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## Parent - Student Handbook 2020-2021

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### Riverside Academy

[www.acariverside.com](http://www.acariverside.com)

It is the mission of Riverside Academy (“Academy or “School”) to provide all students with a content-rich, academically challenging education with a well-defined, sequential curriculum in a safe, orderly, disciplined environment. Riverside students will learn to express themselves and utilize 21st century computer technology to support learning in all major subjects. Riverside is committed to providing a free appropriate, and socially responsible educational program. By equipping our young people with essential knowledge and skills, Riverside will be helping to fulfill dreams and motivate students to become whatever they so choose.

# Table of Contents

<b>I. Admission Information</b> .....	<b>4</b>
A. Preference of Admission .....	4
B. Kindergarten Entrance and Screening .....	4
C. Registration and Enrollment.....	5
D. Re-Enrollment.....	5
E. Non-Discrimination Policy .....	6
F. Health Certification and Immunization Requirements .....	6
G. Change of Address / Phone Number / Custody .....	6
<b>II. Student and Parent Responsibilities</b> .....	<b>6</b>
A. Behavior Guidelines.....	6
B. Code of Conduct .....	7
C. Dress Code .....	8
D. Attendance .....	9
E. Truancy.....	10
F. Tardy Policy .....	11
G. Suspension and Expulsion Procedures .....	11
H. Withdrawal Policies and Procedures .....	15
<b>III. Academics</b> .....	<b>16</b>
A. Curriculum .....	16
B. Assessment and Intervention .....	16
C. Make-Up Work .....	16
D. Report Cards.....	17
E. Parent / Teacher Conferences .....	17
F. Open House .....	17
<b>IV. School Operations</b> .....	<b>17</b>
A. School Day, Arrival and Dismissal.....	17
B. Illness.....	17
C. Emergency Response/Crisis Management .....	18
D. Emergency Phone Calls.....	18
E. Early School Dismissal .....	18
F. Emergency School Closings.....	18
G. Cars / Parking / Buses.....	18
H. Breakfast / Lunch.....	18
I. Recess.....	19
J. Textbooks .....	19
K. Money.....	19
L. Lost and Found.....	19
M. Student Photographs.....	19
N. Visitors.....	19
O. Volunteer Program .....	20
P. Field Trips .....	20
Q. Classroom Parties .....	20
R. Cell Phones .....	20
S. Personal Items Brought to the School .....	21
T. Stolen Items.....	21
U. Backpacks, Desks, Lockers and Other Personal Storage Areas.....	21
V. Pesticide Notice and Log Policy .....	21
<b>V. Health and Safety</b> .....	<b>22</b>
A. Reporting Injuries .....	22

B.	Health Clinic.....	22
C.	Emergency Medical Authorizations.....	22
D.	Medication Administration.....	22
E.	Food Allergy Action Plan.....	23
F.	Health Screening .....	23
G.	Eye Protective Devices.....	23
H.	Reporting Child Abuse / Neglect.....	24
I.	Technology and Internet Safety.....	24
J.	Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying.....	25
K.	Prohibited Gang Activity.....	25
L.	Drug-Free School .....	26
M.	Weapon-Free School.....	26
<b>VI.</b>	<b>School Records.....</b>	<b>26</b>
A.	Current Information.....	27
B.	Request for Records.....	27
C.	Student Directory Information .....	27
D.	Audio-Visual Information .....	27
E.	Release of Student Records .....	27
F.	Non-Custodial Parent Record Request .....	28
G.	Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) Notification.....	29
<b>VII.</b>	<b>Child Find .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>Parents' Right to Know Teacher Qualifications .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>IX.</b>	<b>Parent Involvement Policy.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>X.</b>	<b>Complaint Procedure.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>XI.</b>	<b>Non-Discrimination and Title IX/Section 504 Notice.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>XII.</b>	<b>Homeless Student Education.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>XIII.</b>	<b>Missing Children .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>XIV.</b>	<b>Positive Behavior and Interventions and Supports.....</b>	<b>33</b>
	<b>Parent/Student Handbook Contract .....</b>	<b>34</b>
	<b>Media Release.....</b>	<b>35</b>

- Appendix 1**    Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation or Anti-Bullying Policy  
**Appendix 2**    Internet Safety Policy

**\*\*NOTICE\*\***

The school is a community school established under Chapter 3314 of the Ohio Revised Code. The school is a public school and students enrolled in and attending the school are required to take proficiency tests and other examinations prescribed by law. In addition, there may be other requirements for students at the school that are prescribed by law. Students who have been excused from the compulsory attendance law for the purpose of home education as defined by the Administrative Code shall no longer be excused for that purpose upon their enrollment in a community school. For more information about this matter contact the school administration or the Ohio Department of Education.

## **Introduction**

This Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year. This Handbook contains important information that you are responsible for knowing. Become familiar with the following information and keep the Handbook available for reference by you and your parents. The term “parent” when used herein means an official care-giver of a minor child, including but not limited to mother, father, stepparent, grandparent, foster parent or court-appointed guardian. If you have any questions about this Handbook, please contact the Principal. The Principal has similar authority and responsibilities as the superintendent of schools for a local district. This Handbook does not constitute a contract between the School and the student/parent, and the School reserves the right at its discretion to change or amend the Handbook at any time in the future.

Cooperation, respect for others, and a sense of wonder are essential to learning. For this reason, the following regulations and guidelines have been outlined in this manual to assist in maintaining a positive learning environment.

## **School Hours**

Breakfast: 7:30-8:00 a.m.

Instructional Start Time: 8:05 a.m.

Student Marked Tardy After: 8:10 a.m.

Instructional End Time: 3:30 p.m.

## **I. Admission Information**

### **A. Preference of Admission**

Admission to the School is open to students on a statewide basis. Preference for admission shall be given to students attending the school the previous year, to students who reside in the district in which the School is located, and to siblings of students attending the school the previous year.

If enrollment exceeds capacity, the School will perform a blind, random lottery to determine what students are enrolled and what students are placed on a waiting list (in order of their selection). Any students who inquire about enrollment after the lottery is held will be placed on the waiting list on a first come, first served basis.

### **B. Kindergarten Entrance and Screening**

Children entering the Kindergarten program must be five years of age on or before September 30<sup>th</sup> or qualify for early entrance under the School’s policy.

All kindergarten, first, third, fifth, and seventh (vision only) graders will be screened for adequate vision and hearing. In addition, by November 1, of the school year, in which a kindergartener or first grader is enrolled for the first time, the child must be screened for speech and communication, health and medical problems and any developmental disorders. If the screening reveals the possibility of potential learning needs, the District must provide a further assessment. A child's screening and assessment data cannot be used to determine eligibility to enter kindergarten. Furthermore, the screenings are not intended to diagnose an educational disability or to be used for placement procedures. Screening results help identify areas of individual development that require further assessment for educational programming, particularly for students who might benefit from early intervention, prevention, acceleration, and enrichment programs. A parent may sign a statement that they do not wish to have the child screened.

### **C. Registration and Enrollment**

Registration and enrollment are two different steps in the process of becoming a student at the Academy. Registration initiates the first step in the two-step process. By registering, the parent expresses a desire to have his/her child attend the Academy. It does not mean the child will be enrolled in the Academy.

Parents express the desire to have their child attend by:

- Completing and submitting the Registration Form;
- Providing the child's:
  - Birth Certificate or other certification permitted by state law;
  - Proof of Residency
  - Current Immunization Record; and
  - Last Report Card, when appropriate

Annual Verification Information:

- Parents are required to provide the school with proof of residency/Address Verification annually and at any time a change of address, residency or custody changes.

The second step is enrollment. After registration is completed enrollment can begin. The child is not officially a student of the Academy until the second step, enrollment, is completed.

The child is enrolled when:

- All the registration steps are complete;
- The enrollment packet including all required documents is completed and submitted; and
- Grade placement is assigned.

Enrollment of students shall comply with the admissions procedures specified in the Ohio Revised Code and the School's Open Enrollment, Admission & Residency Policy.

### **D. Re-Enrollment**

For those students presently attending the School, re-enrollment starts at the end of March or during the first week of April. Students are not automatically re-enrolled from school year to school year. All parents must state their intention to have their child/student be re-enrolled each school year. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of any changes to their residency or contact information.

### **E. Non-Discrimination Policy**

Enrollment will not be denied to any eligible applicant on the basis of sex, race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy, marital or parental status, economic status, homelessness, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability. The School will also not discriminate in its pupil admissions policies or practices whether on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or any other basis that would be illegal if used by any public school.

### **F. Health Certification and Immunization Requirements**

#### **State of Ohio Immunization Requirements for School Attendance**

All new students are required to submit a copy of their Immunization Records within the first fourteen (14) days that they are enrolled. No student shall be permitted to remain in school for more than fourteen (14) days if the student has not met the minimum immunization requirements established by the Ohio Department of Health which can be accessed at <https://www.odh.ohio.gov>.

**On the 15<sup>th</sup> day after school entrance, it will be necessary to exclude all students from the school who do not meet the above requirements.**

Medical authorities and school educators urge that every child have a complete medical examination before entering school so that the child may be physically ready to accept all the advantages which education has to offer.

### **G. Change of Address / Phone Number / Custody**

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school office of any change of address, phone number or custody. For changes of address, a new proof of residence will be required. For a change of custody, parents will be required to provide a copy of the custody order to the School.

## **II. Student and Parent Responsibilities**

### **A. Behavior Guidelines**

Effective learning cannot occur without an approach to student behavior that stresses self-discipline, consistent with the maturity level of the students. Discipline, which reflects the school's policy of non-violence, exists to promote an atmosphere favorable to concentration, attention, and creativity. In addition, discipline is a positive attempt to help all students realize that they are important, worthwhile, and capable of learning. In classroom management, teachers shall be fair, firm, consistent, and impartial, displaying sensitivity to the needs of the individual child.

The following are the main ideas basic to the School's system of discipline. Students will be successful by:

- Knowing and obeying the rules; and
- Accepting responsibility for their behavior.

**Corporal punishment is not permitted.** No employee shall threaten, inflict, or cause to inflict unreasonable, irrational, or inappropriate force upon a student.

The rules of the Student Code of Conduct apply to any conduct:

- On school grounds during the school day or immediately before or after school hours;
- On school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- On or off school grounds at any school activity, function, or event;
- Traveling to and from school, including actions on any school bus, van, or public conveyance; and

On the Internet including but not limited to any social media platforms, whether on School grounds or off School grounds if the conduct affects the learning environment.

## **B. Code of Conduct**

Violation of the Code of Conduct may subject the student to discipline including but not limited to detentions and in-school suspensions and up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or permanent exclusion. The following behavior is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct:

- Tardiness – Arriving later than scheduled\*
- Truancy – Absent without permission\*
- Dress Code Violation – Not adhering to school dress code regulation
- Disobedient/Disruptive Behavior – Unwillingness to submit to authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request or any act that disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function; behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment (i.e., dress code violation, inappropriate language, cursing, inappropriate gestures)
- Cheating – To act dishonestly; copying of someone else’s work; to deceive, take credit for work not done by the student himself/herself
- Profane/Obscene Language or Gestures Between/Toward Students or Staff – Use of unacceptable words, terms, or gestures to embarrass or insult another student or staff member
- Theft – To take the property of an individual or the School without right or permission
- Fighting/Violence – To participate in physical contact with one or more students or personnel with the intent to hurt or injure
- Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of Tobacco Products, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, or similar tobacco substitutes
- Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages
- Vandalism/Damage to School or Personal Property – Purposeful destruction, misuse or defacing of School or other’s personal property
- Intimidation/Interference/Hazing of Student or Staff – Threatening to physically or verbally harm, interfere, or degrade another student or staff
- False Alarms/Bomb Threat – Purposefully engaging in a false alarm
- Use/Possession/Sale/Transmission/Concealment of any Drug or look-alike drug or other illegal or Controlled Substance
- Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of a Firearm or look alike firearm– Firearm has the same meaning as provided pursuant to the “Gun Free Schools Act of 1994.”
- Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of any Explosive, Incendiary or Poison Gas – Any destructive device, including a bomb, a grenade, or a rocket
- Unwelcome Sexual Conduct – Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other physical or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, including gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education or work environment, i.e., pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments, gestures, jokes, or pressure to engage in sexual activity
- Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying behavior (including by an electronic act) as defined in the School’s Policy on Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (**Appendix 1**)

- Gang involvement – Participation in gang-related actions, dress or activities;
- Possession of Electronic Devices – Students may not have cellular phones, compact discs, electronic games, or any other devices unrelated to schoolwork, except as otherwise set forth herein.
- Weapons – No student at any time, for any reason, shall possess, handle, transmit, or use any object, which can be reasonably considered a weapon in or on the property of an Academy, or any Academy sponsored activity held away from the School property. For purposes of illustration, but without limitation, this rule shall include firearms, explosives, fireworks, and knives, including penknives, chemicals, and other dangerous objects, which are of no reasonable value to a student other than as a weapon. Possession of a “weapon” may result in immediate expulsion.
- Serious Bodily Injury – An incident that results in serious bodily injury to one’s self or others. Serious bodily injury is defined as “a bodily injury that involves substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member or organ.”
- Wrongful Conduct – Actions not in the listing above that, in the sole discretion of the Principal, impede, obstruct, interfere, or violate the mission, philosophy, and regulations of the School.

\*A student may not be suspended or expelled for truancy.

### C. Dress Code

All students are expected to come to school in clean and properly fitting uniforms with proper hygiene and hair styled neatly. Daily personal grooming is important. Pride in one’s appearance is the first step in gaining self-esteem and confidence. Moreover, limiting distractions associated with inappropriate or unusual dress and personal style promotes a positive learning environment. Parents will be contacted if a student is out of uniform or comes to school poorly groomed.

The student dress code is an important part of the school program and philosophy. Making a choice to attend the School, the student (with parent support) agrees to follow all dress code requirements. **The dress code is not an option for the student or parent.** Not choosing to follow the dress code may lead to suspension or expulsion.

The teacher and instructional aide are the prime enforcers of this policy. Occasionally, the Principal may have a building “dress-down” day when students and staff may dress down (in a reasonable fashion).

School administration may make changes to the dress code during the school year. The school administration will first notify parents in writing that the changes are to be made. Students are expected to comply with such changes.

The student dress code is as follows:

- Any solid colored short or long sleeved polo shirt; undergarments must also be solid colored (e.g., t-shirts)
- Only solid colored white, gray, navy, black, or beige knitted cardigans or knitted pullover sweaters are allowed. **No sweatshirts or hoodies.**
- Black, navy, or khaki skirts, skorts, jumpers, or slacks. **NO COLORED DENIM** may be worn. Skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be knee length. No floor length dresses, jeans, sweatpants, overalls, leggings or jeggings. Uniform shorts may be worn during the months of April through September only. Uniform shorts are black, navy, or khaki and must be knee length.



- Black or brown belts must be worn around the waist (no “sagging”).
- Socks or tights must be worn at all times.
- Dress shoes or plain white or black tennis shoes may be worn Shoes must be closed-toed. No moccasins, sandals or high heels.
- Tennis shoes must be worn on scheduled physical education days.
- Students may not come to school with unusual “fad” haircuts or unnatural hair coloring. **No designs** may be cut into the hair. Natural haircuts are the accepted style. All hairstyles must be neat and clean.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times.
- Studs for earrings (one per ear) and wristwatches are permitted.
- No headscarves (except for religious observance)
- No “yoga” pants or tights as pants even on dress down days.
- No writing or pictures are on any clothing.
- No see-through clothing of any kind.

#### **D. Attendance**

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for success in school and necessary for success later in life. Each student at the Academy has the responsibility to attend all classes regularly and to be on time.

The required attendance of students shall conform to the minimum standards prescribed by State law. Therefore, absences from school should be only for illness or an emergency. In case of an absence from school:

- The parent must notify the school before the beginning of the school day from which his/her child will be absent. Calls are to be made to the Academy office. Within 120 minutes after the beginning of each school day, the school shall make at least one attempt to contact the parent for any student absent without legitimate excuse. Parents or a designated adult will be required to sign the child out when they leave and then sign in if they return. A sign-in/sign-out sheet is located in the Academy office and a photo ID will be required.
- While permission will be given to keep a dental/doctor appointment during school hours, parents are encouraged to make these appointments for times other than class hours, if possible. Every tardy or absence (excused or unexcused) slows the progress of a child’s development.
- Both “excused” and “unexcused” absences are counted toward the maximum allowable absences. The distinction is made between “excused” and “unexcused” absences for determining whether disciplinary action is in order.
- **A student will be retained** in his/her present grade level if he/she has been absent without legitimate excuse for more than **10% of the required attendance days** of the current school year and has failed two or more of the required curriculum subject areas. A student may only be promoted under these circumstances if the school administrator and the student’s teachers of any failed subject areas agree that the student is academically prepared to be promoted.
- Per state law, a student will be automatically withdrawn from school if the student does not have a legitimate excuse (see below “excused” absence from class) and **fails to participate in seventy-two (72) consecutive hours** of the learning opportunities offered to the students.
- Students who are habitually or excessively absent or tardy may be referred for interventions pursuant to the School’s attendance, truancy and withdrawal policies.

The term “excused” will refer to any absence from a class based on the following:

- Medical appointment
- Pursuant to medical advice
- Death of an immediate family member
- Personal illness
- Court appearance
- Religious observance
- Placement in foster care or change in foster care placement
- Homelessness
- Other as deemed by the Principal.

The term “unexcused” will refer to any absence from a class based on the following:

- Any absence where a student fails to provide appropriate written documentation of the absence (Students should have written documentation for absences in-hand on the first day that they return to school.)
- Leaving school early without proper authorization
- Each day that a student is late without appropriate documentation
- Other unexcused absence determined by the Principal

NOTE: Failure to attend any Academy function outside the regular school day will not be considered an absence.

### **E. Truancy**

Attendance at school is key to achievement. Students are expected to attend school regularly and on time. Parents are encouraged to partner with the school to ensure attendance and timeliness. Parents are encouraged to make any doctor, dentist, etc., appointments for times other than school hours. No student shall be suspended or expelled based solely on the number of absences.

#### **Excessive Absences**

A student shall be considered excessively absent when the student is absent (with or without legitimate excuse) 38 or more hours in one school month or 65 or more hours in one school year.

When a student is excessively absent from school:

1. The school will notify the student’s parents in writing within seven days of the triggering absence; and

The student will follow the school plan for absence intervention.

#### **Habitually Truant**

Habitually truant is defined as being absent without legitimate excuse for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, forty-two (42) hours or more in one school month, or seventy-two (72) or more hours in a school year.

As required by law, within ten (10) days of the School’s determination that a student is a habitual truant, the School shall assign the student to an absence intervention team which shall develop a plan aimed at reducing or eliminating further absences. The student’s continued absence and/or failure to participate and make satisfactory progress in accordance with the plan may require the School to file a complaint in juvenile court, naming both the student and the student’s parent, guardian, or other person having care of the student, and alleging that the student is an unruly child based on habitual truancy.

If a student is a truant and the parent, guardian, or other person having care of the student has failed to cause the student's attendance, the School may require the parent, guardian or other person having care of the student to attend an educational program for the purpose of encouraging parental involvement in compelling the attendance of the child at school.

#### **F. Tardy Policy**

All students reporting to school after the school day begins will be considered tardy. Tardy arrivals are added to hours absent, and the student may be referred to the absence intervention team.

Students must be in their assigned classroom by the start of school day. Just being "in school" or "hanging around" in the restrooms, gym, or the halls is not considered ready for school and in the classroom. Students using such an excuse will be marked tardy.

Parents are encouraged to make dental/doctor appointments for times other than class hours, if possible. Every tardiness, even if excused, slows the progress of a child's development.

Tardiness is only excused for the same reasons as absences.

#### **G. Suspension and Expulsion Procedures**

The School recognizes that exclusion from the educational program is a serious sanction and that suspension and expulsion must follow due process the State of Ohio. The School shall not issue an out-of-school suspension or expulsion to a student in grades pre-kindergarten through three unless the student has committed an act that could result in a one-year expulsion under the Weapons Expulsion rules, described below, or only as necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, the student's fellow classmates, the classroom staff and teachers, or other school employees.

##### **Suspension**

Out-of-school suspension is removal of a student from school for a period of one to ten days. While students are suspended from school, they will be afforded the opportunity to complete missed classroom assignments and receive at least partial credit for any assignment completed. During suspension, students are not permitted to participate in extracurricular activities or be on any school property.

The Principal, Assistant Principal or Principal designee may suspend a student. Prior to suspending a student, the Principal, Assistant Principal or Principal designee must do both of the following:

1. Give written notice of the intention to suspend and the reasons for the intended suspension to the student. If the proposed suspension is based on a violation listed in Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.662(A) and the student is sixteen years of age or older, the notice must contain a statement that the School may seek to permanently exclude the student if the student is convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child for that violation; and
2. Provide the student an opportunity to appear at an informal hearing before the Principal, Assistant Principal or Principal designee and challenge the reasons for the intended suspension or otherwise explain. The hearing can happen immediately and can happen anywhere - the hall, office, classroom, etc.

Within one school day after the time of the student's suspension, the Principal, Assistant Principal or Principal designee shall also provide written notice of suspension to the parent/guardian of the student and the treasurer of the Board of Directors. The notice shall contain:

1. The reasons for the suspension;
2. Notice of the right of the student, or student's parent/guardian/custodian to appeal to the Board of Directors or the Board's designee;
3. Notice that the student/parent/guardian/custodian has the right to be represented in all appeal proceedings;
4. Notice of the right to be granted an appeal hearing before the Board of Directors or the Board's designee to be heard against the suspension;
5. Notice of the right to request that the hearing be held in executive session;
6. Notice that the School may seek the student's permanent exclusion if the suspension was based on a violation listed in Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.662(A) that was committed when the student was sixteen years of age or older and if the student is convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child for that violation; and
7. The date and manner by a student or parent/guardian/custodian may notify the Board of Directors of their intent to appeal the suspension. If the student or parent/guardian wishes to appeal the suspension, the request must be submitted, in writing, to the principal within five (5) school days of the written notice of suspension. The principal shall immediately forward this written appeal to the Board of Directors and Board of Directors' appeal hearing designee.

If there are fewer than ten school days remaining, the out-of-school suspension may not be applied to the following school year, but the school leader may require the student to participate in a community service program or other alternative consequences for a number of hours equal to the remaining period of the suspension.

### **Expulsion**

Except as specifically provided for by statute, the Principal may expel a student for a period not to exceed the greater of 80 school days or the number of days remaining in the semester or term in which the offense leading to expulsion took place. Students expelled from the school are not permitted to participate in extracurricular activities or be on any school property. Expulsions may extend into the following school year.

Only the Principal may expel a student. No student shall be expelled unless prior to the expulsion, the principal does both of the following:

- (1) The Principal shall give the student and parent, guardian or custodian written notice of the intention to expel the student and the reasons for the intended expulsion. The notice shall include the reasons for the intended expulsion, notification of the right of the student, guardian, custodian or their representative to appear before the Principal or his/her designee to hear and to challenge the reasons for the intended expulsion or otherwise to explain the student's actions, and the notification of the time and place to appear. The time to appear shall not be sooner than three (3) nor later than five (5) school days after the notice has been given unless the principal grants an extension of time at the request of the student, his/her guardian, custodian, or representative. If an extension of time is granted, the principal shall notify the student and his/her parent, guardian, custodian, or representative of the new time and place to appear. If the proposed

expulsion is based on a violation listed in Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.662(A) and the student is sixteen years of age or older, the notice must contain a statement that the principal may seek to permanently exclude the student if the student is convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child for that violation.

- (2) Provide the student and parent, guardian, or custodian an opportunity to appear in person before the Principal or his/her designee to challenge the reason for the intended expulsion or otherwise to explain the student's actions.

Within one school day after the time of the student's expulsion, the Principal shall also provide written notice of expulsion to the parent/guardian of the student and the treasurer of the Board of Directors. The notice shall contain:

1. The reasons for the expulsion;
2. Notice of the right of the student, or student's parent/guardian/custodian to appeal to the Board of Directors or the Board's designee;
3. Notice that the student/parent/guardian/custodian has the right to be represented in all appeal proceedings;
4. Notice of the right to be granted an appeal hearing before the Board of Directors or the Board's designee to be heard against the expulsion;
5. Notice of the right to request that the hearing be held in executive session;
6. Notice that the School may seek the student's permanent exclusion if the suspension was based on a violation listed in Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.662(A) that was committed when the student was sixteen years of age or older and if the student is convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child for that violation and that the expulsion may be extended if a juvenile court or criminal proceeding regarding such violation is pending at the time the expulsion terminates; and
7. The date and manner by a student or parent/guardian/custodian may notify the Board of Directors of their intent to appeal the expulsion. If the student or parent/guardian wishes to appeal the expulsion, the request must be submitted, in writing, to the principal within fourteen (14) calendar days of the written notice of expulsion. The Principal shall immediately forward this written appeal to the Board of Directors and Board of Directors' appeal hearing designee.

If the Principal expels a student for more than twenty school days or for any period of time if the expulsion will extend into the following semester or school year the notice shall provide the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian with information about services or programs offered by public and private agencies that work toward improving those aspects of the student's attitudes and behavior that contributed to the incident that gave rise to the student's expulsion. The information shall include the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the appropriate public and private agencies.

An expelled student will be provided with a date for re-entry and the date for the re-entry conference. The expelled student, and parent or guardian of the student must be present in the re-entry conference. The student and parent or guardian of any student will be notified in the event that the student fails to attend the re-entry conference.

Expulsion proceedings will be pursued against a student who has committed an act warranting expulsion even if the student has withdrawn from school for any reason after the incident giving rise to the hearing, but before the hearing or decision to expel. If after the hearing, the student would have been expelled for a period of time had the student remained in school, the expulsion will be for the same length of time as on a student who has not withdrawn from school.

## Weapons Expulsion

A student must be expelled for one year for:

1. Bringing a firearm to the School or onto School Property (any Property owned, used, or leased by the School for school, school extra-curricular activities or school related events).
2. A student may be expelled for one year for:
  - Bringing a firearm to an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event, or any other school program or activity that is not located at the School or on School Property.
  - Possessing a firearm at School, on School Property, or at an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event or any other school program or activity which firearm was initially brought onto the property by another person.
  - Bringing a knife capable of causing serious bodily injury to School, onto School Property, an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event, or any other program or activity sponsored by the school or which the school is a participant.
  - Possession of a knife capable of causing serious bodily injury at School, on School Property, or at an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event, or any other program or activity sponsored by the School or which the school is a participant which knife capable of causing serious bodily harm was initially brought onto the property by another person.
  - Committing an act while at School, on School Property, at an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event, or any other School program or activity that is a criminal offense when committed by an adult that results in serious physical harm to persons or serious physical harm to property.
  - Making a bomb threat to a school building or to any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat.

Firearm has the same meaning as provided pursuant to the "Gun Free Schools Act of 1994". At the time this policy was adopted, the above-referenced statute defined a firearm as any weapon (including a starter's gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expect a projectile by the action of an explosive; including the frame or receiver of any such weapon; and any firearm muffler or silencer; or any destructive device. If the definition of a firearm as provided by the "Gun Free Schools Act of 1994" changes, then the definition set forth in this policy shall automatically change to conform to it.

Knife is defined as cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade or edge, not to include scissors, wire cutters, or other similar tools determined by principal(s) to be necessary in the school setting at a particular building or grade level, if used only for the necessary purpose.

The specific circumstances under which the Principal may, in his/her discretion, reduce a one year expulsion may include: the student was unaware that he/she brought or was in possession of a firearm or knife capable of causing serious bodily harm; the student legitimately did not understand that the item he/she brought or possessed was a firearm or knife capable of causing serious bodily harm; a recommendation from qualified individuals concerning circumstances that justifiably mitigate the student's culpability.

### **Disabilities Compliance**

The School will comply with all laws and regulations presented in the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. Discipline procedures for students having a disability, will follow the procedures outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 or such successor or replacement law.

### **Emergency Removal**

If a student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, the student can be removed from School without prior notice of hearing. Written notice of the hearing and the reason for the removal shall be given to the student as soon as practicable prior to the hearing. The hearing shall be held on the next school day following the day of the student's initial removal. Students are to remain home during school hours and not attend/participate in School sponsored function(s) pending the hearing. Should an out-of-school suspension be warranted, days of removal may be applied to the days of out-of-school suspension.

If a student in grades pre-kindergarten to three poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, the student can be removed from school without prior notice of hearing. The student may only be removed for the remainder of the school day and will be permitted to return to School and participate in extracurricular activities the following day. In this case, the School may forego the written notice and one-day post-removal hearing requirements.

The School may not initiate suspension or expulsion proceedings against a student in grades pre-kindergarten to grade three who was removed as an emergency removal unless the student has committed an act that could result in a one-year expulsion under the Weapons Expulsion rules, described above, or as necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, the student's fellow classmates, the classroom staff and teachers, or other school employees.

## **H. Withdrawal Policies and Procedures**

### **Voluntary Withdrawal**

Parents withdrawing children from school are asked to give the School at least one week's notice. A withdrawal form must be signed and the parent is required to tell the School what new School the student will be attending. This signed form gives official notice of the child's withdrawal. Except as is required by law, records will not be released until a Release of Information form is completed by the legal parent. In addition, all outstanding fees, academic records or obligations must be met, including the return of all textbooks/electronics.

### **Mandatory Withdrawal** – 72 Consecutive Hours

Per Ohio law, students must be withdrawn if they are absent for 72 consecutive hours and have not provided the School with documentation of approved excused absences.

### **III. Academics**

#### **A. Curriculum**

The School provides a high-quality standards-based curriculum using an inquiry model to enable the students to meet individualized goals and prepare for their lives after elementary school. The School shares the student progress with parents and provides an explanation of the results to parents during the school year.

#### **B. Assessment and Intervention**

Assessment is an ongoing evaluation of student progress at all grade levels and in all courses. Classroom assessment occurs daily and includes such strategies as observations, oral presentations, reports, role-playing, reviews, projects, homework, quizzes, and tests. In addition, grades K through 3 will complete diagnostic assessments, and grades 3 through 8 will complete required state testing. Nationally normed assessments will also be administered for grades K through 8. These assessments are mandatory for all students.

Intervention is supplemental instruction based on student needs, designed to provide remediation, reinforcement, enrichment, or support for student learning about specified student performance objectives.

State law requires that each school district in Ohio assess reading skills for students in kindergarten by November 1<sup>st</sup>, and, first, second and third grades by September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year to determine whether they are reading at grade level. If a student is not reading at grade level, the School will notify the parent or guardian and the school will provide intervention services to improve the student's reading performance. If the student does not attain the required level of reading competency by the end of third grade, he/she must be retained. A copy of the complete Reading Skills Assessments and Interventions Policy, including information regarding the midyear promotion of retained students, is available from the Principal.

#### **C. Make-Up Work**

When an excused absence occurs, students are responsible for making up the assignments that are missed. The teacher will assign make-up work and set a date for completion, which shall be the same number of days as the corresponding absence. Assignments not completed will result in failing grades.

In the event of a planned excused absence, the school must be provided with three or more days of advanced notice for teachers to provide class assignments. Students must return completed assignments within two days of returning to school.

Make-up work will not be provided for unexcused absences.

It is strongly suggested that absences not occur during state testing week(s).



## **D. Report Cards**

Report cards are sent to the home through the mail, given directly to the parent, or sent home with the student for each grading period (four times a year). See the school calendar for these dates. Please check with your Principal to learn what distribution method is used at the School.

Copies of all report cards are placed into the student's cumulative file.

Kindergarten students will receive a report card at the conclusion of the second and fourth grading period. Kindergarten students will receive an Interim Report at the conclusion of the first and third grading period.

The grading scale K-8 is as follows:

90%-100%	A
80%-89%	B
70%-79%	C
65%-69%	D
64% and below	F

## **E. Parent / Teacher Conferences**

Formal parent-teacher conferences are conducted at least once a year. Conference dates are specified in the school calendar. Conference schedules will be issued through the school office but arranged by each student's teacher. Once a conference date and time have been arranged, parents should contact the student's teacher if a change is necessary. Parents may request conferences throughout the year.

Parent-teacher conferences are a focal point in student evaluation and reporting to the parents. This is a two-way avenue for both parents and teachers and may be initiated by either party as needed.

## **F. Open House**

Open house will be held during the month of September or October. Parents will be notified of the exact dates and are encouraged to attend.

# **IV. School Operations**

## **A. School Day, Arrival and Dismissal**

School days and vacations are provided in the school year calendar.

## **B. Illness**

Parents are encouraged to examine their child each morning before sending him/her to school to see if any signs or symptoms of illness are present.

If a student is ill, please keep the student at home and notify the school of the absence. Should a condition persist, the student's physician should be consulted. Parents are urged to establish children with a physician so that one can be promptly called when the need arises. Cooperation in the communicable

disease program will be greatly appreciated. Students should not return to school until a 24-hour period of a normal temperature has elapsed.

### **C. Emergency Response/Crisis Management**

A school wide Safety/Crisis Plan has been developed and provided to school personnel for assisting and responding to various crisis/emergency situations. In the event of a manmade or natural crisis, your cooperation is needed. Staff is trained to move students to a designated evacuation site. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL DIRECTLY. Calling the school may limit the availability of telephone lines needed to access emergency rescue services. Initial notification to Parents will be through local television and radio stations. Once students are secure and safe, school personnel will contact parents with sign out procedures. Students will only be released to parents or individuals listed on their emergency contact forms.

### **D. Emergency Phone Calls**

Parents should not call the School for the delivery of messages to children, except in cases of emergency.

Students may give the School's phone number to relatives for emergency purposes only. The main office will take a message and forward it to a student as soon as possible.

Students are not permitted to use School phones without approval from School personnel.

### **E. Early School Dismissal**

Occasionally, weather conditions or other building emergencies may arise that necessitate sending students home earlier than the regular dismissal time. Every possible effort will be made not to make such a closing. In case of closing, every effort will be made to contact the parents under these conditions. It will be necessary for the parent to arrange procedures (such as stay with a neighbor, friend, relative, etc.) for their child to follow in case there is no one home to meet him/her. Parents should make these arrangements beforehand and instruct the child on what he/she is to do. The school cannot make any such decisions.

### **F. Emergency School Closings**

Should it be necessary to close the Academy for weather or other unforeseen emergencies, information will be given over radio and television stations. Usually, if the city school district in which the Academy is located is closed, the Academy will also close; however, this is not always the case. Consequently, parents are asked to monitor their television or radio to be certain. Primary contacts receive automated phone calls to alert of the school closing.

### **G. Cars / Parking / Buses**

For the sake of order and safety, parents coming to drop off or pick up their children are to park in designated areas only. The School will give traffic, parking, and bus information before the opening of school.

### **H. Breakfast / Lunch**

Families needing financial assistance may apply for free or reduced breakfast/lunch fees through the school office. Information for the free and reduced breakfast/lunch program is sent home early in the school year and the forms are available throughout the year in the Academy office. Note: it is the

responsibility of the parent to see to it that their child is provided lunch or to notify the School of qualification for free or reduced lunch.

Some ACCEL schools participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) food program. Students at schools participating in the program may receive breakfast and/or lunch at no cost to the family.

#### **I. Recess**

When scheduled, students are expected to participate in outdoor recess activities during the school day – weather permitting. If a student is too sick to go outside for recess, the student should not be in school. Parents must ensure that the student has the appropriate clothing with him/her for outdoor activities. Coats, hats, and gloves should be worn as recess will be outside unless the temperature is 32 degrees or less (actual or wind chill).

#### **J. Textbooks**

Students are expected to take care of and are responsible for the textbooks assigned during the school year. Parents will be responsible for paying a replacement fee for lost or damaged books. The student's academic records will not be released until payment of the replacement fee is settled.

#### **K. Money**

All money turned into the Academy should be in an envelope marked with the child's name, grade, amount, and purpose. The children are not to bring additional money to the school. The School will not be responsible for any money brought to the School.

#### **L. Lost and Found**

Any personal items that have been left at the School will be taken to the main office. If students find personal items that belong to others, they should turn the items into the main office as soon as possible. The School is not responsible for lost money, jewelry, phones or other personal items.

Many clothing items find their way into the lost and found containers. Parents are encouraged to have their children request permission to look for missing items. Many good clothing items are never claimed and are given to various charitable organizations as space permits.

Money, jewelry, and other personal items may be turned in at the office. Students should ask permission from their teacher to come to the office to claim any such items.

#### **M. Student Photographs**

School pictures will be taken in the fall of each school year. Parents/Guardians will be offered a package of individual and class photographs through the photography company. All students will be photographed whether or not a package is purchased unless the parent sends a written refusal.

#### **N. Visitors**

Visitors are required (for the safety and security of everyone) to report to the Academy office before their visit to a classroom or other parts of the building. All visitors must sign in upon arrival, sign out before leaving the building, and wear a visitor's identification badge while in the building. Visitors are not to approach students and should always be escorted by a staff member while in the building.

All visitors must pre-arrange, through the office, any meetings or visits with the teacher or classroom. The length and repetition of visits shall be determined by the school administrator to be in the student's and the school's best interest.

Visitors are asked not to attempt an impromptu parent-teacher conference, particularly while students are in the classroom.

The School reserves the right to deny access to anyone, including parents, to the school facility and grounds.

#### **O. Volunteer Program**

Parents and members of the community may be asked or wish to give of their time in the form of volunteering. Information regarding these opportunities will be forwarded to the parents as appropriate. This is a wonderful opportunity to become more involved with the child's school.

The protection and well-being of students enrolled in the School is paramount. To that end, a background check (FBI/BCI) may be required for volunteers depending upon their level of contact with students. Any adult having unsupervised access to children who is supervising students alone for any period of time must have a background check (FBI/BCI) on file with the School, this does include field trip chaperones. The cost of this is the responsibility of the parent or volunteer.

#### **P. Field Trips**

Field trips may be conducted throughout the school year and are correlated with students' educational experiences within the classroom. Parental permission slips are required for a student to participate. Without a signed permission slip, the student will not be able to participate in the field trip. In addition, an Emergency Medical Authorization Form must be on file at the Academy before a student may participate. Teachers may request parents/guardians to assist in organizing and chaperoning field trips.

**Please note:** To be considered as a chaperone, it is required that you obtain a BCI/FBI check with no disqualifying offenses prior to participating in any school activity.

#### **Q. Classroom Parties**

Parties may be scheduled for special holidays and/or special occasions. The classroom teacher will coordinate and communicate dates, times and procedures for such events. Each classroom teacher will establish a party policy for his/her individual classroom. Parental requests for parties will be approved or denied by the classroom teacher. Any request for a child not to participate in any/all such parties or activities should be in writing and forwarded to the teacher ahead of time.

#### **R. Cell Phones**

The School understands that students come to School with cell phones for a variety of reasons. Students who have phones at school must not have them out during class nor may they disrupt class order or instruction. If the student does not comply with a request to put the phone away or to turn it off, the phone will be taken to the office and locked in the safe until the parent can come to retrieve it.

**Please Note:** The Academy is not responsible for the cost, usage, or replacement of lost, damaged or stolen cell phones that are brought to the School.

### **S. Personal Items Brought to the School**

Students are not allowed to bring personal items to School. To avoid disruption of the educational process, currently popular items such as trading cards, electronic games and action figures are to be left at home. Such articles will be taken and returned only to the parent or the law authorities if deemed prudent to do so by the Principal. Except for approved fundraisers, students are not permitted to sell or trade anything among themselves at school, on the school grounds or the bus. This includes food from lunches. Pets should never be brought to school without prior permission of the Principal. Further, items should not be brought in glass jars because of the danger of breakage (e.g., lunch items).

**Please Note:** The School is not responsible for replacement of lost, damaged or stolen items brought to school.

### **T. Stolen Items**

The School **is not responsible** for stolen personal items, including cell phones.

### **U. Backpacks, Desks, Lockers and Other Personal Storage Areas**

All lockers, desks and other storage areas provided to the student for use remain the property of the Academy. The student has no expectation of privacy in any storage area assigned to them. No student shall lock or otherwise impede access to any locker or storage area, except with a lock (if any) approved and/or provided by the Academy. Unapproved locks will be removed and destroyed with no compensation. Upon authorization of the Principal, personal storage areas may be searched at any time for any reason.

Students have no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of the internet, intranet or e-mail. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the School network system may lead to the discovery that a student has or is violating School policy or the law. Violations of School policy, the student code of conduct or the law may result in severe penalties, up to and including expulsion.

School authorities are charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, School authorities may search the person or property of a student, with or without the student's consent, whenever they reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of School rules.

### **V. Pesticide Notice and Log Policy**

In accordance with Ohio law, parents and guardians of minor children, adult students, faculty and staff who are enrolled or employed at the School may request and receive prior notifications of the applications of pesticides which are scheduled for a time when school is in session. All such requests shall include the requesting party's email address or telephone number and shall be submitted to the Principal at the school office. The Principal is designated as the contact person for all pesticide applications made at the School.

Additionally, pesticide logs shall be available for inspection at the school office during normal school hours. Said logs shall be retained for one year following the date of the pesticide application.

This Policy shall not apply to disinfectants, sanitizers, germicides, and anti-microbial agents.

## **V. Health and Safety**

The School provides a safe and clean environment and takes precautions to protect students and staff.

The building doors are locked during the school day. Entrance to the building is by office permission. Closed circuit cameras cover all entrances and are placed at strategic locations throughout the building.

### **A. Reporting Injuries**

If a student is injured at the School, he/she must immediately report the injury to School personnel. The main office will complete an injury report and will provide a copy of the report to the parents as notice of the incident.

### **B. Health Clinic**

When available, the school nurse or health aide handles all first aid; otherwise, first aid issues will be handled by other school personnel. All students are required to have an Emergency Authorization Form on file at the Academy. These forms will be used in case there is a medical emergency or illness.

### **C. Emergency Medical Authorizations**

Each parent is asked to complete and return to the Academy an Emergency Medical Authorization Form, which will be included in the student's cumulative record folder. Parents are responsible for ensuring that this authorization form includes the necessary information the School must have should an emergency arise. It is extremely important that this authorization form is fully completed and updated appropriately.

### **D. Medication Administration**

Per the Ohio Revised Code students are permitted to possess and use a metered dose or dry powder asthma inhaler to alleviate or prevent asthmatic symptoms at the school. Students are also permitted to carry and use an epinephrine auto-injector to treat anaphylaxis (an intense allergic reaction). In order for a student to properly possess or use an asthma inhaler, epinephrine auto injector, or other medication at the School, written approval from the student's physician and parent must be signed and provided to the School.

For medications, asthma inhalers, and epinephrine auto injectors, written approval by the student's physician must include all information as detailed herein below or as indicated on the Food Allergy Action Plan, if applicable. If a student has a serious food allergy, the parent must complete a Food Allergy Action Plan.

Written approval must include the following information:

1. The name and address of the student;
2. The name of the school and class in which the student is enrolled;
3. The name of the medication and the dosage to be administered;
4. The times, intervals, or circumstances at which each dosage of the medication is to be administered;
5. The date the administration of the medication is to begin;

6. The date the administration of the medication is to cease (if applicable);
7. In the case of an auto-injector, an acknowledgement that the prescriber has determined that the student is capable of possessing and using auto injector appropriately and has provided the student with training in the proper use;
8. Any severe adverse reactions that should be reported to the physician and one or more phone numbers at which the physician can be reached in an emergency;
9. Instructions outlining procedures to follow if the asthma inhaler does not provide adequate relief;
10. A list of adverse reactions that may occur if an individual for whom the asthma inhaler was not intended uses the medication; and
11. At least one emergency telephone number for contacting the physician and one number for contacting the parent
12. Any other special instructions.

Should any information regarding the medication change, the parent must submit a revised written statement. All medications must be in the prescribed container. Parents are responsible for keeping a record of the amount of available medicine provided to the School and for sending more medicine as necessary.

The school shall acquire and retain copies of each request and accompanying statement. The statement shall be given to the employee authorized to administer the drug by the next school day after receipt.

The school shall store the medication in a locked location in the school office or other location as determined by School personnel that meets legal requirements for storage. Any drugs that require refrigeration shall be stored in a refrigerator located in a place not commonly used by students.

Properly trained school staff may administer epinephrine in an emergency situation, in accordance with the Written Approval and/or the student's Food Allergy Action Plan when emergency medical service providers are not immediately available, and the exigency of the circumstance requires immediate action. School staff will immediately request assistance from an emergency medical service provider whenever a student is administered epinephrine at the school or at an activity, event, or program sponsored by the school. This request for medical assistance applies whether the student self-administers the medication, or a school staff member administers it to the student.

#### **E. Food Allergy Action Plan**

If a student has a serious food allergy, the student and his/her parent must complete a Food Allergy Action Plan.

#### **F. Health Screening**

Screening for the students will be conducted in accordance with state guidelines. The School nurse will notify the parent of the results. Any conditions discovered that might impede the student's health or school progress will be brought to the parent's attention by the school nurse.

#### **G. Eye Protective Devices**

Every student and teacher at the School shall wear industrial quality eye protective devices at all times while participating in or observing any of the following courses, vocational, technical, industrial arts, chemical, physical, or combined chemical-physical educational activities, involving exposure to:

- Hot molten metals or other molten materials
- Milling, sawing, drilling, turning, shaping, cutting, grinding, buffing, or stamping of any solid materials
- Heat treatment, tempering, or kiln firing of any metal or other materials
- Gas or electric arc welding or other forms of welding processes
- Repair or servicing of any vehicle
- Caustic or explosive materials
- Chemical, physical, or combined chemical-physical laboratories involving caustic or explosive materials, hot liquids or solids, injurious radiations, or other hazards

#### **H. Reporting Child Abuse / Neglect**

When any staff member suspects abuse or neglect, he/she will first notify the Principal. Then the staff member will call the local reporting agency in the presence of the Principal. The staff member will document the notification. All reports are to be confidential.

#### **I. Technology and Internet Safety**

As more fully outlined in the School's Internet Safety Policy attached as **Appendix 2** to this Handbook, the use of technology is a privilege and an important part of the School's overall curriculum. The School will, from time to time, make determinations on whether specific uses of technology are consistent with School policies for students and employees of the School but does not warrant that the technology resources will meet any specific requirements of the student or other users, or that it will be error free or uninterrupted. The School always reserves the right to monitor and log technology use, to monitor file server space utilization by users, and examine specific network usage (as may be deemed necessary) for maintenance, safety or security of the technology resources or the safety of the user.

**By signing the Parent/Student Contract Page at the end of the Parent/Student Handbook, the parent and student agree:**

- To abide by all School policies relating to the use of technology;
- To release all School employees from any and all claims of any nature arising from the use or inability to use the technology;
- That the use of technology is a privilege; and
- That use of the technology will be monitored, and there is no expectation of privacy whatsoever in any use of the technology.

**The parent/student further agrees and understands that the student may have his/her privileges revoked or other disciplinary actions taken against him/her for actions or misuse such as, but not limited to, the following:**

- Altering system technology, including but not limited to, software or hardware;
- Placing unauthorized information, computer viruses or harmful programs on or through the computer system in either public or private files or messages;
- Obtaining, viewing, downloading, transmitting, disseminating or otherwise gaining access to or disclosing materials the school believes may be unlawful, obscene, pornographic, abusive, harmful to minors or otherwise objectionable;
- Using technology resources for commercial, political, or other unauthorized purposes – the school technology resources are intended only for educational use;



- Intentionally seeking information on, obtaining copies of, or modifying files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users;
- Disrupting technology through abuse of the technology, including but not limited to, hardware or software;
- Malicious uses of technology through hate mail, harassment, bullying, profanity, vulgar statements, or discriminating remarks;
- Interfering with others' use of technology;
- Installation of software without consent of the school;
- Violating the conditions of federal and Ohio law dealing with students and employees' rights to privacy;
- Violating copyright laws by illegally downloading or installing music, any commercial software, shareware, or freeware;
- Damaging any technology devices;
- Allowing anyone else to use an account other than the account holder; and
- Other unlawful or inappropriate behavior.

The parent and student also acknowledge and agree that the student is solely responsible for the use of his/her accounts, passwords, and/or access privileges, and that misuse of such may result in appropriate disciplinary actions (including but not limited to suspension or expulsion), loss of access privileges, and/or appropriate legal action.

The parent and student must also know and further agree that:

- Should the user transfer a file, shareware, or software that infects the technology resources with a virus and causes damage, the user will be liable for any and all repair costs;
- The user will be liable to pay the cost or fee of any file, shareware, or software transferred or downloaded, whether intentional or accidental;
- Should the user intentionally destroy information or equipment that causes damage to technology resources, the user will be liable for any and all costs; and
- Violation of the Internet Safety Policy is also a violation of the school Code of Conduct and may result in other disciplinary action, other than those specifically set forth above, including but not limited to suspension or expulsion.

## **J. Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying**

As more fully set forth in the School's Policy on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying attached as **Appendix 1** to this Handbook, harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior is strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include counseling, suspension, or expulsion from School. The School's commitment to addressing harassment, intimidation, and bullying, however, involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a School atmosphere in which this behavior will not be tolerated by students, faculty or School personnel.

It is imperative that harassment, intimidation, and bullying be identified only when the specific elements of the definition are met, because the designation of the conduct of such behavior carries with it special statutory obligations. Any misconduct by one student against another student or staff, whether or not appropriately defined as harassment, intimidation, or bullying will result in appropriate disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator.

## **K. Prohibited Gang Activity**

Students are prohibited from engaging in gang activities while at School, on School property, to or from School, or at a School related function or event whether at the School or outside of the school facility, and on the Internet. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from School.

The term “gang” is defined as any non-school sponsored group of students with secret and/or exclusive membership, whose purposes or practices include unlawful or anti-social behavior as well as actions that threaten the welfare of others

The term “gang activity” is defined as any conduct engaged in by a student:

- On behalf of a gang;
- To perpetrate the existence of a gang;
- To effect or promote the common purpose and design of any gang, including the wearing of apparel, jewelry, or symbols;
- To recruit for membership in a gang;
- To threaten or intimidate by use of gang affiliation; or
- To represent a gang affiliation, loyalty or membership in any way

#### **L. Drug-Free School**

In accordance with applicable law, the School prohibits the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of drugs by students on the School grounds, in the school building, on school buses, or at any School related event. Drugs include any alcoholic beverage, an anabolic steroid, and any dangerous controlled substance as defined by state or federal statute, or any substance that could be considered a “look alike” controlled substance. Compliance with this School policy is mandatory for all students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with due process and as specified in this Parent/Student Handbook, up to and including expulsion from the School. When required by state law, the School will also notify law enforcement officials.

#### **M. Weapon-Free School**

No student at any time, for any reason shall possess, handle, transmit, or use any object, which can be reasonably considered a weapon or considered a “look-alike” weapon in or on property of the School, school bus, or any school-sponsored activity held away from the school property. Possession of a weapon may result in immediate expulsion and involvement of local law enforcement.

- A weapon is anything that is commonly used or designed to hurt someone or to put someone in fear (examples: guns, knives, knuckles, clubs, box-cutters, etc.).
- A dangerous instrument is anything that although not specifically designed to hurt someone, can be used to hurt someone or put someone in fear (examples: belts, combs, compasses, etc.).
- An explosive is any substance that can potentially generate a release of mechanical or chemical energy (examples: firecrackers, cherry bombs, gun shells, etc.).
- Any object that closely resembles a weapon or explosive and could put persons in fear for their safety is included in this category (examples: starter pistols, pellet guns, toy guns, smoke bombs, etc.).

## **VI. School Records**

The School takes student records and their confidentiality very seriously and has a policy of not disclosing any student records to anyone outside of the School except in strict accordance with state and federal law. Records of students are only released to another school upon properly authorized request from that school or from a signed release by the parent or as otherwise required by law.

#### **A. Current Information**

To ensure student records are up-to-date parents must inform the School of address, telephone (home/work), and legal custody changes as they occur during the school year.

#### **B. Request for Records**

The School will request student records from the previous school(s) upon completion of enrollment. Pursuant to the Ohio Revised code, the requested records must be received within fourteen (14) days. If the records are not received within fourteen (14) days or if the previous school indicates there are no records, the local law enforcement agency will be notified regarding the possibility that the student may be a missing child. All fees are due at the time of record release.

#### **C. Student Directory Information**

The School has designated student names as directory information and may include such information in school publications, recognition lists, programs or student directories or give such information to third parties without parental consent or as otherwise required by law.

#### **D. Audio-Visual Information**

The School recognizes the value of audio-visual and other types of electronic communication in providing students with an effective education. In communicating school-related activities, opportunities exist to photograph and videotape students and their work in a variety of activities. However, individual student records (academic, behavioral) will not be disclosed. Communications may include School newsletters, local newspapers, community access cable channel, school-sponsored web pages, marketing materials and other publications. Highlighting the achievements and celebrating student successes in school is an integral part of the reporting responsibility to the community. The School will, however, respect parents' wish for privacy in this area. Parents should call the school with any questions or concerns. Parents may notify the school in writing if they prefer that the school not use their student's name, picture or work product for presentations or other uses.

#### **E. Release of Student Records**

Access to records will be in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) days after the day the School receives a request for access.  
Parents or eligible students should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed.

If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

A school official is a person employed, contracted, or volunteering at the School in an administrative, supervisory, academic or support staff position, including but not limited to, school employees (whether employed directly by the Board or by a third party on behalf of the Board); a member of the school law enforcement unit, which consists of the School Leader; a person with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (i.e. Attorney, auditor, outside consultant); a person serving on the Board; or a parent, student or volunteer serving in an official school capacity. A School official has a "legitimate educational interest" in an education record when the official needs to review the record in order to fulfill his or her responsibility on behalf of the School, such as when the official is performing a task that is specified in his or her job description or by a contract agreement or other official appointment; performing a task related to a student's education; performing a task related to the discipline of a student; or providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, assisting with the college application procedure; any other purpose that the Board deems necessary as related to a student's education. A school official has a "legitimate educational interest" if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

#### **F. Non-Custodial Parent Record Request**

The School will only give access to or release records to parents who have a legal right to the records of their child. If a parent has ever been to court for custody, those court documents must be on file with the school. Both custodial and non-custodial parents have equal access to the following unless there is a court order to the contrary:

- Cumulative file (including the enrollment file, academic file, vocational file, Title One file, and graduation file);
- Health records;

- Psychological records;
- Parent conferences and lab observations.

The stepparent does not have access to the stepchild's records unless the stepparent has adopted the child, the natural parent has given power of attorney, or the natural parent himself/herself shows the record to the stepparent.

## **G. Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) Notification**

### **Description of Intent**

The School follows a philosophy of continuous improvement and honest, objective data analysis. This philosophy requires well-planned and sometimes independent research efforts to determine the effectiveness of the School's programs and strategies. From time to time, the School will collect and analyze student performance data and various measures of effectiveness. Families may also be asked to participate in surveys or focus groups. Such research shall always be undertaken ensuring student privacy is protected and in compliance with the PPRA. For example, the names of the student, parent, and family members will not be revealed, and results will only be reported in the aggregate or by sub-groupings of sufficient size so that anonymity of the participants is safeguarded.

### **Rights Afforded by the PPRA**

The PPRA affords parents of minors certain rights regarding the School's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and conduct of certain physical exams. These rights include the following:

- The right to provide consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more protected areas ("Protected Information Survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education. Protected areas include the following:
  1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent
  2. mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family
  3. sexual behavior or attitudes
  4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
  5. critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships
  6. legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or clergy
  7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent
  8. income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility
- The right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:
  1. any other Protected Information Survey, regardless of funding
  2. any nonemergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the School or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law
  3. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others
- The right to inspection, upon request and before administration or use, of the following:
  1. Protected Information Surveys of students
  2. instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
  3. instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

### **Notification Procedures**

The School will work to develop and adopt policies regarding these rights in consultation with parent. The School will also work to make arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of Protected Information Surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.

The School will directly notify the parent of these policies annually in this PPRA Notice or after any substantive changes. The School will also directly notify by U.S. mail, e-mail, or other reasonably available method, the parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys described in this PPRA Notice and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt students out of participation in the specific activity or survey. The School will make this notification to parents near the beginning of the school year if it has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, the parent will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys covered by the PPRA and will be provided an opportunity to opt their students out of such activities and surveys. The parent will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. The following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution
- administration of any Protected Information Survey funded in whole or in part by U.S. Department of Education
- any nonemergency, invasive physical examination, or screening as described above in the Rights Afforded by the PPRA

Where a student is scheduled to participate in these activities, the student will be notified as described above.

### **Reporting a Violation**

The parent/or student who believes his/her rights have been violated may file a complaint to the following:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

## **VII. Child Find**

The School is participating in an effort to assist the State of Ohio in identifying, locating, and evaluating all children who may have disabilities that may be hindering their ability to receive Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

School districts across the State of Ohio are also participating in this effort to identify disabilities such as hearing impairments, visual impairments, speech or language impairments, specific learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, multiple disabilities, cognitive impairments, physical impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, and other health impairments.

The School is committed to affording all children their right to a free and appropriate education, regardless of any disability a child may have. However, to accomplish this, the School must know that a need is present.

Parents, guardians, relatives, public and private agency employees, and concerned citizens are used to help schools find any child, birth through age 21, who may have a disability and need special education and related services. If you are aware of a child who may have special needs, please notify the Principal.

The School will contact the parents or guardians of the child to find out if the child needs to be evaluated. Free testing is available to families to determine whether a special need exists. If a need is identified, the child can begin receiving special education and related services.

### **VIII. Parents' Right to Know Teacher Qualifications**

A parent or guardian may request information on the professional qualifications of each classroom teacher who provides instruction to the parent's child. The information that may be requested includes:

- Licensure and certification information
- Educational background
- Qualifications of instructional aides (if applicable)

### **IX. Parent Involvement Policy**

The School has adopted a policy addressing the importance of parent involvement. In addition to existing policies and/or guidelines, the School also recognizes the need for a policy that meets requirements under Section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended.

Parents are vital contributors in the education of their children. Accordingly, they are encouraged to participate in the development and structure of Title I activities and to be kept informed about programs in which their children belong. Moreover, they are encouraged to be kept informed of the academic progress their children make as a result of participation in these programs. For it is through mutual understanding and close cooperation between the School and home, that a student's academic success will improve. Two-way communication, both verbal and written, provides a sound base for a good partnership between the school and home to provide an effective educational program for all students.

### **X. Complaint Procedure**

Initially, complaints shall be addressed formally or informally with the staff member. Complaints must be made in a civil/respectful manner in order to be considered by School personnel. Where appropriate, the Complaint should be in writing on a form developed by the Principal and should contain a statement of the facts and the specific outcome desired by the parent or other person making the complaint. The complainant may sign the complaint and should be given a copy. The staff member should work with the complainant to resolve the issue in a timely, professional, and courteous manner. The efforts used to resolve the complaint and the outcome should be noted on the form. Allegations involving illegalities should be reported immediately to the Principal

Complaints unresolved through a parent-staff member communication or complaints involving teachers or staff members should be in writing as noted above and directed to the Principal. The Principal shall investigate and attempt to resolve the issue in a fair and timely manner. The outcome should be noted on the form and further documented by letter or email as appropriate under the circumstances. If the Principal cannot resolve the issue with consultation with school advisors or consultants, the complaint (with documented history or preceding steps) is forwarded in written form to the Board of Directors and a copy to the school's legal counsel.

### **XI. Non-Discrimination and Title IX/Section 504 Notice**

The School does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, homelessness, or disability in its programs and activities. The

following have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies and can advise parents on the specific civil rights grievance procedure.

**Title IX Coordinator**

ACCEL Schools  
Vice President of Operations  
4700 Rockside Road  
Suite #345  
Independence, OH 44131  
216-583-5095

**Section 504 Coordinator**

ACCEL Schools  
Vice President of Operations  
4700 Rockside Road  
Suite #345  
Independence, OH 44131  
216-583-5095

## **XII. Homeless Student Education**

Children who meet the Federal definition of “homeless” will be provided a free and appropriate public education in the same manner as all other students of the School. To that end, homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and will be assigned to the school serving those non-homeless students residing in the area in which the homeless child is actually living. Pursuant to the School’s Open Enrollment Policy, any homeless child in the State of Ohio is eligible to attend the School. No homeless student will be denied enrollment based on a lack of proof of residency. No Board policy, administrative guidelines, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment attendance, or school success of homeless children.

Homeless students will be provided services comparable to other students in the School including:

- Transportation
- Educational services for which the homeless student meets eligibility criteria including services provided under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or similar State and local programs, educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency
- Programs in vocational and technical education;
- Programs for gifts and talented students; and
- School nutrition programs.

### **McKinney-Vento Homeless Children and Youth Program Overview**

The Principal of the School shall serve as the School’s local liaison for homeless children and youth. To the extent that the School receives assistance from the Federal Program for Education for Homeless Children and Youth, it shall comply with requirements to coordinate services for homeless students with local social service agencies and programs, including those funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.



### **XIII. Missing Children**

The School shall notify a student's parents, parent who is the residential parent and custodian, guardian, legal custodian, or any other person responsible for the student within a reasonable time after the determination that the student is absent from school. The student's parents, parent who is the residential parent and custodian, guardian, legal custodian, or any other person responsible for the student shall provide to the School a current address and telephone number at which said person or persons can receive notice that the student is absent from School.

A student at the time of his or her initial entry to school shall present to the person in charge of admission, any records given to him or her by the school he or she most recently attended and a certification of birth or a comparable certificate or certification issued pursuant to Ohio law. Within 24 hours of a student's entry into the school, a school official shall request the student's official records from the school he or she most recently attended. If the school the student claims to have most recently attended states that it has no records of the student's attendance, or the records are not received within 14 days of the date of the request, or the student does not present a certification of birth or comparable certificate, the principal of the school shall notify the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction in the area where the student resides of this fact and the possibility that the student may be a missing child."

The School shall make available to parents and community members in the School's office copies of informational materials acquired or prepared of the Ohio Attorney General's Missing Children Clearinghouse.

### **XIV. Positive Behavior and Interventions and Supports**

The Board of Directors ("Board") has adopted a policy to guide the use of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and the limited use of restraint and seclusion at the School. It is the Board's belief that every effort should be made to prevent the need for the use of restraint and for the use of seclusion. The use of a non-aversive effective behavioral system such as PBIS shall be used to create a learning environment that promotes the use of evidence-based behavioral interventions, thus enhancing academic and social behavioral outcomes for all students.

Restraint or seclusion shall not occur, except when there is an immediate risk of physical harm to the student or others and shall occur only in a manner that protects the safety of all children and adults at school. Every use of restraint or seclusion shall be documented and reported in accordance with the Board adopted policy.

The PBIS prevention-oriented framework or approach applies to all students, all staff, and all settings. Research supports the conclusion that PBIS, when integrated with effective academic instruction, provides the support students need to become actively engaged in their own learning and academic success.

**Riverside Academy**  
Parent/Student Handbook Contract  
2020-2021

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
*PRINT*

Parent's/Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*PRINT*

We have read and understand all the information contained in this manual including but not limited to the student code of conduct, internet usage policy and related policies. We agree to abide by and support the Academy's policies, procedures and code of conduct as outlined in the Parent – Student Handbook. We recognize that although this Parent-Student Handbook reflects the current policies of the School, it may be necessary to make changes from time to time to best serve the needs of the School and its students, especially in the upcoming year. As a result, we agree to make affirmative efforts to review new policies and information related to changes at the School on a regular basis.

Agreed to by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent / Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return signed form to Academy Office.

This agreement will be placed into the student's file.

## Media Release

### STUDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please print clearly:

\_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of participating student

\_\_\_\_\_  
School

\_\_\_\_\_ grade  
city/town/zip

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT or GUARDIAN:

I/We understand that as part of my/our child's/my attendance at the Academy, photos, videos, and quotations may be taken for use in publications and reports about the program. I/We further understand that members of the news media invited to cover the program may take photos, videos and quotations. I/We grant permission to use such materials for the promotion of the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent or guardian date

- PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM CLEARLY AND COMPLETELY.
- PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE OFFICE.