

## **2.013 RIVERSIDE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **I. Attendance**

All students must be fully enrolled and should attend school regularly. Riverside Leadership Academy does not accept partial enrollment. Regular attendance ensures that students master the curriculum. Riverside Leadership Academy will make every effort to protect instructional time from interruption and requests that, whenever possible, parents/guardians schedule appointments (doctor, dentist) after school hours. For record keeping purposes, a student is marked absent when he or she misses half of the school day.

### **II. Excused Absences (all absences not listed below are unexcused)**

- **Illness or injury:** When the absence results from illness or injury, which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school. The Executive Director or designee may require an official note from a physician.
- **Quarantine:** When isolation of the student is ordered by the local health officer or by the State Board of Health.
- **Death in the family:** When the absence results from the death of a member of the family of the student.
- **Medical or dental appointments:** When the absence results from a medical or dental appointment of a student.
  - *A written excuse is required and should be presented with a doctor's signature or stamp.*
- **Court or administrative proceedings:** When the student is a party to or is under subpoena as a witness in the proceedings of a court or administrative tribunal.
- **Religious observances:** When the student or the student's parent/guardian adheres to a religion whose tenets require, or suggest the observance of a religious event.
  - *The parent/guardian must seek prior approval of the Executive Director for such absences.*
  - *The approval should be granted unless the religious observance or the cumulative effect of religious observances is of such duration as to interfere with the education of the student.*
- **Educational opportunity:** When the student obtains the Executive Director's prior approval of a valid education opportunity, such as travel or participation in a community event.

### **III. Unexcused/Unlawful Absences and Tardies**

An unexcused/unlawful absence/tardy, with or without parental permission, is one that does not fall under one of the excused absence categories. Examples include, but are not limited to, oversleeping, hair/beauty appointments, car trouble, shopping, picking up food, traffic, DMV, etc.

### **IV. Procedures for Notifying Riverside Leadership Academy about Absences**

In order for absences to be excused, they must be document, lawful, and meet one of the following criteria:

- Be submitted **on the day of the absence**, in writing, by the parent/guardian to a member of the Riverside Leadership Academy staff (teacher or administrator) stating the reason for absence.
  - *This can include an email, doctor's note, or written note from the parent/guardian.*
- If documentation is not submitted on the day of the absence, it must be submitted, in writing, to a member of the Riverside Leadership Academy staff (teacher or administrator) **within three days of returning to school**.

If Riverside Leadership Academy does not receive the explanatory note within three days, the absence will be marked **unexcused**.

#### **V. Make-Up Work for Absences**

Students are responsible for, and permitted to, make up all work missed during absences. All work must be made up within **3 school days** of returning to school, unless the teacher or an administrator determines that extenuating circumstances would support an extension of time. Generally, no homework assignments will be given out prior to a student's pre-planned absence (i.e. trips). Students who are absent due to a suspension from school will be provided an opportunity to complete work and take any tests that were missed.

For students in grades K-5, the teacher will work with the student and the parent/guardian to make up missed assignments, quizzes and tests within the specified time period. At the middle and high school level, the student is responsible for finding out which assignments, quizzes, and tests were missed and completing them within the specified time period.

Any student with 20 or more absences in one or more classes during a school year is subject to failure of the grade. For high school level coursework, any student with 10 or more absences in any semester long class is subject to failure of that class.

If the Executive Director determines that retention or failure of a high school course is necessary based on attendance, the parent/guardian and student will be notified in writing. The parent/guardian or student shall have ten (10) school days from the date of receipt of such notification to appeal the Executive Director's decision pursuant to the School/Parent Grievance Procedure.

#### **VI. Truancy (recurrent unexcused absences)**

If a student is truant, the first step will be a conference with the parents/guardians. Should this prove unsatisfactory, next steps include possible notification of appropriate legal authorities and/or possible recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion. Students absent more than 20 days may not be promoted and must meet with the Executive Director to determine next steps, which could result in expulsion.

**VII. Tardiness & Late Pick-up**

Tardiness interrupts instruction for the entire class. Students who are tardy must go to the office to sign in. Excused tardies are student illness, medical or dental appointments, and death/illness in the family. An explanatory note should be provided for a tardy to be excused. This includes documentation such as email, doctor’s note, or written note from the parent/guardian. All other tardies or tardies with no valid documentation are unexcused.

Students must be supervised at all times while on campus. Parents/guardians who arrive after the carline has ended infringe on the time of the classroom teacher or Riverside Leadership Academy staff who must change their afternoon schedule to accommodate. Though emergency late pick-ups are understandable, routinely picking up students late will receive the same consequences as tardies.

The table below outlines the consequences for cumulative absences, tardies or late pick-ups.

| Number of Occurrence(s) | Action to be Taken   |
|-------------------------|--|
| 0-4                     | No Action  |
| 5-9                     | Letter home to parent/guardian and student. Late pick-up may need to have a conference with an administrator.  |
| 10-19                   | Required conference with an Administrator and the School Counselor.  |
| 20+                     | Parent/guardian and student required to conference with the Executive Director. The Executive Director will determine next steps, which could result in expulsion. |

**VIII. Releasing Students from School**

Parents/guardians and individuals listed on the student’s approved pick-up list are the only people allowed to take a student from school. Prior arrangements, however, may allow for other adults to pick up a student. If a parent/guardian would like their child to be released to an adult who is not on their approved pick-up list, the request must be provided in writing to Riverside Leadership Academy’s administration prior to school dismissal. Riverside Leadership Academy’s staff will not release a child to anyone other than the student’s parent/guardian or an individual on the student’s approved pick-up list without written documentation from the student’s parent/guardian.

**IX. Discipline for Attendance**

Rewards and penalties in the form of grades shall not be used as attendance incentives. Riverside Leadership Academy can develop attendance incentives that do not involve grades to encourage attendance. Riverside Leadership Academy’s administration does reserve the right to apply consequences for students who knowingly “skip” classes or leave campus without permission. This shall be considered a behavioral issue and disciplinary action shall be administered according to the Student Code of Conduct.

**X. Minimum Attendance Requirement**

A student who is not present for at least half the school day is absent, whether the absence is excused or unexcused. A student who is not present for at least half a class period (middle & high school) is absent from that class, whether the absence is excused or unexcused. Absences resulting from participation in school-sponsored activities will not count against the minimum attendance requirement. This policy does not limit a teacher or Executive Director from imposing disciplinary sanctions for students who miss portions of the school day or a class without excuse.

**XI. Partial Attendance for Extracurricular and Special Event Participation**

Students must be present at school for at least half of the school day in order to participate in any extracurricular activities and/or special events.

**XII. Providing Support to Students with Excessive Absences**

The Executive Director and school staff shall take appropriate action to help prevent excessive absences and provide counseling for students with a history of excessive absences. A student's parent/guardian must be notified of excessive absences, and the teacher and counselor shall work with the student and family to analyze the causes and determine steps to eliminate the problem. The Executive Director shall designate a school employee to assist parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and counselors with chronic cases of absenteeism.