

## Student Behavior and Conduct Policy revision 10

**Rationale** – At River Mill Academy, we are entirely committed to maximizing the potential and success for each of our students. It is our responsibility to provide a positive and safe learning environment. To achieve that goal, our students must comply with all of the rules and regulations of the school and report all potential problems to school personnel.

- I. **Scope:** Conduct and behavior (including the dress code) applies to students while on the school grounds of River Mill Academy and at any event where students are representing River Mill Academy off of the school grounds (i.e. athletic or academic events at other schools, field trips, etc.)
  - a. **School Grounds Defined:** The school grounds include all buildings, areas between buildings and the parking lots. It also includes any vehicles used for transportation to and from school or events (such as the school buses), as well as personal vehicles on school grounds.
- II. **Behavior towards Faculty and Staff** – Students shall comply with the instructions of all River Mill Academy personnel at all times while on the school premises or while attending or participating in any school sponsored activity. Failure to do so will result in suspension.
  - a. No student shall strike, push, shove, or verbally abuse school personnel. Students and parents are reminded that school employees are considered state government officials and that there are specific laws in place to protect these individuals. Improper behavior toward faculty or staff may result in criminal prosecution of offenders.
- III. **North Carolina General Statute § 115C-391.** Corporal punishment, suspension, or expulsion of pupils sets forth the protocols that administration and staff of River Mill Academy will employ to punish, manage, and disperse disruptive and/or dangerous student behavior. River Mill Academy administration and/or staff may incorporate any of these means to maintain and restore a safe and orderly environment. NOTE: In any situation where mechanical restraint is needed to restore safety and/or order, law enforcement shall be called.
- IV. **Infraction Definitions** – Inappropriate Conduct is anything that interferes with the educational environment or teaching/learning process, including but not limited to, excessive talking, excessive laughing, disruptive behavior, horse playing, not following instructions, video game playing, card playing, eating and drinking in class.
- V. **Notification Process to Parents of Administrative Disciplinary Referrals and Suspensions** -  
When a student receives an administrative disciplinary referral and/or is suspended for either short-term or long-term, the Principal or an administrator shall:
  - a. Make every effort to telephone the parent.
  - b. Send a timely written notice that includes details of the infraction.
  - c. Keep documentation of the infraction for possible future review.All disciplinary action will be administered in accordance with the guidelines of established laws, policies, rules, and regulations of the State of North Carolina and/or the Department of Public Instruction. Every possible offense cannot be anticipated; therefore, any matters not listed will be determined by the River Mill Academy administration.  
Note: Suspensions are "out of school" only (as opposed to detention or in-school suspension) for two reasons. First, it is essential that a disciplined atmosphere be maintained on campus at all times. Students who disrupt this environment lose the privilege to attend. Second, in-school suspension or detention drain precious resources of time, personnel, and space.
- VIII. **Prohibited Conduct**
  - a. **Criminal Offenses:** Any conduct committed by a student that would also be a crime under North Carolina Law is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and disciplinary action will be taken. In addition, the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency may be contacted and criminal charges may result. Criminal offenses that will result in disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:
    - i) **Possession of Weapons on School Grounds** (NCGS § 14-269.2) – Weapons include, but are not limited to guns, rifles, pistols, any firearm of any sort, dynamite cartridges, bombs, grenades, mines or powerful explosives, BB guns, stun guns, air rifles, air pistols, bowie knives, dirks, daggers, knives of any sort, slung shots, leaded cane, switchblade knives, blackjacks, metal



- knuckles, razors, razor blades (except those for personal shaving), fireworks, etc.
- ii) **Arson** (NCGS § 14-58, et. seq.) – Setting fire to or any attempt to set fire to buildings located on the school grounds (or any other building where a school related event is taking place). This also includes marring and/or defacing any school's real property by setting or attempting to set a fire.
  - iii) **Burning of Personal Property** (NCGS § 14-56) – Setting fire to or burning any personal or private property on school grounds.
  - iv) **Injury to Real Property** (NCGS § 14-127) – includes the willful marring or defacing of any school's real property.
  - v) **Injury to Personal Property** (NCGS § 14-160) – includes the willful destruction of the school's personal property (such as books, computers, smart boards, desks, etc.).
  - vi) **Assaults** (NCGS § 14-33 et. seq.) – The physical assault of any student, teacher, coach, etc. will not be tolerated. This includes fist fighting, pushing, slapping or any other harmful touching of another student.
  - vii) **Communicating Threats** (NCGS § 14-277.1) – Threatening the physical safety of any student (or any of their family members) while in school or at any school related/sponsored event will not be tolerated. This includes any event or function when students are subject to the authority of River Mill Academy and the threatening behavior negatively affects the order, discipline and safety of our students and staff. Threats include those communicated verbally, electronically or through any other means.
  - viii) **Sexual Battery** (NCGS § 14-27.5A) – the touching of another student, teacher, coach, etc. for gratification of sexual desire, etc. against that person's will.
  - ix) **Indecent Exposure** (NCGS § 14-190.9) – the exposure of the private parts in the presence of any person(s) of the opposite sex.
  - x) **False Fire Alarm** (NCGS § 14-286) – pulling, engaging or otherwise reporting a fire when one does not exist. Students shall not activate any fire or other alarm system unless authorized to do so by school employees (unless there are reasonable grounds to believe that an actual emergency situation exists).
  - xi) **Possession of Controlled Substances** (NCGS § 90-89 et. seq.) – No controlled substances are allowed on campus at any time or at any off campus events. Prohibited substances include, but are not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, etc. Further, recreational substances such as synthetic marijuana (K2 or Spice), Mephedrone (meow-meow) or any similar substance that can produce an intoxicating effect on the body are prohibited.  
**Exception: Prescription Medications** (including those that are over the counter) are only allowed when proper documentation is on file with the office.
  - xii) **Possession of Drug Paraphernalia** (NCGS § 113.21) – such as rolling papers, pipes, tweezers, roach clips, etc. are not allowed on school property or at any school event.
  - xiii) **Possession of Alcohol** – on school grounds and at school events is strictly forbidden. Any student found in possession of any alcoholic beverage (on school grounds or at any school event) faces punishment (and may be in violation of NCGS § 18B-302).
  - xiv) **Possession/Use of Tobacco or Nicotine Products** – No student, regardless of age, who attends River Mill Academy, is allowed to smoke, chew, dip, possess or otherwise use any tobacco or nicotine product, including but not limited to electronic cigarettes and/or any vaping products on school grounds or during a school sponsored event. This includes within cars on school grounds.
  - xv) **Trespassing** (NCGS § 14-159.12-.13) - Any student who has been suspended from school is not allowed on school property or at school events during the period of the suspension. Entry onto school property or attendance at school events will be prosecuted as trespassing. Any student who is asked to leave school property by an administrator is expected to do so immediately. Failure to do so may be prosecuted as trespassing.
  - xvi) **Larceny/Theft** (NCGS § 14-72 et. seq.) – The stealing or taking of another's personal property without their consent will not be tolerated.
- b. Attendance -**
- i. **Truancy** (Skipping Class / School) - At River Mill Academy, we are committed to student success. Skipping class is strictly prohibited and may result in suspension.
  - ii. **Tardiness** (All Students)
    - 1. Students must be in their classrooms by 7:45 am (middle school and high school) / 8:00 am (elementary school) each day.



2. Parents will receive a warning after three (3) unexcused tardy arrivals to class.
  3. Unexcused tardy arrivals occurring after a warning is issued will result in disciplinary action.
- iii. Individual Class Tardiness (Middle and High School)
  - iv. Students must be in the instructional area at the assigned time.
  - v. Students must be in class at least one-half of the allotted instructional time to be counted as present.
- c. **Bus Behavior** – Bus transportation is provided for many of the students at River Mill Academy. Riding a bus is a privilege. Students who ride a bus shall follow the same rules and regulations that are enforced within the school building.
- i. **Food and Beverages** – Shall be kept in backpacks or lunch boxes. There is to be no eating or drinking on the buses. Exceptions may be made by the bus driver.
  - ii. **Safety Rules** – There are four important safety rules for students and parents:
    1. All students must obey the bus driver at all times.
    2. Students are to remain seated at all times while the bus is moving.
    3. Students may only talk in a low voice to the students sitting in his/her seat.
    4. Aisles must be kept clear at all times. This includes book bags and student's feet.
  - iii. **Bus Assignments** – A student is only to ride the bus to which he/she has been assigned. Any change to the assigned bus (temporary or permanent), must be made in writing by the parent/guardian and must be submitted to the principal for approval.
  - iv. **Punishments** – Misbehavior and/or violation of the Code of Conduct while on the bus may result in the short or long-term suspension of bus riding privileges and/or suspension from school. When a student is suspended from riding the bus, school administrators must:
    1. Make every effort to telephone the parent.
    2. Send a timely written notice that includes details of the infraction.
    3. Keep documentation of the infraction for possible future reference.
- d. **Inappropriate Literature, Illustrations, or Websites** – The possession of literature or illustrations which disrupts the educational process are prohibited. Pornographic, obscene, and/or sexually suggestive materials are prohibited and possession of such will result in immediate suspension.
- i. **General Internet Access** – Students must have permission from a faculty member to use the Internet. The internet is for educational purposes only and any other use is prohibited. Students are prohibited from accessing chat rooms, instant messaging programs, pornographic web sites, and any type of Internet games (including non-violent games). The exclusion to this policy is games that are educational in nature and are played with teacher permission, under his/her direct supervision.
  - ii. **Network:** Attempting to disable or circumvent River Mill Academy's network and internet content filters and firewalls, including using or attempting to use proxies to access sites that would otherwise be restricted is not permitted.
- e. **Gambling and Related Activities** – Students shall not participate in any event which provides the chance for monetary advantage of one participant at the expense of the others. Activities include, but are not limited to: card playing, trading cards, dice, matching, coin tossing or pitching, selling CDs, or trading items for money. Some of these activities provide participants with the opportunity for later monetary settlement, and therefore must be included.
- f. **Mechanical/Electronic/Digital Devices** – With the exception of River Mill Academy issued laptops, students must not possess any type of electronic or mechanical device that disrupts or impedes the educational process (i.e., use within the classroom). These items include, but are not limited to: cell phones, iPhones, radios, cassette and CD players, beepers, phones, electronic games, iPods, MP3 players, BlackBerry's, cameras, etc. These items must not be displayed or used between the hours of 7:45 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. An exception shall be made for High School students ONLY to use their phone during lunch, so long as the remainder of the policy is upheld at all times. This privilege may be rescinded at any time by the Principal. It is not appropriate for students to use these items while on the school bus. Exceptions may be made by the bus driver during travel to and from sporting events. River Mill Academy is not responsible for the damage, loss or recovery of any personal property that is brought to campus.
- i. **Violations-** Any violations will result in confiscation of these items. The principal will take possession of these items and only return them to a parent/guardian. Items confiscated more than one time may be held until the end of the year at which time parents must pick them up.

**IX. Other Prohibited Conduct**

- a. **Public Displays of Affection** – Public display of affection by students disrupts the educational process by distracting the attention and focus of others. Therefore, it is prohibited at school, on school property, and at school-related events. This includes, but is not limited to: embracing, kissing, hand holding.
- b. **Inappropriate Touching** – Any form of physical contact that is sexually blatant or is otherwise sexually suggestive is prohibited.
- c. **Eating / Drinking** – Eating and drinking in class is not allowed for Middle School and High School students with the exception of a water bottle. Elementary snack time will be held at the teacher's discretion.
- d. **Pets and Animals** – For health and safety reasons, *all* pets and animals must have prior, written approval from the principal *before* being brought on school grounds.
- e. **Other Prohibited Items** – Mace, pepper spray and Tasers.
- f. **Inappropriate Exposure**- Blatant exposure of sex organs to members of the same sex with the intent to harass or demean another is prohibited.

**NOTE:** Teachers and staff members must enforce and abide by these rules. Teachers may however, choose to have additional rules that apply within their specific classrooms.

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**Approved by the River Mill Academy Board of Directors**



Board Chairperson



Date