, and brushes are not to be used in the classrooms or cafeteria.
- No pajama pants (except on designated pajama days).
- No undergarments that show.
- No bare midriff.
- Pants should be correct length and size and worn with a belt.
- Shirts need to cover the undergarment straps and be approximately one inch wide. **No spaghetti straps.**
- Swim/beachwear may not be worn.

Middle School 7th – 8th Grade

1. All points from above, including:
2. Extreme or inappropriate make-up, hair color, or hair style resulting in a disruption of instructional activities is not acceptable. Hair that impairs vision or eye contact is not appropriate.
3. Shoes must be worn at all times.
4. Clothing, jewelry, and personal items shall be free of writing, pictures, or other insignia which are crude, vulgar, profane, or sexually suggestive or which advocate racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice or promote the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, or violence.
5. All clothing shall be appropriate for school. Garments shall conceal undergarments at all times.
 - The hem of all shorts, skirts, or dresses shall not be more than a minimum length of 5 inches above the knee. (midhigh). If there is a slit in a skirt, the upper end of the slit is considered to be the edge of the garment.
 - We strongly discourage leggings and yoga pants.
 - Pants should be worn at or above the hip with no under garments showing. Fashion holes in jeans at the knee or below.
 - No revealing clothing may be worn including low-cut (no cleavage) tops, bare midriff tops, strapless tops, halter tops, and garments with excessive holes or fraying. **ALL** top straps must be at least 1” wide. Personal parts of the body must not be inappropriately exposed. See through garments are not allowed without proper undergarments underneath. A bandeau is considered a “bra” and must not be visible.
 - No gang affiliated attire, including bandanas, may be worn.
 - Pajamas, sleepwear, slippers, blankets or other bedtime clothes are not allowed unless there is a special spirit day deeming this as acceptable.
 - Swim/beachwear may not be worn.
 - Chains, large earrings, and or jewelry with protrusions/sharp edges are not allowed.

Teachers and or other River Charter Schools staff may impose more stringent dress requirements to accommodate the special needs of certain sports, classes, and/or other school-sponsored activities. **Please mark the interior tags within articles of clothing with the student’s name for ease of recovering lost items.**

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal Electronic devices are not permitted to be used during the school hours at any time (7:30-3:15). If students bring electronic devices to school, they must be turned off and kept in their backpacks. Electronic devices that are misused such as cell phones, smartphones, I-pods, hand-held games, smart watches, etc, will be taken away if used at school or are on, and will be kept by the office until the parent picks it up, after first speaking with the child's teacher and/or the school principal. The use of social media is not permitted at school. River Charter Schools is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices.

PLAYGROUND PROCEDURES

In order to maintain a safe and positive environment on the playground River Charter Schools has established the following expectations:

- River Charter Schools is a "hands free" zone
- Engage in positive, non-violent play
- Use all equipment appropriately
- Follow ball check out and check in rules with the ball monitors
- Follow the "stop and take a knee" whistle procedure
- After the whistle blows, all equipment must be held and walked back to the equipment area for check in
- The thruways are "quiet zones" where students are to walk at all times

HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

Our campus brings together a diverse group of individuals. We are guided by the principle that respect and consideration for all individuals is foremost in all school activities. It is unlawful to discriminate against any individual based on disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code in any program or activity conducted by an educational institution that receives, or benefits from, state financial assistance or enrolls pupils who receive state student financial aid. It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to observe and uphold the principles of equal opportunity as they affect staff, faculty and students in all aspects of school life. It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to actively promote appropriate workplace behavior. Any form of coercion or harassment that insults the dignity of others or impedes their freedom to work and learn will not be tolerated. Any such form of coercion or harassment will result in appropriate discipline, up to and including, expulsion.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is modern slavery. It involves exploiting a person through force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of forced labor, commercial sex, or both. Victims of human trafficking include men, women, boys, girls, and transgender individuals lured by the promise of a better life in the United States as well as adults and children who were born and raised in the United States. Few crimes are more abhorrent than child trafficking, and few crimes are more challenging for communities to recognize and address. For many people, the reality of trafficking in their

community is difficult to comprehend, let alone confront. For educators and school personnel, the reality of these crimes and the severity of their impact are cause for a call to action. *Source: National Center on Safe, Supportive Learning Environments*

For more information, visit: <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools>.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

River Charter Schools is committed to the health and well-being of all students. Mental health services are available at each campus and can be accessed by communicating (verbally or in writing) with the School Principal, School Psychologist, and/or the Mental Health Counselor. For mental health services across Yolo County, please contact the Yolo County Department of Health Services Mental Health Crisis and Access Line 24 hours a day at (888) 965-6647 or by visiting <https://www.yolocounty.org/health-human-services/mental-health>.

PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

Each school at River Charter Schools is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and patrons free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. “Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education; or
- Is severe, persistent, or pervasive so that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this policy requires the affected student to possess a characteristic that is a perceived basis for the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or other distinguishing characteristic. Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendo’s, demeaning comments, drawing cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions. “Intentional acts” refers to the individual’s choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s). Anyone found to violate the above policy, is in violation of the California Education Code (Section 48900.4) and may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS

Prior to student discipline, especially those involving suspension or expulsion or other limitation of fundamentally protected student rights, every student will have access to the maximum due process protections provided under the law, within the context of the circumstances. Students who are being considered for suspension and expulsion will be provided the specific due process protections provided below to safeguard the student’s interests within the situation.

Suspension Procedure

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

Informal Conference

Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the principal or designee with the student and whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the principal. The conference may be omitted if the principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists, or a parent/guardian is unresponsive. An “emergency situation” involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student’s right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time of the suspension, a charter school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may add that state law requires the parent/guardian to respond to such requests without delay.

Authority to Expel

Only the River Charter School Board of Directors, upon the recommendation of the expulsion panel, may expel a student. The governing board may expel any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

Expulsion Procedure

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Written notice of the expulsion hearing shall be provided to the student and the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) at least ten (10) calendar days before the scheduled hearing date. The hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the date of suspension. The hearing will be conducted by the expulsion panel. The charter school principal will make a recommendation to the expulsion panel. The expulsion panel shall consist of at least three members of the administration team and neither a teacher of the pupil or a board member of the charter school’s board of directors.

Finding of facts shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While no evidence shall be based solely on hearsay, sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses whose disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

The decision of the expulsion panel shall be in the form of a recommendation to the River Charter School governing board which will make a final determination regarding the expulsion.

Written Notice to Expel

The principal or designee following a decision of the River Charter School’s governing board to expel, shall send written notice of the decision to expel to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall include the following:

- 1) The specific offense committed by the student;

- 2) Notice of the student's right to appeal the expulsion;
- 3) Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district and/or new school in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the charter school.

The principal, or designee, shall send written notice of the decision to expel to the student's district of residence and the county office of education. This notice shall include the following:

- 1) The student's name;
- 2) The specific offense committed by the student.

Upon a student's expulsion from the charter school, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student shall be responsible for seeking alternative educational programs, including, but not limited to, programs within the county or their district of residence. River Charter Schools shall work cooperatively with student's parent(s)/guardian(s) as requested by parent(s)/guardian(s) or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

Appeal Rights

Following receipt of the notice of expulsion or suspension, the student shall have the right to appeal that decision to the full River Charter School Board of Directors. The student shall have 10 days to present her/his intention to appeal the decision. Upon the appeal, the student shall have the right to a de novo review in front of the full governing board in closed session, including the full complement of due process rights available to the student during the initial hearing. The full governing board will then render a final decision regarding the student's appeal.

Disciplinary Records

The school shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions. Such records shall be made available for the district / county office's review upon request, but neither the district nor county office of education shall be involved in the disciplinary decision.

Readmission

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be the sole discretion of the governing board following a meeting with the principal and the pupil and guardian or representative, to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The principal shall make a recommendation to the governing board following the meeting regarding his or her determination.

CALIFORNIA EDUCATIONAL CODE SECTION 48900

A pupil may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the Principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has committed an act as defined pursuant to Education Code Section 48900.

Corporal Punishment will not be permitted at any River Charter School campus. Any employee who engages in such action will be terminated immediately.

VI. GOVERNANCE AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of River Charter Schools, meets at the schools regularly, at least once a month throughout the year alternating between the schools for regular board meetings. This Board of Directors is fully responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of River Charter Schools. All parents are encouraged and welcome to attend the monthly Board meetings. [Note: For a more complete accounting of the Board's responsibilities and operations, see the *Charter of the River Charter Schools*, which is available from the school. Notices of the Board's meetings and planned agendas are also available from the school and on the school's websites

ENGLISH LEARNERS ADVISORY COUNCIL (ELAC/DELAC)

River Charter Schools complies with federal guidelines to ensure that parents of English Language Learners are aware of the programs and services provided to their student. All parents are encouraged and welcome to attend the quarterly ELAC meetings to discuss educational programs available to English Language Learners. [Note: Check the school's website for meeting times and locations.]

PARENT-TEACHER COMMITTEE (PTC)

River Charter Schools Parent-Teacher Committee is composed of parents and teachers volunteering their time and talents in various ways for the benefit of the children and the school. This is accomplished by supporting school activities, class programs, and fundraisers and sharing time and ideas. PTC meetings are held quarterly. All parents are welcome to attend these meetings and encouraged to participate in PTC activities. Dates are listed on the PTC link on the schools' website.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Research has shown that parental involvement is the most important factor in a student's success in school; therefore, parents are encouraged to attend parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Parent-teacher conferences may be conducted at any time a need arises. Teachers will notify parents with the dates and times of the conferences. Families are encouraged to meet with teachers/staff throughout the year.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

River Charter Schools is committed to excellence in education and providing a safe and nurturing environment for the children. River Charter Schools encourages and expects the dedicated support of its parents to achieve this goal.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to volunteer at River Charter Schools. The principal shall maintain a comprehensive list of volunteer opportunities, including, but not limited to, the following: volunteering in the classroom/school (including at-home assistance); tutoring; attending parent-teacher conferences; attending meetings of the Board of Directors (as member or observer), ELAC, or any applicable parent group function; participating in the planning of, or attendance at, fundraising or academic/arts events; or taking part in other activities upon approval by the principal. We value our parents and families greatly!

VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS IN CLASSROOMS

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in classrooms, providing they sign up for volunteer time with the teacher. River Charter Schools asks that, when possible, teachers be notified at least 24 hours in advance if a parent or guardian wishes to visit his or her child's classroom to observe or assist. This way, visitors may be assured that there are no conflicting activities such as art or music. The school asks that parents respect the requests of teachers for alternative days for visitation. **Visiting parents and adults must sign in and out of the school office and abide by the school's rules. In order to volunteer in a classroom all adults must have an up to date Tuberculosis test and be fingerprinted specifically for River Charter Schools. Please visit the school office for clearance to volunteer in your child's classroom.**

All volunteers in the classrooms will be fingerprinted and cleared by the Department of Justice.

Exclusion of Volunteers:

- Any convicted sex offender will be prohibited from volunteering at River Charter Schools.
- The Superintendent or site administrator has the discretion to deny volunteer service to any individual based on a criminal conviction. In determining whether an individual will be prohibited the designee shall consider the nature of the conviction as it relates to the volunteer's duties, to the potential for the individual's behavior or negatively impact the school and the duration of time since the conviction.
- Volunteers who have been convicted of a DUI will be prohibited from transporting students.

RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES

Dispute resolution policies and procedures are to be followed by staff, parents, and students at River Charter Schools. The intent of this dispute resolution process is to:

- Resolve disputes within the school pursuant to the school's policies.
- Ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes.

When a complaint is communicated to the school or an employee of the school, it must be done in a respectful manner. These complaints may arise during regular communication or as part of the Uniform Complaint Procedure. This may include disputes among or between students, staff, parents, volunteers, partner organizations, and Board of Director members (Governing Board). Complaints regarding sexual harassment, however, will follow the guidelines specified in the River Charter School's "Harassment Policy."

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

In order to maintain an orderly, respectful and secure educational environment for the students and staff of River Charter Schools, it is essential that all parents/guardians and visitors to our school or school sanctioned events be aware of their responsibilities and adheres to the expected code of conduct.

Parents are expected to:

Academics:

- Talk to their child about the importance of education and coming to school.

- Encourage their child to read at home.
- Review their child's progress.

Attendance:

- Get their child to school on-time every day.
- Notify the school if their child is ill and will not be coming to school.
- Pick up or make arrangements for their child to be picked up every day.
- Understand the importance of Independent Study and the financial impact to River Charter Schools.

Citizenship:

- Support the school in developing positive behavior.
- Respect other parents and school staff at all times.
- Bring concerns and questions directly to staff.

Homework:

- Provide a quiet time and place for their child.
- Assist their child with understanding the work.

Parent Involvement:

- Attend Back to School Night, Parent Conferences, Open House, etc.

Parents/guardians are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified and respectful manner. This requirement refers to their actions toward other students, teachers, and adults within the school including their language, dress and manners. This also includes online interactions with other parents, students, and school staff on social media, phone or email.

We believe self-discipline is key to individual success. Students and parents have a responsibility to know and respect the policies, rules and expectations of the school. Violations of such policies, rules and regulations will result in disciplinary action. School authorities have authorization to employ probation and suspension and to recommend expulsion, if necessary, to enforce this policy.

Parents/guardians and adult family members who fail to meet the school's standards of conduct may be banned from campus for an amount of time determined by school administration. A ban from campus may be permanent at the discretion of school administration.

Application of the policies contained in this handbook regarding parent/guardian conduct are in effect during the following times and in the following places:

- On school grounds during, and immediately before or immediately after school hours
- On school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group
- Off school grounds at a school activity, function or event
- En route to and from school/school activity on a school bus or other school vehicle
- At any time or in any place that impacts the school's ability to maintain order and discipline, including online

NONDISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The River Charter School's Governing Board is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals. River Charter School's programs and activities shall be free from discrimination based on age, sex, race, color, religion, political affiliation, national origin, ethnic group, ancestry, marital or parental status, disability, or any other unlawful consideration. The Board shall promote programs which ensure that discriminatory practices are eliminated in all school activities and which, at the same time, provide personnel practices based on fitness and merit. This policy is subscribed to in the belief that River Charter Schools must ensure equal treatment for all persons. It is a goal of this Governing Board to achieve and maintain a workforce representative of the general population for all occupations and at all levels.

River Charter School's programs and facilities, viewed in their entirety, shall be readily accessible to individuals with handicaps. The principal shall ensure that interested persons, including those with impaired vision and hearing, can obtain information about the programs, facilities, and activities available.

The Governing Board prohibits unlawful sexual harassment of or by any student by anyone in or from the school. "Sexual harassment" is unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical contact of a sexual nature made by someone from or in the workplace or educational setting.

Any student, staff member, or parent who feels that harassment has occurred should immediately contact the principal. If a situation involving sexual harassment is not promptly remedied by the principal, a complaint of harassment can be filed at the school. Put the complaint in writing and submit it to the principal. If the complainant is unable to put a complaint in writing, staff shall help him or her file the complaint. If the concern is not resolved, a formal complaint may be initiated at the school or by directly contacting the River Charter Schools' Board of Directors.

Complaints will be kept confidential. The school prohibits retaliation against any participant in the complaint process. Each complaint shall be investigated promptly and in a way that respects the privacy of all parties concerned. Complaints concerning the principal shall go directly to the Superintendent.

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) NOTICE

Notice to Parents

At the beginning of each school year, in addition to the notice required for directory information, all River Charter Schools' schools shall provide parents and eligible students with a notice of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The notice shall inform the parents and eligible students that they have the right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Seek amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
3. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and the Code of Federal Regulations authorize disclosure without consent; and
4. File with the Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA and its promulgated regulations.

5. Request that the School does not release student names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters or institutions of higher education without prior written parental consent.

The notice must also include the following:

1. The procedure for exercising the right to inspect and review educational records;
2. The procedure for requesting amendment of records;

Education Record

An education record is any written or computerized document, file, entry, or record containing information directly relating to a student that is compiled and maintained by the School. Such information includes but is not limited to:

1. Date and place of birth; parent and/or guardian's address, and where the parties may be contacted for emergency purposes;
2. Grades, test scores, courses taken, academic specializations and school activities;
3. Special education records;
4. Disciplinary records;
5. Medical and health records;
6. Attendance records and records of past schools attended;
7. Personal information such as, but not limited to, student identification numbers, social security numbers, photographs, or any other type of information that aids in identification of a student.

An education record does not include any of the following:

1. Records that are kept in the sole possession of the maker, are used only as a personal memory aid, and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record;
2. Records maintained by a law enforcement unit of the School that were created by that law enforcement unit for the purposes of law enforcement;
3. Records relating to a School employee that are made and maintained in the normal course of business, relate exclusively to the individual in that individual's capacity as an employee; and are not available for use for any other purpose;
4. Records on a student who is 18 years of age or older, or is attending an institution of postsecondary education, that are: a) made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in his or her professional capacity or assisting in a paraprofessional capacity; b) made, maintained, or used only in connection with treatment of the student; and c) disclosed only to individuals providing the treatment. For the purposes of this definition, "treatment" does not include remedial educational activities or activities that are part of the program of instruction at the School or
5. Records that only contain information about the individual after he or she is no longer a student at the School.

Parental and Eligible Student Rights Relating to Education Records

Parents and eligible students have the right to review the student's education records. In order to do so, parents and eligible students shall submit a request to review education records in writing to the Site Administrator. Within 5 business days, the School shall comply with the request. If

circumstances effectively prevent the parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the education records, the School will provide the parent or eligible student with a copy of the requested records or made other arrangements for inspection and review of the requested records.

Copies of Education Records

The School will provide copies of requested documents within 5 business days of a written request for copies to the Education Rights holder of the student. The School will charge reasonable fees for copies it provides to parents or eligible students unless it effectively prevents a parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the education records. The charge will not include a fee to search for or to retrieve the education records.

Request for Amendment to Education Record

If upon review, a parent of eligible student discovers any information or notation that is factually inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's right of privacy, he or she may request, in writing, that the School amend the record. The request must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the discovery of the inaccurate or misleading information or a violation of the student's right of privacy. The School will respond within a reasonable prompt period of time to the request. The School's response will be in writing and if the request for amendment is denied, the School will set forth the reason for the denial and inform the parent or eligible student of his or her right to a hearing challenging the content of education record.

Hearing to Challenge Education Record

If the School denies a parent of eligible student's request to amend an education record, the parent or eligible student may request in writing that he/she be given the opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the student's education records on the grounds that the information contained in the education records is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the privacy right of the student. The hearing to challenge the education record shall be held within 30 days of the date of the request for a hearing, notice of date, time and place of the hearing will be sent by the School to the parent or eligible student no later than 20 days before the hearing.

The hearing will be conducted by the River Charter School Superintendent or his/her designee. The parent or eligible student will be given will be given a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues relating to the challenge to the education record. The parent or eligible student may also, at his/her own expense, be assisted or represented by one or more individuals of his/her choice, including an attorney. The Superintendent or his/her designee's decision will be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. Within 45 days of the conclusion of the hearing, the School's decision regarding the challenge will be made in writing and will include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.

If, as a result of the hearing the Superintendent or designee determines that the information is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, the School will amend the record accordingly and the parent or eligible student will be informed of the amendment in writing.

If, as a result of the hearing, the Superintendent or designee decides that the information in the education record is not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, the parent or eligible student shall be informed of the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information in the record or stating why he/she disagrees with the decision or both. River Charter Schools will maintain the statement with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and disclose that statement whenever it

discloses the portion of the record to which the statement relates.

Disclosure of Education Records and Directory Information

The school must have a signed and dated written permission from the education rights holder or eligible student before releasing any information from a student's education record with the exceptions listed below and for directory information. With the exceptions listed below, the school will not release educational records to any person or entity outside of the River Charter Schools network without the written consent of a parent or eligible student. The written permission must specify the records that may be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure and the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. When disclosure is made pursuant to written permission, the parent or eligible student may request a copy of the disclosed records. Signed and dated written consent may include a record and signature in electronic form if it identifies and authenticates a particular person as a source of the electronic consent and indicates such person's approval of the information contained in the electronic consent.

The school will only disclose personally identifiable information on the condition that the receiving parties not disclose the information to any party without the prior consent of the parent or eligible student and the receiving party use it for the purposes for which the disclosure was made. This restriction does not apply to disclosures that fall within the disclosure exceptions listed below and the school maintains the appropriate records, as described below. Except for the disclosures pursuant to a judicial order or lawfully issues subpoena, of directory information or to the parents or eligible students, the school will inform a receiving party of the requirement that the party not disclose the information to any other party without the prior writing consent of the parent or eligible student and that the receiving party use it for the purpose for which the disclosure was made.

The school will disclose education records, without consent, to the following parties:

1. River Charter School employees who have legitimate educational interest as defined by 34 C.F.R. Part 99;
2. Other schools to which a student seeks or intends to enroll;
3. Certain government official listed in 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1) in order to carry out lawful functions;
4. Appropriate parties in connection to a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid to a student if it is necessary to determine eligibility, amount of aid, conditions for aid or enforcing the terms and conditions of the aid;
5. Organizations conducting certain studies for the school in accordance with 20 U.S.C § 1232g(b)(1)(F); including Northwest Evaluation Association as it relates to student assessment;
6. Accrediting organization in order to carry out their accrediting functions;
7. Parents or a dependent student as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
8. Individuals who have obtained lawful court order or subpoenas;
9. Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies;
10. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law;
11. A victim of an alleged perpetrator of crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense. The disclosure may only include final results of the disciplinary proceedings conducted by the school with respect that that alleged crime or

offense. The school may disclose the final results of the disciplinary proceeding, regardless of whether the school concluded a violation was committed.

Record Keeping Requirement

The school will maintain a record of each request for access to and each disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records of each student for as long as the records are maintained. For each request, the record must include the following information: the parties who have requested or received the information and the legitimate interests the parties had in requesting or obtaining the information.

For disclosures of personally identifiable information to institutions that make disclosures of the information on behalf of the School in accordance with 34 C.F.R. 99.33(b), the record must include the names of the additional parties to which the receiving party may disclose the information on behalf of the School and the legitimate interests that each of the additional parties has in requesting or obtaining the information.

These record keeping requirements do not apply to requests for or disclosure to parents and eligible students, School officials with a legitimate purpose of inspecting the records, a party with written consent from the parent or eligible student, a party seeking directory information, or a party seeking or receiving the records as directed by a court order or subpoena.

The records relating to disclosures of personal identifiable student information may be inspected by parents and eligible students, School officials (or their assistants) responsible for the custody of the records, and parties authorized by regulations for the purpose of auditing the recordkeeping procedures of the School.

Complaints

Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failure by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202