

Vision:
Prepare students to lead and thrive
in a dynamic world.

Mission:
Empower lifelong learners to
become problem solvers, and
creative, healthy individuals who
are self sustaining, responsible,
active citizens of their global and
local community.

About This Handbook

This handbook includes an overview of River Heights Charter School policies, regulations and procedures. Those documents are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. Therefore, there may have been changes to the documents reviewed in this handbook since the handbook was printed in fall 2008.



If you have questions or would like more information about a specific issue, please contact the Director.

River Heights Charter School Information

CALENDAR

A school calendar will be provided to all students. If you have not received one, please contact the office manager.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The school day begins at 8:00am and ends at 2:45pm.

❖ Attendance	8:00
❖ Phys. Ed.	8:15 to 8:45 am
❖ Break	8:45 to 8:50 am
❖ 1 st Period	8:50 to 9:25
❖ Break	9:25 to 9:30
❖ 2 nd Period	9:30 to 10:05
❖ Break	10:05 to 10:10
❖ 3 rd Period	10:10 to 10:45
❖ Break	10:45 to 10:50
❖ S.S.R./Journal	10:50 to 11:30
❖ Lunch	11:30 to 12:15
❖ Advisories	12:15 to 12:30
❖ Project Time	12:30 to 2:45
❖ Dismissal	2:45

OPEN LUNCH



Students who are eligible for open campus lunch are permitted to leave the building from 11:30am to 12:15pm. Open campus lunch permission from a parent or guardian must be on file with the school. All policies in this handbook apply while students are off campus during open campus lunch. Any student not returning within the 45 minute lunch period will be considered tardy. Repeated tardiness will result in the suspension of Open Campus Lunch. Do not litter, cut across lawns, or otherwise cause disturbance while on open lunch. Open privileges will be revoked for inappropriate behavior.

BUILDING SECURITY

- ❖ When entering the school, all visitors must sign in at the front desk.
- ❖ Security cameras are used to record activity in common hallways, building entrances and in instructional areas at all times.
- ❖ No one is authorized at any time to wedge open a door to allow individuals to enter the building or the school; or to circumvent security measures in any way.

VISITORS

- ❖ Student visitors from other schools or other student guests must receive prior permission from the Director in order to visit River Heights during school hours.
- ❖ Parents/guardians are welcome to observe or shadow their children at any time, but must do

so with respect for the educational environment and learning process.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

For weather related school closings, check River Height's website **<http://riverheights.info>**, or watch **WCCO**, or **KARE 11**, for school closing information.

TRANSPORTATION

River Heights Charter School provides MTC bus passes free of charge for students who live 2 miles or more from River Heights.

Students must have permission from parents/guardians before receiving a bus pass. Students who are issued a bus pass will be expected to use the passes only for the purpose of transportation to and from school. If a student uses a ride for any other purposes and has been warned twice, he/she will be charged for that bus pass. After payment has been made, the student will be able to receive bus passes free of charge unless they continue to use the bus passes inappropriately. If bus passes continue to be abused, bus privileges maybe suspended or terminated.

If students, parents/guardians are concerned with specific incidents occurring on the bus or at the MTC bus stop, they should notify the Transit Police at 612-349-7200.

PHONE USAGE AND CALLS



Phones are to be used for emergency and educational purposes only. Messages will be taken for incoming calls and students may return calls at lunch or after school. Parents are asked to leave a message unless it's an emergency. Students wishing to use the phone need to receive permission from a staff prior to use. Cell phones must be turned off during the day. However, they may be used during lunch time with permission from an advisor.

FOOD

Food and beverages are welcome at student work stations provided that students are responsible for health, safety and cleanliness. Student food or beverage may be inspected or confiscated by staff at any time for any reason to ensure health, safety and cleanliness.

There is no food or beverage allowed in the computer lab at any time. If you are seen with any food or beverage, you will lose computer privileges.

CLOTHING STANDARDS

River Heights requires students, parents/guardians, staff and community members to dress appropriately for school activities and in keeping with community standards. Clothing must be appropriate for a school or business setting. Hats, bandanas or hoods worn over the head or used to hide one's identity are prohibited. Clothing must be free from visible impressions communicating a message that is racist,

sexist or derogatory to any person or group of persons or which connotes gang membership; or which promotes the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs. When a member of the community is offended by another members' clothing, that individual may submit concerns to the Director. It is not the intention of this policy to abridge the rights of students to express political, religious, philosophical or similar opinions by wearing apparel on which such messages are stated. Such messages are acceptable as long as they are not lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory or profane. Students may be asked to remove hats, bandanas, hoods or similar head coverings or to turn shirts inside out or to cover up that which is clearly in violation of school policy or currently under review. Students will be advised if clothing is deemed inappropriate for a school or business setting. If the offending clothing is worn after such actions are taken, the student may face disciplinary action.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Parents/guardians of each student are required to complete an Emergency Card and return it during the first week of school. Please return this form promptly so that the school may respond appropriately in the case of an emergency.

If a student becomes ill or injured at school, first aid or other necessary care will be given immediately. We will first attempt to contact the parent/guardian or emergency contact listed on the Emergency Card. When it is not possible to reach a parent/guardian, an emergency vehicle will be called.



MEDICATIONS

The administration of medication to students is carried out only under written orders from a student's physician and written permission of the parents/guardians. The policies of the Minnesota Department of Health and the State Department of Education are followed.

Whenever possible, parents/guardians are encouraged to make alternative arrangements so that it is unnecessary for school personnel to administer medications. If a student **REQUIRES** that prescription medication needs to be taken during school hours, a River Heights staff member can give the medication in school **ONLY** if the following procedure is followed:

- ❖ **ORIGINAL BOTTLE:** Medication is sent in the original bottle with the name of the medication, how often it is taken, amount of dosage, physician's name and name and telephone number of the pharmacy on the label. Parents/guardians who know their students need to take medication at school can request a second bottle from their pharmacist to send to school.
- ❖ **WRITTEN REQUEST:** The medication **MUST** be accompanied by a written request from the parent that their student should take the medication in school. The dosage given, time of day to give the medication, and specific directions for giving the medication.
- ❖ **PARENT AND PHYSICIAN MEDICATION AND AUTHORIZATION FORM:** This needs to be

completed for the students on medication for extended period of time or the entire school year. If a student is on a medication for a long period of time, please contact the front desk for one of these forms.

If the above procedure is not followed, students may not carry or self-administer prescription medications on school property except as prescribed by law. Prescription medications may be confiscated. Sharing prescription or over the counter medications with other students is prohibited.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

River Heights Charter School has adopted the following Code of Conduct:

1. **Students will attend school with a common goal of learning.** They will demonstrate this by
 - a. attending school every day school is in session unless they have an approved excuse.
 - b. arriving on time and remaining at school for the entire day unless they have a valid excuse.
 - c. being punctual in returning from lunch, restroom breaks, or school outings.
 - d. actively participating in learning tasks when and where scheduled to do so.
 - e. creating an environment where all can study, work and learn without distractions or conflict.
 - f. striving to do their best work at all times.
 - g. encouraging each other to work hard and make academic progress.

2. **Students will promote and preserve their own physical and emotional well-being.** They will demonstrate this by
 - a. striving to develop positive relationships with peers and staff.
 - b. refraining from using alcohol, drugs, and other substances which cause intoxication or impairment of judgment or behavior.
 - c. refraining from using tobacco.
 - d. avoiding activities which could result in personal physical or emotional harm.

3. Students will promote and preserve the physical and emotional well-being of others.

They will demonstrate this by

- a. choosing words carefully and considering their impact on others.
- b. respecting others' physical space in person and property.
- c. resolving conflict or disagreements in a peacekeeping manner.
- d. wearing clothing or displaying items which are free from visible impressions communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or derogatory to any person or group of persons or which connotes gang membership; or which promotes the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.

4. Students will display appropriate behavior for a school or business setting at all times.

They will demonstrate this by

- a. refraining from loud and inappropriate talking, public displays of affection, roughhousing, running or other boisterous activities.
- b. entering, leaving, and being in the building or on surrounding property without disturbing other tenants and visitors.
- c. taking care of school and building property so it remains in tact and undamaged.
- d. using time, equipment, instructional materials and supplies wisely, recognizing that wastefulness reduces the availability of these resources for all.

e. wearing clothing or displaying items that are appropriate for a school or business setting.

5. Students will abide by all school rules and policies.

6. Students will abide by all local, state and federal laws.

The Code of Conduct applies to:

- ❖ All school buildings, school grounds, school property, areas of entrance or departure from school premises or events, and all school-related functions;
- ❖ School-sponsored activities or trips, off campus excursions during school hours, and open lunch;
- ❖ School vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school purposes;
- ❖ Off campus conduct which disrupts, interferes or otherwise obstructs the mission or operations of the school or the safety of the student, other students or staff.

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS

The following are examples of Code of Conduct violations which are subject to disciplinary action by the school. It is not a comprehensive list; staff may take disciplinary action for any behavior deemed to violate the Code of Conduct.

Refusing or failing to respond or carry out a reasonable request by authorized school personnel (insubordination).

Using impertinent or disrespectful language toward advisors and staff members.

Leaving the instructional area, school or school grounds without permission; this includes truancy, absenteeism and tardiness and violations of the school's Attendance policy.

Actions or conduct resulting in academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism including the use of picture phones or other technology to facilitate academic dishonesty.

Wearing clothing containing lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory or profane words or impressions; or which is offensive or inappropriate for a school or business setting.

Wearing clothing or displaying items which have visible impressions communicating a message that is

racist, sexist or derogatory to any person or group of persons or which connotes gang membership; or which promotes the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.

Wearing hats, bandanas or hoods including hoods pulled up from sweatshirts, sweaters, jackets or coats or other clothing.

Using profane or obscene language.

Use of language which is discriminatory, abusive, obscene, threatening, intimidating or that degrades other people.

Actions, including fighting or any other assaultive behavior, which causes or could cause injury to the student or other persons or which otherwise endangers the health, safety, or welfare of students, staff or others.

Actions which inflict great bodily harm upon another person, even though accidental or as a result of poor judgment.

Bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying; violations against the school's Bullying policy.

Promoting, instigating or contributing to a verbal or physical assault of another person verbally or through behavior.

Observing a verbal or physical assault of another person without reporting the assault to school staff or authority.

Failing to cooperate in a school or police investigation.

Making a verbal false and malicious statement or report about someone (slander); or publishing (writing or displaying) or distributing such a statement or report (libel).

Violations of the school's policies regarding School-Sponsored Publications and Non-School-Sponsored Materials.

Violations of the school's Internet Use policy.

Possessing, accessing, displaying or distributing violent, obscene, or pornographic materials in printed or electronically generated or transmitted forms, including music or other audible forms.

Actions or use of language constituting harassment or which are abusive, threatening or demeaning towards others based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, national origin or sexual orientation; or sexual harassment.

Engaging in any sexual contact with another person; violations of the school's Harassment and Violence policy.

Violations of the school's Hazing policy.

Physical or verbal threats including staging or reporting dangerous or hazardous situations that do not exist.

Threatening, directly or indirectly, to commit a crime of violence with the purpose to terrorize another or with reckless disregard of the risk of causing terror in another.

Using, possessing, or distributing tobacco or lighters or other tobacco paraphernalia.

Using, possessing, distributing or being under the influence of alcohol, narcotics and drugs, controlled substances, intoxicating substances or their paraphernalia; including look alike substances. Prescribed medication for which a student has written permission to use at school is allowed; but sharing or distributing prescribed medication with others is prohibited.

Using, possessing or distributing weapons, look-alike weapons, objects used as weapons or other dangerous materials; violations of the school's Weapons policy.

Possessing ammunition including, but not limited to, bullets or other projectiles in any form designed to be used in or as a weapon.

Possessing, using, distributing fireworks, explosives or any compound or mixture, the primary or common purpose of which is to function by explosion, with substantially instantaneous release of gas and heat.

Playing a game of chance for stakes (gambling), possessing gambling paraphernalia, or visiting related websites.



Driving on school grounds including parking lots and surrounding streets in such a manner as to endanger persons or property.

Trespassing; being on school grounds when not engaged in a legitimate school approved activity or during suspension, exclusion or expulsion without express permission of the Director.

Damaging or destroying school property or the property of others; failing to compensate for damage to or destruction of school property.

Taking property of another person or receiving or possessing such property without permission or authorization from the rightful owner.

Willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, or the ability of school personnel to perform their duties, or school sponsored extracurricular activities.

Other acts, as determined by the school, which are disruptive of the educational process or dangerous or detrimental to the student or other students, school personnel or surrounding persons, or which violate the rights of others or which damage or endanger the property of the school, or which otherwise interfere with or obstruct the mission or operations of the school or the safety or welfare of students or employees.

Violations of any local, state or federal law as appropriate.



Violation of school rules, regulations, policies, or procedures including, but not limited to, those policies specifically enumerated in this policy.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND PROCEDURES

The school district may develop and employ various methods for teaching the Code of Conduct to students and may apply reasonable in school consequences for violations or infractions. Whenever possible or appropriate, consequences will focus on resolving conflict, restoring relationships or property, and restitution. These methods will be communicated to students but may change or be altered by staff in order to modify or correct inappropriate behavior as needed.

It is the general policy of the school district to utilize progressive discipline to the extent reasonable and appropriate based upon the specific facts and circumstances of student misconduct. The specific form of discipline chosen in a particular case is solely within the discretion of the school district.

The minimum disciplinary action for any violation is that students will be made aware of the violation and asked not to repeat it.

The school district shall, however, impose more severe disciplinary sanctions for any violation, including exclusion or expulsion, if warranted by the student's misconduct, as determined by the school district. Dismissals will be conducted in accordance with the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act,

Minnesota Statutes 121A.40 to 121A.56, and other applicable laws.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- ❖ Conference with student to review the Code of Conduct.
- ❖ Parent contact.
- ❖ Conference with student's parent or guardian by phone to discuss student behavior and expectations.
- ❖ Conference with student and parent or guardian in person to review the Code of Conduct and to reach an agreement from the student to abide by it. This meeting may also include the formation of a plan to assist and monitor the student in following the Code of Conduct.
- ❖ Removal from learning activity or class.
- ❖ In-school suspension.
- ❖ Restriction of school privileges.
- ❖ Loss of school privileges.
- ❖ Suspension from extracurricular activities.
- ❖ Financial restitution.
- ❖ Referral to police, other law enforcement agencies or other appropriate authorities.
- ❖ A request for a petition to be filed in district court for juvenile delinquency adjudication
- ❖ Student dismissal for the remainder of the school day.
- ❖ Student dismissal (suspension) under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.

- ❖ Preparation of an admission or readmission plan.
- ❖ Recommendation of exclusion or expulsion of student to the RHCS Board under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students who are currently identified as eligible under the IDEA or Section 504 will be subject to the provisions of this policy, unless the student's IEP or 504 plan specifies a necessary modification.

Where a student is dismissed for five (5) or more consecutive days, or has accumulated more than ten (10) days of dismissal over the course of the school year, the school district will convene a meeting to determine whether the student's educational program is appropriate and to review all relevant information in order to determine whether the behavior subject to discipline is a manifestation of the student's disability. Such a meeting must be held within ten (10) school days of the school district's decision to remove the student from his or her current educational placement and must be held before commencing an expulsion or exclusion of the student.

If the student's educational program is appropriate and the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school district will proceed with discipline – up to and including expulsion – as if the student did not have a disability, unless the student's educational program provides otherwise.

If the team determines that the behavior subject to discipline is a manifestation of the student's disability, the team shall conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such student provided that the school district had not conducted such assessment prior to the manifestation determination before the behavior that resulted in a change of placement. Where a behavioral intervention plan previously has been developed, the team will review the behavioral intervention plan and modify it as necessary to address the behavior. If the student was placed in a 45-day interim alternative educational setting pending the manifestation determination, the student will be returned to the placement from which the student was removed unless the student and school district agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

When a student who has an IEP is excluded or expelled for misbehavior that is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school district shall continue to provide special education and related services during the period of expulsion or exclusion.

If a student with an IEP engages in conduct which endangers or may endanger the health, safety, or property of the student, other students, staff members, or school property, the Director or the Director's designee, may request that a police liaison officer or a peace officer remove the student from school grounds.

IS THIS SCHOOL RIGHT FOR YOU?

Minnesota Statute § 120A.36 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Attendance at a particular public school is a privilege not a right for a pupil.

The River Heights Charter School Board, Director and Staff believe that students who follow the Code of Conduct will be very successful at achieving their academic goals. But not every school is the right place for every student. We are committed to teaching these expectations and assisting students in meeting them; but if in-school consequences and conferencing do not cause a student to alter his or her behavior significantly and violations continue, a student may be asked to withdraw voluntarily or face possible dismissal from River Heights for the remainder of the school year or for any period of time up to twelve (12) months (expulsion). Certain violations may warrant a recommendation for expulsion with the first incident.

Minnesota Statute § 121A.45 GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL

*Subd. 2. **Grounds for dismissal.** A pupil may be dismissed on any of the following grounds:*

- (a) willful violation of any reasonable school board regulation. Such regulation must be clear and definite to provide notice to pupils that they must conform their conduct to its requirements;*
- (b) willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, or the ability of school personnel to perform their duties, or school sponsored extracurricular activities; or*

(c) willful conduct that endangers the pupil or other pupils, or surrounding persons, including school district employees, or property of the school.

Policies

POLICY OF ACADEMIC PROGRESSION

Students of River Heights Charter School are required to progress through the school's curriculum in the following manner:

1. Students will meet Requirements for Graduation through the completion of student initiated projects, seminars, rotation of morning classes, and other learning experiences. Each learning component is designed to incorporate authentic student interests and real world relevance while addressing one or more of the learning targets required for graduation. These learning targets are described in detail on Project Foundry, an online project management system, or a paper copy can be requested from the school. When students have completed all learning targets, they will have successfully completed all Minnesota State and River Heights Requirements for Graduation and will be issued a state-approved diploma from River Heights Charter School.

The average number of learning targets to be completed per quarter during a school year is approximately 15. For one school year, the average student will complete between 55-60 targets. Students are encouraged to be productive and show quality effort and curiosity toward new information. It

is reasonably possible to meet more than 60 targets in one school year.

In order to receive recognition for completing Requirements for Graduation, the project, seminar, or other class or learning activity should be pre-approved by the student's parent/guardian and their school advisor. The projects, while varied, will all be documented with a hard-copy project process form and also documented with Project Foundry's Project Request Form. If these processes are not followed, students may not receive credit for their projects.

All students are strongly required to attend Presentation Days, as they take place during the school day. Parents are also encouraged to attend, as they give the River Heights community an opportunity to share what project presentations are like, and show what students have learned.

Following the Requirements For Graduation, students will receive credit for each year of presentation targets if:

- * Student attends Presentation Day during school hours
- * Presents at least once a year for the River Heights community (parents and students), and between 3-5 smaller-evaluation opportunities with advisors and small groups of peers. This may be in the form of an exhibition-style project, or a more formal presentation.

- * Evaluate at least three separate projects presented by peers of students.
- * All students will participate in a daily reflection activity as determined by their advisor. This activity serves to help students process the day's learning, evaluate the quality of the work done that day, identify tasks and strategies for the future, and request specific assistance and feedback from their advisor. This requirement is reflected in the Learning Targets required for graduation.
- * All students will write in a journal on a daily basis in accordance with the Requirement For Graduation target described as "Writing Required." One target is met for each of the four years from 9-12th grade.
- * Students who have not passed the Minnesota Basic Skills/GRAD Tests at their appropriate grade level should develop a project to meet the necessary competencies that will aid them to pass standardized tests.
- * Approved projects, seminars, and other learning activities must be completed by the end of the school year in which they were approved. Failure to complete the learning activity by this time will require that the learning activity be proposed again at the beginning of the following school year. Students should expect that criteria for approval of learning activities will be revised annually in the interest of continuous improvement.

ATTENDANCE



Student attendance is a very important issue at River Heights. If a student must be absent during all or part of a school day, the absence must be excused. Absences will be excused for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointments
- Serious illness in the immediate family
- Death in the immediate family,
- Religious instruction (3 hours per week)
- Physical emergencies (flood, tornado, storm, etc.)
- Or suspension

Family vacations or other pre-arranged absences MAY be excused according to the discretion of the advisor.

Absences are excused only by a signed parent excuse or verbal confirmation from parent/guardian.

Absences that are considered unexcused are:

- Absence without a signed note from parent
- Failure to receive an advisor's approval for at-home or off-campus work
- Absences resulting from cumulative unexcused tardies
- Being out of the building without signing out
- Leaving early or coming in more than 10 minutes late

Any other absence not included in the excused section of this policy.

Parents will be notified of all unexcused absences as soon as possible.

If attendance continues to be an ongoing issue, it will be recommended that the student terminate enrollment at River Heights and seek out a school that will better fit the student's learning style.



Minn. Statute § 260A.02 provides that a student who is absent from instruction for three or more learning periods (rotations and project-based learning) on three days without a valid excuse within a single year will be considered continuing truant. At this time, parents/guardians will be notified by first class mail or by other means. They will have time to notify the school if there should be a valid excuse for the student's absence. If there is not a valid excuse, parents/guardians will be notified that they are obligated to compel the attendance of the student pursuant to Minn. Statute § 120A.22.

Parents/guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minn. Statute § 120A.34. The parent has the right to meet with staff to discuss solutions to the student's truancy.

A student under the age of 16 who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for any part of seven school days shall be considered a habitual truant and will be subject to referral to appropriate agencies as a child in need of protection or services.

Pursuant to state law, students will be withdrawn after 15 consecutive days of absence, without the provision of homebound instruction. If enrollment is at capacity, this space may be filled by lottery from students on a waiting list.

Consequences for unexcused absences are:

One unexcused absence per quarter = one day disabled from computer and loss of open campus lunch privilege.

Two unexcused absences = one full day of ISS (In-school suspension), loss of open campus lunch privilege

Three or more unexcused absences = family meeting with parent/guardian and two staff advisors for the purpose of determining whether a revised behavior plan or withdrawal plan should be implemented.

SMOKING

According to the Minnesota Dept. of Health, Indoor Air Unit Enforcement Coordinator, the Minnesota Clean Indoor Act **does not regulate outdoor smoking anywhere in the state of Minnesota including the parking lots or entry ways to buildings.** Because River Heights is located in a leased space with multiple tenants, outdoor smoking by adults is not subject to Minnesota statute § 144.4165 Tobacco Products Prohibited in Public Schools, part of the Minnesota Clean Indoor Act, which states that:

No person shall at any time smoke, chew, or otherwise ingest tobacco or a tobacco product in a public school, as defined in section 120A.05, subdivisions 9, 11, and 13. This prohibition extends to all facilities, whether owned, rented, or leased, and vehicles that a school district owns, leases, rents, contracts for, or controls. Nothing in this

section shall prohibit the lighting of tobacco by an adult as a part of a traditional Indian spiritual or cultural ceremony. For purposes of this section, an Indian is a person who is a member of an Indian tribe as defined in section 260.755 subdivision 12.

The school can and does have policy prohibiting **students** from possessing, using or distributing tobacco products, lighters and other tobacco paraphernalia anywhere in the Southview Office Center building, on the building grounds or parking lots, while on school-sponsored outings or in any vehicle contracted or approved for school purposes. Students in violation of this policy will be in violation of the Code of Conduct and subject to appropriate consequences.

DRUG OR ALCOHOL USE

If a staff member should have reasonable suspicion of use or possession of alcohol or other drugs, this will be communicated to the student. The parents/guardians will be notified with a request to remove the student immediately. A parent conference and/or a chemical health evaluation may also be requested.

HAZING

“Hazing” means committing an act against a student, coercing a student to commit an act that creates substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose. The term hazing includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any type of physical brutality.
2. Any type of physical activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
3. Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
4. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in the school.
5. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school policies or regulations.

Any person who believes he or she has been a victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to the Director.

Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, River Heights School District 4119 shall investigate the report and take proper action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, restorative conflict-resolution processes, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation or discharge. School action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable

statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, school policies and regulations.

River Heights School District 4119 will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or any other employee who retaliates against any person who makes a report of alleged hazing or testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation or hearing related to such hazing.

NONDISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the School Board of River Heights School District No. 4119 to comply with applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination to the end that no person protected by such law shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age, sexual orientation or disability (hereinafter “protected class status”) be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or in employment, or recruitment, consideration, or selection, therefore full time or part time under any education program or activity operated by the School.

Any student of River Heights School District No. 4119 who feels he/she has been discriminated against in violation of the School’s non-discrimination policy may avail himself/herself of filing the grievance with the Human Rights Officer who is the Director. If the Human Rights Officer is a witness or otherwise involved in the alleged discrimination, the complaint should be filed with the Board Chair.



HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

It is the policy of the of River Heights School District No. 4119 School Board to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment or violence including but not limited to harassment on the basis of protected class status (see Nondiscrimination). It is policy of the School to prohibit all forms of violence.

It shall be a violation for any student or staff member of the School to harass or inflict violence upon a student or staff member through conduct or communication as defined by this policy.

Harassment constitutes any action that creates a hostile or offensive educational work environment. A student will be warned to discontinue the harassing behavior and warned that if they should choose to continue they may face suspension. River Heights encourages parties in conflict to participate in restorative conflict-resolution procedures. Either party can refuse these measures and accept the more traditional disciplinary policies and procedures outlined in the Code of Conduct in this manual.

Flagrant or extreme forms of harassment or any form of violence may result in immediate suspension followed by expulsion.

River Heights School will act to investigate all complaints, whether formal or informal, verbal or written, of harassment and to discipline any student or staff member who harasses a student or staff member of River Heights School District No. 4119. Staff members are required to report any known or

suspected harassment of or violence towards any student. Students and staff are strongly encouraged to file complaints. Complaints should be addressed in written form to the Human Rights Officer who is the Director. If the complaint concerns the Director, it may be filed with the Board Chair. A complete copy of RHCS Policy 509, Harassment and Violence, is on file at River Heights School.

SEARCHES

Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, desks, storage units and school computers are the property of the school. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of desks, storage units and school computers provided for the convenience of students. Staff members for any reason may conduct inspection of the interior of these items at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

The personal possessions of students including, but not limited to, purses, backpacks, book bags, personal packages or clothing may be searched only when staff members have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules.

As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school authorities must provide notice of the search to the student whose items were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or staff members. Information obtained which indicates that a student has violated school policies or the directives and

guidelines implementing it shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

PROTECTION AND PRIVACY OF PUPIL RECORDS

River Heights School District No. 4119 gives notice to parents/guardians of students currently in attendance at River Heights, of their rights regarding pupil records.

A. Parents/guardians and eligible students are hereby informed that they have the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records;
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that those records are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that such consent is not required for disclosure pursuant to the RHCS Protection and Privacy policy, state or federal law, or the regulations promulgated thereunder;
4. The right to refuse release of secondary students' names, addresses, and home telephone numbers to military recruiting officers;
5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the federal law and the regulations promulgated thereunder;
6. The right to be informed about rights under the federal law;

7. The right to obtain a copy of the school’s policy regarding the protection and privacy of pupil records; copies of this policy are located at River Heights Charter School.

B. River Heights School District No. 4119 has adopted a school board policy in order to comply with state and federal laws regarding education records. The policy does the following:

1. It classifies records as public, private, or confidential.
2. It establishes procedures and regulations to permit parents/guardians or students to inspect and review a student’s education records. These procedures include the method of determining fees for copies, a listing of the locations of these education records, and the identity of the individuals in charge of the records.
3. It establishes procedures and regulations to allow parents/guardians or students to request the amendment of a student’s education records to ensure that the records are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights.
4. It establishes procedures and regulations for access to and disclosure of education records.
5. It establishes procedures and regulations for safeguarding the privacy of education records and for obtaining prior written consent of the parent or student when required prior to disclosure.

C. The Director is the responsible authority for River Heights School District pupil records. Requests for records should be made to:



River Heights Charter School
ATTN: Director
60 East Marie Ave. Suite 220
West St. Paul, MN 55118
Phone 651-457-7427.

HEALTH CONDITIONS

Any student who has health conditions such as diabetes, asthma, seizures, allergies (especially food or wasp/bee stings) must inform the Director upon enrollment. Parents/guardians should provide instructions for appropriate medical intervention should the student experience a health crisis due to a pre-existing condition.

Students having a history of hearing or vision difficulties must inform the Director upon enrollment.

ILLNESS/ACCIDENTS

If a student becomes ill in school or in the case of an accident or injury, reasonable attempts will be made to contact a parent or guardian at home or at work to make arrangements for the student to go home. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian, we will contact the persons designated on the student's emergency form. If all attempts to contact someone fail, the student will remain in school until the end of the school day. **IT IS CRITICAL THAT EMERGENCY CARDS WITH UP TO DATE PHONE NUMBERS FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN and BACK-UP CONTACTS ARE ON FILE AT RIVER HEIGHTS AT**



ALL TIMES. Please update this information at the school as changes in phone numbers and addresses occur.

If a student has a temperature above 100 degrees, vomits or has had diarrhea within the past 24 hours, the student should not come to school. If a student comes to school with these symptoms or develops them during the school day, a parent/guardian will be contacted to make arrangements for the student to go home.

Should a student have a minor injury, staff may give first aid. First aid is the immediate and temporary care given in the case of an accident or sudden illness before the service of a physician or paramedic can be secured.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

To prevent the spread of contagious diseases, the school needs to be informed of all students who have a communicable disease including but not limited to: chicken pox, pinkeye (conjunctivitis), measles, mumps, rubella, impetigo, ringworm, head lice, scabies, strep throat, etc. If a student has a communicable disease, the student must meet the health guidelines for readmission which is available from the front office. If a student comes to school without having met the guidelines for readmission, a parent/guardian will be contacted to make arrangements for the student to go home.

IMMUNIZATIONS



Minnesota School Immunization law requires that all students be properly vaccinated in order to remain enrolled in school. Since immunization laws change frequently, the school will contact parents/guardians if additional information regarding immunizations is needed. Immunizations need to be up to date prior to school entrance for all students, including transfer students. Foreign exchange students will have 30 days to update their immunizations unless they are transferring to River Heights from another school.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

At River Heights and in accordance with Minnesota Statute § 121A.11, Subd. 3, we observe the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance once a week. The time of reciting the Pledge may vary according to the school schedule and day of recitation.

Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reasons may choose not to do so. Students and school personnel must respect another person's right to make that choice. For those students or staff who do not wish to take part in the Pledge during this time, we only require that you be silently respectful while it is being observed.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Student publications are important elements of the instructional program and contribute directly to the accomplishment of the school's goals. River Heights Charter School does not intend, however, to create a public forum for expression.



Students producing official school publications shall be under the supervision of a staff member. Official publications shall be subject to the guidelines set forth below.

A. Freedom of expression in school-sponsored publication shall not be contrary to:

1. Development of student responsibility
2. Consideration by faculty of the maturity level of the students and of appropriate standards of journalistic taste; or
3. Care for the development of skills of written expression among students.

B. Expression in an official school publication is prohibited when the material is:

1. Obscene to minors;
2. libelous or slanderous
3. pervasively indecent or vulgar or contains any indecent or vulgar language or representations, with a determination made as to the appropriateness of the material for the age level of students to which it is intended;
4. advertises or promotes any product or service not permitted for minors by law;
5. encourages students to commit illegal acts or violate school regulations or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of school or school activities;
6. expresses or advocates sexual, racial or religious harassment or violence or prejudice;
7. distributed or displayed in violation of time, place and manner regulations; or

8. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or the manner of distribution, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the properly and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, will cause the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school regulations.

Students who violate the provisions of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action as appropriate.

Students who believe their right of free expression has been unreasonably restricted in an official student publication may seek review of the decision of the Board Chair. The Board Chair shall issue a decision no later than five (5) school days after the review is requested.

NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

The purpose of this policy is to protect the exercise of students' and staff members' free speech rights, taking into consideration the educational objectives and responsibilities of the school. The school recognizes that students and staff have the right to express themselves on school property. This protection includes the right to distribute, at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner, non-school sponsored material. Students and staff have the right to distribute, at reasonable times and places as set forth in this policy, and in a reasonable manner, non-school sponsored material.

A. Requests for distribution of non-school-sponsored materials will be reviewed by the staff on a case-by-case basis. However, distribution of the materials listed below is always prohibited. Material is prohibited that:

1. is obscene to minors;
2. is libelous or slanderous;
3. is pervasively indecent or vulgar or contains any indecent or vulgar language or representations, with a determination made as to the appropriateness of the material for the age level of students to which it is intended;
4. advertises or promotes any product or service not permitted for minors by law;
5. advocates violence or other illegal conduct;
6. expresses or advocates sexual, racial, religious or other protected class harassment or violence or prejudice;
7. constitutes insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses other people
8. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or the manner of distribution, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the properly and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, will cause the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school regulations.

B. Any student or staff wishing to distribute non-school-sponsored material must first submit for approval a copy of the material to the Director at least five days in advance of the desired distribution time, together with the following information:

1. Name and phone number of the person submitting the request.
2. Date(s) and time(s) of day of intended display or distribution.
3. Location where material will be displayed or distributed.
4. If intended for students, the grade(s) of students to whom the display or distribution is intended.

If the person submitting the request does not receive a response within three school days, the person shall contact the staff to verify that the lack of response was not due to an inability to locate the person. If the person is dissatisfied with the decision of the Director, the person may submit a written request for appeal to the Board Chair. If the person does not receive a response within three (3) school days (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) of submitting the appeal, the person shall contact the Board Chair to verify that the lack of response is not due to an inability to contact the person. Permission or denial of permission to distribute material does not imply approval or disapproval of its contents by the school, the staff, the RHCS Board, or the individual reviewing the material submitted.