



Parent and Student Handbook
2025 – 2026

Table of Contents

NRCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:	5
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	6
Section 1: School Information.....	6
1. A. About North River Charter Academy	6
1. B. School Hours	6
1. C. Contact Information.....	6
1. D. North River Charter Academy Mission Statement.....	6
1. E. North River Charter Academy Vision.....	7
1. F. About the Handbook	7
1. G. Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Student Records	7
1. H. Jessica Lunsford Act.....	9
Section 2: Parent Code of Conduct	9
2. A. Drug Free Zone	9
2. A. 1. Drug Use	9
2. A. 2. Medical Marijuana Policy.....	9
2. A. 3. Tobacco Use.....	10
2. B. Abusive Language	10
2. C. Threats	10
2. D. Physical/ Verbal Punishment	10
2. E. Safety Policies	11
2. F. Parent Grievance Policy	11
2. G. Visitors.....	12
2. H. Volunteer Program	12
2. I. Appointment of a Special Magistrate.....	13
Section 3- Student Guidelines.....	14
3. A. Personal Property	14
3. B. Attendance	14
3. B. 1. Excused Absences	15
3. B. 2. Unexcused Absences.....	15
3. C. Tardiness.....	16

3. C.1 Excused Tardiness:	17
3. C.2.Unexcused Tardiness:	17
3. D. Drop off and Dismissal	17
3. D. 1 Drop- Off	17
3. D. 2. Dismissal Procedure.....	18
3. E. Car Riders:	19
3. F. Walkers:	19
3. G. Busses	19
3. H. Rainy Day Dismissal	20
3. I. Early Checkout Procedure	20
3. I.1. Excused Early Checkout	21
3. I .2. Unexcused Early Checkout	21
3. J. Aftercare	21
3. J.1 Overdue Balances:	22
3. K. Dress Code	22
3. L. Lost and Found	24
3. M. Makeup/ Cologne	24
3. N. Hair	24
3. O. General	25
3. P. Dress Code Consequences	26
Section 4: Academics	26
4. A. Grading Policies	26
4. B. Accountability and Tracking.....	26
4. C. Report Cards	27
4. D. Homework	29
4. E. Homework Policy	29
4. F. Academic Honesty.....	29
4. F.1. Cheating	29
4. G. Special Services	30
4. H. Character Education	30
4. I. Conferences	30
4. J. Textbooks	31
4. K. Tutoring Program	31

4. L. Pledge of Allegiance 1003.44	31
4. M. School Parties	32
4. N. Student Birthdays	32
4. O. School Pictures/ Yearbooks	32
4. P. School Supplies	32
4. Q. Club Activities	33
4. R. Team Sports	33
4. S. Field Trips	33
4. S.1. Overdue Balances:.....	33
4. T. Internet Use	34
4. U. Telephone/ Cell Phone Guidelines.....	34
Section 5 - Discipline.....	35
5. A. Bullying	36
5. B. Harassment.....	37
5. C. Vandalism and Defacing School Property	38
5. D. Weapons and Dangerous Instruments	39
5. E. Zero Tolerance Offenses	39
5. E. 1. Examples of Zero-Tolerance Offenses:	39
5. F. Behavior Consequences	41
5. G. Search and Seizure	41
5. H. Search and Seizure Guidelines.....	42
5. I. Arrest by Law Enforcement Officers	43
5. J. Student Bathroom and Locker-room Use	43
Section 6-Health	44
6. A. Child Abuse/ Neglect	44
6. B. Health Issues and Medication	44
6. C. Student Illness or Accident in School	46
6. D. Communicable Disease.....	46
6. E. No “Nit” Policy	46
6. F. Stranger Danger Procedures	47
6. G. Safety and Security	47
6. H. Crisis Management Plan	47
6. I. Universal Precautions	47

6. I. 1. Blood-borne Pathogens.....	47
Section 7- Parental Rights for Unresolved Student Welfare Complaints (Specials Magistrate)	48
7. A. Related complaints or disputes.....	48
7. B. complaint Procedures	49
Section 8 - General Information.....	49
8. A. Important Phone Numbers and Websites	49
8. B. General State, District, and School Websites	49
8. C. Florida Standards Assessment preparation and research sites	50
NORTH RIVER CHARTER ACADEMY HANDBOOK AGREEMENT.....	52

Welcome!

North River Charter Academy of Parrish represents a microcosm of the community-at-large that includes families from different cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds. The North River Charter Academy School family learns, lives, and works harmoniously based on a foundation of mutual respect, without compromising their beliefs or their identities. Moreover, North River Charter Academy celebrates diversity in a multicultural environment and champions the cause of excellence and equity!

FORZA Education Management LLC



NRCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Mark McCabe- Board President

Frank Zhou- Vice President

Helen Deitrich - Board Member

Brett Baugh – Board Member

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Brittany Fangmeier - Principal

N/A - Assistant Principal

* * Board Meetings are held as scheduled by the Board of Directors. Meeting days, dates and times are posted in the lobby and on monthly calendars at:

Section 1: School Information

1. A. About North River Charter Academy

North River Charter Academy (NRCA) is a Florida non-profit corporation. NRCA has entered into a charter contract with the School Board of Manatee County, Florida to operate a charter school in Manatee County focused on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math). The NRCA Board of Directors has final authority to conduct oversight, and set policies and procedures for NRCA. The Principal of NRCA is responsible for day-to-day operations and employment decisions.

1. B. School Hours

Main Office	7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Classroom Teachers	7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Students	8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Tardy Bell	8:00 a.m.
Breakfast	7:40 a.m. -8:00 a.m.
Dismissal Times	3:00 p.m.-3:40 p.m.

1. C. Contact Information

NRCA Telephone number: 941-545-6380

NRCA Fax 941-845-4066

NRCA Website - www.NRCAedu.org

FORZA Education Management – (727) 642-9319

FORZA Education Management Website (www.FORZAedu.com)

1. D. North River Charter Academy Mission Statement

The Mission of North River Charter Academy is to provide a challenging, innovative, and authentic learning environment for all students that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking through a hands-on learning approach that focuses on the STEAM disciplines in a school environment where every child feels welcomed. Our students will develop key skills such as collaboration,

problem solving, and leadership that will inspire them to become lifelong learners and prepare them to solve real-world problems using their knowledge and skills.

1. E. North River Charter Academy Vision

The vision of North River Charter Academy is to establish a student-centered and nurturing learning environment that actively engages all students in their learning and leads them toward achieving their maximum potential both academically and personally. Our vision is that each child will develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually through the care, guidance, and support provided by our staff.

1. F. About the Handbook

This is the Parent and Student Handbook for North River Charter Academy. It is the responsibility of each student and parent to read, understand, and abide by this handbook.

This handbook is to inform students and parents of the policies, procedures, and organizations of North River Charter Academy. Throughout the *Parent/Student Handbook* the term, “parent(s)” includes legal guardian(s) or other persons standing in loco parentis. All policies in this handbook are subject to change by the NRCA school board or school administration. Parents and students will be notified when such changes occur and an updated handbook will be posted on our website at (www.NRCAedu.org).

This Handbook complies with the terms of the charter contract, as well as applicable state and federal laws.

1. G. Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Student Records

The revised Family Rights and Privacy Act became a Federal law in November 1974.

The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of student educational records. Without your prior consent, only you and authorized individuals having legitimate educational interests will have access to your child's educational records. In special instances, you may waive this right of access to allow other agencies working with your child to have access to those records.

FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under Georgia law. These rights are:

- *The right to inspect and review the student's education records* within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school Executive Director a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- *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 to the school Executive Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be 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 advise them 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.
- *The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records*, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions: school officials with legitimate educational interest; other schools to which a student is transferring; specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law. Upon request, our schools disclose education records without consent from officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- * *Schools may also disclose*, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. The media permission form sent home at the beginning of each school year gives parents an opportunity to instruct the school not to share any directory information about their child or allows them to request that certain information not be shared. Please be sure to make your wishes regarding directory information known to your child's school. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. At OCCS, we notify you of these issues in our student handbooks.

For more information on the federal **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**, visit the U.S. Department of Education's website at (www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html).

1. H. Jessica Lunsford Act

This law went into effect on September 1, 2005, requiring a Level 2 screening (fingerprinting and FBI background check) of any non-instructional school district personnel or contractual personnel who are permitted access on school grounds when students are present, as well as those who have direct contact with students or who have access to or control school funds. “Contractual personnel” has been defined as any vendor, individual, or entity under contract with the school board.

Section 2: Parent Code of Conduct

NRCA requires parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of NRCA is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of NRCA, but also of each parent or adult who enters NRCA. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. It is also the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of any change of address, phone numbers and emergency contact numbers. Notify school personnel if the family is relocating or if there is a family emergency. Be aware of the school calendar and coordinate trips, vacations, and personal business **to support attendance on school days.**

Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on NRCA property thereafter.

2. A. Drug Free Zone

2. A. 1. Drug Use

NRCA is a drug free Zone. While on NRCA’s premises or related activities off NRCA’s premises, no adult may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed drugs on the property is only permitted if it does not impair an individual’s ability to act in a safe manner, that does not endanger other individuals.

2. A. 2. Medical Marijuana Policy

The school is a drug free zone. As such, the school does not allow its employees or visitors to consume marijuana before, during, or after school hours based upon a medical marijuana exception.

2. A. 3. Tobacco Use

In keeping with the intent of NRCA to provide a safe and healthy environment, and in compliance with the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act, smoking is prohibited anywhere on campus. This policy applies equally to all employees and visitors.

2. B. Abusive Language

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express this frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At **NO** time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff or students.

2. C. Threats

Threats of any kind towards employees, children, other parents, or adults associated with NRCA, will not be tolerated and NRCA will not sit idly by while threats are made. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and the perpetrator will be fully prosecuted of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, NRCA will not assume the risk of a repeated offense. While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of NRCA or the parents of other NRCA students, it is expected that all disagreements be handled calmly and respectfully. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate and are prohibited.

2. D. Physical/ Verbal Punishment

NRCA does not support or condone corporal punishment of children, therefore such acts are not permitted anywhere on campus. Moreover, while verbal reprimands may be appropriate at times and made correctly, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher(s) and seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from reprimanding or disciplining any student that is not their own child, either physically or verbally. If a parent should witness another student behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher, assistant principals, or the Regional VPs. Furthermore, it is inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss the other parent's child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the

classroom teacher, principal, assistant principals, or the Regional Vice Presidents who will address the issue with the other parent accordingly. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and administration are prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled at NRCA have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting NRCA.

2. E. Safety Policies

Parents are required to always follow safety procedures. These procedures are designed to protect the welfare and best interests of the employees, children, and associates of NRCA. Please be particularly mindful of NRCA entrance procedures. Please do not allow any individual to follow you inside the building. Immediately report any breaches to the principal, assistant principals, or the Regional Vice Presidents.

2. F. Parent Grievance Policy

If parents disagree with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, they can express their concern through the problem resolution procedure.

If a situation occurs when parents believe that a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable, they are encouraged to make use of the following steps. The parents may discontinue the procedure at any step.

- **Step 1.** Communicate with the classroom teacher via telephone, email, and or send a note discussing the concern. Email addresses are available at the front desk and on the school web page.
- **Step 2.** Schedule a Parent Teacher Conference with the classroom teacher to discuss the concern further if needed. At this meeting, establish next steps or goals and the process for follow up, as necessary. For unresolved concerns, please follow Step 3.
- **Step 3.** Schedule an appointment with the school administration.
- **Step 4.** Contact or schedule an appointment with FORZA Education Management.
- **Step 5.** Submit your concerns in writing to the North River Charter Academy School Board of Directors and the concern will be discussed at the next Board Meeting. Please seal your concern in an envelope and deliver it to the office manager. You can also attend the Board Meeting and address the Board during the Public Comment opportunity. Note: No individual Board Member can address your concerns per Florida State Law. The issue must be addressed by the full Board.

Parents may also, at any time, request to have an item placed on the Board agenda. The parents must put the request in writing to the principal at least twenty-four hours before a Board Meeting. Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through discussion and understanding of mutual problems can parents and educators develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to keep the home-school partnership strong.

2. G. Visitors

It will be our pleasure to have visitors on campus to see our beautiful facility, our students and staff engaged in learning activities, to participate in school activities, and to volunteer. However, visitors, including parents, are **NOT** permitted to go to their child's classroom unannounced during school hours, as this disrupts the classroom's educational process. For the safety and protection of all students, visitors (including parents) must present a valid Florida Driver's License and be checked in by the Front Office. Cooperation will enable the school to provide a safe and orderly environment for all students.

2. H. Volunteer Program

Parents or guardians are required to volunteer at the school a minimum of 20 hours per year. Single-parent households are required to volunteer a minimum of 10 hours per year. The main office will be tracking parent volunteer hours. Please sign in at the main office to receive credit for your hours.

Please remember that for your child to be re-enrolled in North River Charter Academy for the following school year, you must have all your volunteer hours completed before the last day of school.

It is North River Charter Academy's goal to provide a safe environment for students and staff while encouraging parents or guardians to work as school volunteers. To achieve this, volunteers shall be screened based on (1) the level of direct contact they may have with students and (2) the types of duties they may perform. Outside agencies that provide volunteers who work with students are required to screen their volunteers at a level consistent with this policy and provide evidence of insurance pursuant to board policy and/or practices.

All volunteer applicants must complete an online Volunteer Application, submit their government ID to the front office at school, and receive approval before being assigned as a volunteer. In accordance with F.S. 943.043151, all school volunteers must be checked against the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Predator/Offender database. North River Charter Academy reserves the right to deny placement to an applicant volunteer based on any results not in accordance with North River Charter Academy standards or to revoke the volunteer's clearance based on subsequent information. North River Charter Academy shall maintain all volunteer application materials and records in a confidential manner consistent with Chapter 119 (Public Records). All files and other records maintained pursuant to this policy shall be stored in a central location.

The "Volunteer Level" provides the minimum guidelines for determining the documentation and background check required. Each volunteer will be assigned to one of the following levels:

1. **Volunteer Level I:** A volunteer who has direct contact with students, within the presence

of a school employee or is assigned duties such as an office assistant that may not directly involve students.

2. **Volunteer Level II:** A volunteer who has direct one on one contact with students outside of the presence of a school employee except as noted above.

Minimum Volunteer Level II screening requirements: Same as Level I (complete an online Volunteer Application, submit government ID to the front office at school plus fingerprints.

PLEASE NOTE

Volunteers requiring fingerprints must register for this process at <https://schedule.fieldprint.com> before the volunteer is able to serve in a Level II capacity.

Volunteers will need to use the field print code: The cost of fingerprinting is \$80 and must be paid online by debit or credit card at the time of registration.

****No children under the age of 18 are permitted to accompany a volunteer anytime in the school or during field trips.**

2. I. Appointment of a Special Magistrate

The “Parental Rights in Education” law, also known as House Bill 1557 (2022), sets forth specific procedures for complaints or disputes falling into those categories detailed in Section 1001.42(8)(c)1.-7., Florida Statutes, and on the “Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate” form published by the Florida Department of Education and available here: (<https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-9669/dps-2022-158b.pdf>.) This includes any complaints or disputes related to the following:

- Concerns over procedures for notifying a student’s parent if there is a change in the student’s services or monitoring related to the student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school’s ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the student.
- Concerns related to any school policies or procedures that are perceived to discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting their student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being.
- Concerns over classroom instruction related to sexual orientation or gender identity, which is prohibited in grades K-3 and must be age-appropriate for all other grades.
- Concerns over student support services training developed or provided to school personnel that is believed to be out of compliance with guidelines, standards, and frameworks established by the Department of Education.
- Concerns over parental notification at the beginning of the school year about healthcare services offered by the School, including the ability to opt-out or withhold consent for any such services.

- Concerns over whether the School provided a well-being questionnaire or health screening form to the parent and sought their permission before it was administered to the student. This only applies to students in grades K-3.

Parents and guardians have the right to notify the Principal of any concerns related to the above areas. The Principal or designee must provide a response to the parent within seven (7) days of receiving the complaint. If the dispute cannot be resolved by the Principal or designee within seven (7) days, the parent may present the dispute to the School District. The School District must attempt to resolve the dispute within thirty (30) days. If the School District is unable to resolve the dispute, a parent may request the appointment of a special magistrate utilizing the “Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate” form linked above. For purposes of this policy, the term “days” means business days and excludes state, federal and school holidays.

Section 3- Student Guidelines

3. A. Personal Property

- Students are to leave their toys, games, family heirlooms, sports equipment (such as basketballs or footballs), rollerblades, scooters, etc. at home. The school provides everything needed for the classroom, physical education, and recess.
- Students should not bring large amounts of money to school.
- Under no circumstances should a child be allowed to bring knives, bullets, fireworks, spike bracelets, rubber bands, China stars, “peashooters,” BB guns, firearms (real or replicas), toy guns, chains, matches, lighters, or any other hazardous objects to school. Law enforcement officers will be called to investigate violations.

3. B. Attendance

If a child is to succeed in school, they must attend regularly. Each of the 180 days of the school year is important to your child’s success. Chapter 232.10, Florida Law, states “*Each parent of a child within the compulsory attendance age shall be responsible for such child’s school attendance as required under the provision of Florida School Law.*”

Poor attendance or excessive tardiness may result in failing grades. Students should be in their homerooms and seated by 7:50am. Students who arrive after 8:00am will be considered tardy.

It is the parents’ responsibility to **call the school office 941-545-6380** the day the student will not be attending school. A note from a parent/guardian to explain an absence must be submitted to the office upon the student’s return. A doctor’s note is required if the student is absent three (3) or more consecutive days.

1. When a student accumulates **five (5)** days of absences, other than out-of-school suspensions, whether excused or unexcused, the principal or designee shall make a good

faith effort to contact the parent or guardian by telephone to discuss the reasons for the absences and shall document such contact.

2. When a student accumulates **seven** (7) days of absences, other than out-of-school suspensions, whether excused or unexcused, a record of absences will promptly be mailed to the parent/guardian of the student. The letter/records of absences will include information about Truancy Court.
3. When a student is absent **ten** (10) or more days, whether excused or unexcused, a record of absences will promptly be mailed to the parent/guardian of the student. If appropriate, a parent conference will be required and at the discretion of the principal or designees, the parent or guardian may be required to verify absences with appropriate documentation (e.g., doctor's visits, etc.). A student found to be habitually truant will be referred to Truancy Court.

3. B. 1. Excused Absences

If a student is absent, a handwritten parental note or email will not be accepted. **A physician or medical provider must provide confirmation such as a doctor's note to be considered excused.** A doctor's note must be submitted at the office when the student returns to NRCA. If failure to present a note or contact does not occur, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Students are required to be in school unless the absence has been permitted or excused for one of the following reasons below. (Please note that vacations are considered unexcused absences.) Any absence may be judged appropriate by the principal or vice principal, provided that a written request is made within the given notice before the absence. With an excused absence, students will have an equal number of days to complete the assigned work without penalty.

1. Illness of student (if illness persists for three or more consecutive days, or requires numerous nonconsecutive absences, a doctor's note will be requested)
2. Death in the family or major illness to an immediate family member
3. Required court appearance or subpoena by a law enforcement agency
4. Scheduled medical appointments, dental appointments, and absences for treatment of medical diagnosis (It is encouraged to prevent and limit instructional loss for the student to have medical appointments after school hours.)
5. An observance of an established religious holiday; documentation of the religious affiliation of the student may be required by NRCA.
6. Special events (weddings, public functions, competitions, funerals, exceptional cases of family need).
7. Family or student medical emergency (such as emergency room or hospitalization).

3. B. 2. Unexcused Absences

1. Contribute to truancy of the student.
2. Are caused by an out-of-school suspension. A student suspended out of school is responsible for all work missed. The teacher will decide if the work missed will count as a "0," or will be made up for credit or partial credit.

3. The administration will notify the district of excessive unexcused absences.
4. If absences continue, a formal referral letter for attendance will be made to the administration with supporting documentation of parent contact and non-medical absences stapled to the referral, and proper district and school procedures will follow.
5. When excessive unexcused absences become a concern: (Three (3) or more unexcused absences in a calendar month. Fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences in a 90-day period), the school administration will first confirm medical excuse notifications received and recorded for absences.
6. The administration will contact the parent regarding excessive absences. Excessive school absences will be considered truant/habitual truant if s/he has five (5) or more unexcused absence days within a calendar month or fifteen (15) or more unexcused absence days within a ninety (90) day calendar period. This will be reported and can be subject to judicial action.

PLANNED EXTENDED ABSENCES:

1. Parents are encouraged to schedule family trips during school vacations (refer to the school yearly calendar) to minimize disruption to their children's education. Missing school for a family vacation is strongly discouraged. It is strongly advised against pulling students out of school for vacations. In unavoidable circumstances where prolonged absence is necessary, written notification to the school will be needed at least a week prior before the first day a student is out. Teachers will provide makeup assignments either before or after the absence, based on what the teacher deems as most beneficial for the student. Please be aware that vacations are classified as unexcused absences, and it's essential to adhere to the attendance guidelines outlined in the mandatory Parent Obligation when selecting our charter school

The school will contact student services to refer the student exhibiting a non-attendance pattern. If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, a Child Study Team shall implement the following:

- A. Frequent attempts at communication between North River Charter Academy and the family.
- B. Attendance contacts.
- C. Evaluation for alternative education programs.

3. C. Tardiness

A student is tardy when the student arrives after the beginning of the school day or when the student is not in their assigned seat or station when the school day begins. Students should be in their homerooms and seated by **8:00 am**. Students who arrive after 8:00 am MUST sign in at the Main Office. All late students must enter the front office and be issued a tardy pass. A student is considered tardy if they are absent at the time attendance is taken provided the student is in attendance before the close of the day. It is extremely important that students arrive at school on time and ready to learn. When students arrive late, they miss valuable instructional time and disrupt the classroom.

A student's excessive unexcused tardiness shall be considered willful disobedience, and the student shall be subject to disciplinary action and will be reported to the district.

3. C.1 Excused Tardiness:

A student will be considered excused ONLY if a parent/guardian personally escorts the child to the front desk and has a note to excuse tardiness. The reasons for excused tardiness are as follows:

1. Doctor's appointments with notes from the doctor, dentist, or medical facility.
2. Court notices mandating student's appearance.
- 3.
4. Extreme emergencies approved by the school administrator(s).
5. Excused tardiness will not count toward the student's tardy record.

3. C.2.Unexcused Tardiness:

Alarm clock failures, car trouble, inclement weather conditions, anything considered to be "Parent's faulty." etc. will be considered unexcused. Unexcused tardiness will count toward the student's attendance records. Your children must be in school and **ON TIME** by state law.

3 unexcused tardies will constitute 1 absence

The procedures for abiding by state law are as follows:

1. Upon accumulating three tardies, the administration will conduct a review to verify the presence of medical excuses or extreme emergencies approved by the administration for the recorded tardies.
2. Upon reaching three tardies, the administration will reach out to the parent through means such as a phone conference, email, teacher/parent conference, or letter to address the issue of excessive tardiness or early dismissals. Students have the right to make up class work in case of any absence. Students shall not be suspended for "lateness," "tardiness," or truancy. Other forms of discipline alternatives should be applied to these violations. F.S. 1006.09(9).

3. D. Drop off and Dismissal

****Parents must maintain communication with their child's classroom teacher notifying them how their child will go home regularly. If your child follows a regular or irregular pattern, please make it clear in writing. Please try to keep a routine of dismissal procedure(s) for your child. If a change needs to be made in case of an emergency, please notify the office as soon as possible. If it is a last-minute emergency change, please call the office at 941-545-6380 no later than 2:30 p.m.**

3. D. 1 Drop- Off

The safety of our children is our first priority. Please follow drop-off procedures very carefully to keep all of our children safe.

Students transported to school by parents may not arrive earlier than 7:30 AM. There will be no supervision until this time. In the "Car Rider Line," please remember to be courteous to faculty

and staff. Moreover, it is YOUR responsibility to be patient and vigilant of students as they are walking to their cars. Cell phone use is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED** in the car line. Parents must be cautious while driving in the parking lot for everyone's safety and music must be turned off.

Students are dropped off at the building entrance of the school, where parents will wish them well and send them to the cafeteria until class begins. Parents may not wait in the entrance with their children, as there is no space for everyone, and the time before school lends itself to social time for the children with their peers.

Cars may not be in the bus zone (in front of the school) as that is only for loading and unloading the bus. Car riders are to arrive by 7:55 a.m. For the safety of children, traffic flow will be restricted to one lane at morning drop-off.

3. D. 2. Dismissal Procedure

Please be patient during the first few weeks of school during dismissal. It typically takes a few weeks for teachers and parents to get accustomed to the new dismissal procedures. We believe in safety first and want to ensure that students are being dismissed properly and safely.

Parents who need to pick up their students during the school day must report to the office—**not the classroom** and sign them out. The office will send to the student. **Students will not be released after 2:30 p.m.** Please inform the office if you are planning to pick up your child early. **Students will ONLY be released to those listed by the parent on the child's emergency card. Picture identification will be required by anyone picking up a child.** Please update the emergency card whenever information changes, as if someone arrives at the school to seek the release of a student and the person's name is not on the emergency contact card or the person does not have valid photo identification, the student will **not** be released.

To avoid having the school become involved in personal family conflicts, parents or guardians should submit to school authorities a copy of any legal documents that indicate who has legal access to the child and his/her records during school hours. In the absence of legal documentation, school officials will provide access only to those individuals whose names appear on the student's data/emergency card. Failure to provide the school with legal documentation outlining visitation rights will result in any parent listed on the birth certificate being permitted to pick up a child. Friends and strangers will be denied access to a student in the absence of verified parental consent.

All transportation changes require notification by a parent/guardian of the school and be directed to the Office Staff, who will notify the teacher.

PLEASE MAINTAIN SLOW SPEEDS DURING DISMISSAL TIMES

3. E. Car Riders:

1. Parents are to use the car line entering from Erie Road and proceed to the back of the school to drop off and pick up students by car.
2. Staff will assist students arriving and/or departing by car. Students designated as car riders will be loaded into their vehicles and dismissed through the car line.
3. Drivers are asked to display *the Placard i.e., car tag*, listing the student's name(s) on the front windshield. Drivers who do not have this placard properly displayed will be required to go to the office for an identification check (be sure to have your picture ID with you). Your child will be released once identification has been established.
4. **IMPORTANT:** Please note that those picking up their students in the car line may NOT arrive on campus prior to 2:45 P.M.

In addition, parents are NOT permitted to BLOCK any local businesses during dismissal. Failure to abide may result in ticketing by law enforcement and/or their vehicle towed by such business at the vehicle owners' expense.

3. F. Walkers:

For your student to be dismissed as a walker a parent/guardian must complete the Walker Application. This application can be found on the transportation page of the North River Charter Academy school packet.

3. G. Busses

North River Charter Academy offers bus service on a limited basis. Parents must complete and submit a bus application to the Administration by the stated due date.

Busses will be dismissed at 3:09 pm.

A student who misses their assigned bus at dismissal shall promptly go to the office and report to the secretary. The student's parents will be contacted immediately to arrange transportation. If students are not picked up promptly, they will be placed in After Care and the parents will be charged for said service.

Students must realize that the same higher standards of conduct are expected on the bus as in all other aspects of school life. Students are asked to sit facing the front of the bus and talk quietly. Students receiving bus referrals will be disciplined. Repeated referrals will result in suspension from the bus.

Students may only ride on their assigned bus; they may not change buses.

SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE

1st of- fens e	Verbal warning and parents will be contacted.
2nd of- fens e	Not permitted to ride the bus for 1-3 days.
3rd of- fens e	Not permitted to ride the bus for 3-5 days.
4th of- fens e	Suspended from riding the school bus for the remainder of the year

NOTE: Late bus notices are sent out via our One Call System BlackBoard

Any afternoon that a school bus runs over a half-hour behind schedule. You will receive a call to learn if your child's bus will be late.

3. H. Rainy Day Dismissal

Rainy Day Dismissal -We use the 30-30 rule based on School Board Procedures. This dictates that if lighting is within 3 miles of the school building, all students will need to remain indoors or be moved indoors even if dismissal has already begun. Lighting within 3 miles requires us to suspend releasing students for dismissal (car or bus) until the danger passes.

3. I. Early Checkout Procedure

Pre-approved and Emergency checkout procedure: We strongly discourage parents from picking their child up early during the school day. If a student leaves early, the parent must make the request in person in the front office.

During school hours the front office will permit a child to leave school ONLY in custody of a parent/ guardian or person listed on the emergency contact card with a valid photo ID.

All transportation changes require notification by a parent/guardian to the school and be directed to the Office Staff, who will notify the teacher.

Please be aware that students are not permitted to leave school after 2:30 PM.

3. I.1. Excused Early Checkout

Excused early dismissal may include the following:

1. Doctor/Dentist Appointment, with note provided.
2. Court appearance (subpoena required).

Excused early dismissals for doctor's appointments will need a note from the doctor. To receive an excused early dismissal, a doctor's note must be brought to school the next day, or when the student returns to school. **No doctor's notes will be accepted late.**

3. I.2. Unexcused Early Checkout

May include the following:

- Forgotten items (for instance, books, lunch, money, homework, projects).
- Violation of dress code (to obtain appropriate dress).
- The North River Charter Academy Board has provided early dismissal days so that staff may engage in professional development activities. Teacher planning days and early dismissal days may not be the same as the Collier County School District. Please refer to the month-to-month calendar for scheduled early dismissal and teacher planning days.
- Students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m. and After-School care will be available for those enrolled.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the "going home" procedures with their children on these Early Dismissal days.

3. J. Aftercare

Aftercare is offered from 3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. The cost for After Care is \$11.00 per day per student. Registration with a credit card/checking account withdrawal payment method is mandatory when signing up for the After Care Program. An upcharge of \$5.00 per student will be applied on early dismissal days.

All fees **MUST** be paid by **FRIDAY** of each week the services are rendered. Tuition is expected based on the student's enrollment and will be billed weekly to the student's account for the days of attendance. **A late payment fee of \$25 will be applied to student accounts on Monday for payments that are not made by 6:00 p.m. Friday of the previous week.** Fees can be paid with

Master Card, Visa, Debit Card, Checking Account Withdraw, Money Order, or Personal Check.
NO CASH PLEASE!

3. J.1 Overdue Balances:

Families that become overdue on balances will be subjected to consequences as listed below:

Aftercare – **BALANCES OVER \$100** per student. Students will be suspended from After Care until the balance is paid in full.

Field Trips – If the above balances are in place prior to the student's field trip, the student **may not be permitted to attend until the balances are paid.**

3. K. Dress Code

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for one another and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school dress for normal school days for every student. The North River Charter Academy Administration reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes to them during the school year. Students are expected to follow these guidelines and every student **MUST** wear a school uniform. If a student comes to school without the proper uniform, they will be kept/sent to the front office and remain there until a parent/guardian brings a proper uniform for the student.

The student will call their parent from the office to obtain the correct uniform. The student will wait in the office for their parent to bring the correct uniform. Multiple violations of the uniform policy can result in disciplinary actions.

Our goal is to allow children the freedom to come to school, dressed comfortably and appropriately without unnecessary distractions so that they can focus on learning instead of the latest designer labels. School uniforms will include attractive polos, shorts, skorts, pants, and sweatshirts with the school-branded logo clearly visible. All uniform items will be available for purchase using the following link:

NRCA UNIFORMS CAN BE ORDERED AT
<https://www.NRCAedu.org/dress-code>

<p><u>SHIRTS</u></p>	<p>K – 5th students MUST wear the short or long sleeve school polo shirt with the NRCA logo in either green, blue or gray Monday – Thursday. Spirit shirts may be worn on Friday.</p> <p>-</p> <p>6th students MUST wear the short or long sleeve school polo shirt with the NRCA logo in either purple, blue or gray Monday – Thursday. Spirit shirts may be worn on Friday</p>
<p><u>SWEAT-SHIRTS</u></p>	<p><u>ONLY</u> NRCA spirit sweatshirts will be worn inside the building in cooler temperatures (Available for purchase).</p> <p>Hoods are not to be worn on any student’s head on <u>campus at any time before, during, or after school.</u></p> <p>Other sweaters and outer jackets, coats, hats, scarves, gloves, and mittens <u>must be removed upon entering the building.</u> In severe weather these may be used during outdoor activities as deemed appropriate.</p>
<p><u>BOTTOMS</u></p>	<p><u>BOYS - ONLY</u> uniform pants or shorts in Khaki are acceptable.</p> <p><u>GIRLS – ONLY</u> uniform pants, shorts, Capri-pants, skirts, skorts, or jumpers in Khaki are acceptable.</p> <p>Garments must fit, so as not to be so tight that movement is hindered, or so loose as to sag down from the waistline.</p> <p>The following are <u>NOT</u> permitted: *Jeans, denim, stretch, spandex, cargo or decorated pants or shorts *Athletic/sport style shorts, sweat/track suit style pants</p>
<p><u>BELTS</u></p>	<p><u>All bottoms with belt loops require a solid color belt in blue, brown or black.</u></p>
<p><u>SHOES/ SOCKS</u></p>	<p><u>ONLY</u> traditional tennis shoes with laces or Velcro closures are permitted. No boots, dress shoes, flats, heels, sandals, or flip flops.</p>

<p><u>P.E. ATTIRE</u></p>	<p>All students will participate in physical education. Students are required to dress out for PE instruction. Students are to wear black or dark-colored soccer-type shorts and a gray t-shirt. Spirit shirts may be worn on Fridays. Girls are not to wear leggings or Yoga pants for gym. Students are required to wear sneakers daily. Footwear for physical education classes must be suitable for outdoor physical activities and unsafe shoes such as, “skate tennis shoes” are not permitted</p>
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Any non-North River Charter Academy School attire being worn without permission will receive a verbal warning and said attire will be maintained in the main office and returned to the student at the end of the day. Administration will make the final judgment concerning the appropriateness of a student’s clothing and appearance.

3. L. Lost and Found

Student will call their parent from the office to obtain the correct uniform. The student will wait in the office for their parent to bring the correct uniform. Multiple violations of the uniform policy can result in disciplinary actions.

Our goal is to allow children the freedom to come to school, dressed comfortably and appropriately without unnecessary distractions so that they can focus on learning instead of the latest designer labels. School uniforms will include attractive polos, shorts, skorts, pants, and sweatshirts with the school-branded logo clearly visible. All uniform items will be available for purchase using the following link:

3. M. Makeup/ Cologne

Students in grades K-5 are prohibited from wearing makeup, however, students are allowed to carry and use lip balm (ChapStick). If K-5 students are found wearing makeup, they will be directed by the staff to the restroom to remove it. Failure to comply will result in a referral to administration, and multiple offenses of this policy will result in disciplinary actions. For students in grades 6-8, makeup is permitted as long as it does not cause any disruptions to the learning environment. **Heavy or dark makeup, as well as fake nails and eyelashes, are strictly forbidden.** Additionally, students are **not allowed** to wear perfume or cologne due to potential allergies and asthma among students and staff.

3. N. Hair

Hair must be neat and clean with no "unnatural" colors, including but not limited to, greens, blues, pinks, and fluorescent colors. Students will not be allowed to have mohawks, spikes, head symbol shavings, or any hair that is distracting to the educational setting will not be allowed. No headwear

is allowed including, but not limited to hats, and bandanas. Hair bows, hairbands, etc., are allowed for girls. If there is a question, please ask. Decisions are at the discretion of the administration of NRCA.

3. O. General

- Students may not wear body piercings other than small earrings or studs in their ear lobes, for safety purposes (no large hoops). Nose rings and other facial piercings are not permitted.
- Parents of students in kindergarten are encouraged to leave a Ziploc bag labeled with the child's name with a spare change of clothes in the classroom throughout the year for emergencies.
- Students are not permitted to wear anything offensive, immodest, or deemed inappropriate by the faculty.
- Clothing exposing the torso, midriff, or mid-chest area shall not be worn.
- Underwear shall not be visible.
- Head coverings shall not be worn in the building unless required for religious observance or health-related reasons.
- Hemlines shall be no shorter than fingertip length.
- All pants and shorts shall be secured at the waist.
- Garments and/or jewelry which display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, gang, weapons, or alcohol-related wording or graphics, or which provoke violence or disruption in the school, shall not be worn.
- Wallet chains shall not be worn.
 - It is highly advised that all clothing should be marked/labeled with the students name.

Fundraising Days:

Throughout the year we will allow students to participate in different spirit days as a way to fundraise. These days are when students are able to dress out of uniform, and in a certain way that matches to the spirit event. At no time are students to wear anything offensive, immodest or deemed inappropriate by the faculty. Students must dress in appropriate everyday clothing, however no sandals/flip flops, tank tops or ripped jeans are allowed. Leggings must be covered at all times.

Jewelry:

Students, both boys and girls, may not wear body piercing other than earrings in the ear lobes as long as they do not cause a distraction to the learning environment. Only one earring per ear is permitted. For safety purposes, earrings must be studs or small hoop earrings, with tiny hoops no larger than an adult's pinky finger. Limited jewelry, such as watches, small bracelets, and thin necklaces/chains, is acceptable. However, necklaces/chains should be worn underneath the school uniform, **not** over the uniform shirt, for safety reasons. Additionally, students are requested to limit bracelets to one per wrist to avoid unnecessary noise and distractions.

If the appropriateness of attire is questioned, students will be referred to the office and required to change, and the parent/guardian may be contacted. Disciplinary actions will be taken when violations are repeated.

The general appearance of a student should reflect neatness and good personal hygiene. Any student who violates the grooming and hygiene policy will be sent home. Students may return to school when their appearance is appropriate.

NRCA employs only highly qualified teachers with the appropriate certification for the content area to which they are assigned. These professional educators and staff have a deep passion to positively impact students' lives. This will also be reflected by their attire and appearance, as everyone at NRCAS will be dressed for success.

3. P. Dress Code Consequences

Teachers will conduct dress code checks as students enter the classroom promptly at 8:00 a.m. It is expected that students adhere to the established dress code. Any student found not in compliance will be requested to change into appropriate attire. Parents or guardians will be notified to provide the necessary clothing if needed. Students will not be permitted to participate in class activities until they are dressed according to the dress code standards. Repeated violations of the dress code may result in a parent conference, suspension, or other administrative measures.

Section 4: Academics

4. A. Grading Policies

Students shall be informed by the school of their academic progress and shall have periodic reviews of their instructional achievement by the school staff. Students' academic marks in each class will be presented fairly and impartially regarding their academic progress in that class. They should have the opportunity to periodically review their grades with their teacher. Students shall be graded on their progress and classwork. Conduct, while not a part of a student's grade, may bear a direct relationship to said academic grade, especially if a student is absent from a class and unable to make up work due to misbehavior.

A student must accept the responsibility for regular class attendance, the performance of all tasks required for the successful completion of the course, and for making up all work missed during excused absences. Additionally, a student shall complete all classroom assignments to the best of his or her ability to earn the best possible grade and cooperate with the teacher to provide a good learning environment in class. A student has the responsibility to refrain from cheating or plagiarizing on all tests and work assignments.

4. B. Accountability and Tracking

North River Charter Academy Accountability Plan must provide the information needed to measure and track the school's progress toward its goals, make program adjustments when needed, and report to parents, the community, and the Charter Authorizer on performance and progress.

It is the intent of North River Charter Academy that all Kindergarten through 6th grade students become proficient in reading, writing, math, science, social science, and Physical Education classes each year at, or above their grade level. Moreover, the students will make progress towards North River Charter Academy achievement standards in preparation to meet or exceed the Florida B.E.S.T. Standards as tested on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) instrument that is administered to all 3rd through 6th-grade students.

In addition, all grade levels will achieve mastery of the Florida B.E.S.T. Standards as monitored by the SAT 10 and i-Ready Diagnostic assessments for reading and math. Pre, Interim, and Post Tests will be used as a quarterly benchmark in monitoring each student's learning gains throughout the school year. The results obtained, utilizing the above evaluative and monitoring tools, will generate the “**evidence of facts**” that will present the annual North River Charter Academy's “**snapshot**” to the school community, Collier County, and the Florida Department of Education.

4. C. Report Cards

NRCA will use the Focus System for Attendance and Grade Reporting. Parent/Student Portal access will be made available for online tracking of student assignments.

This information will provide parents with a clear, concise, and well-defined report regarding their student's current level of performance and continuous improvement over the school year. This will be viewed as one part of a larger accountability system for students and parents, based on performance and proficiency in the standards in each academic area.

Manatee County/ North River Charter Academy Grading Scale 6th Grade:

A+	98%	Excellent Progress
A	94%	
A-	90%	
B+	87%	Above Average Progress
B	83%	
B-	80%	
C+	88%	Satisfactory Progress
C	73%	
C-	70%	
D+	67%	Needs Improvement

D	63%	
D-	60%	
F	0-59%	Unsatisfactory Progress

Kindergarten Grading Scale

S – Satisfactory

N – Needs Improvement

U – Unsatisfactory

1st-5th Grades Grading Scale

A – 90-100% Excellent Progress

B – 80-89% Above Average Progress

C – 70-79% Satisfactory Progress

N – 60-69% Needs Improvement

U – 0-59% Unsatisfactory Progress

Assignment Percentages - K-2

5% Homework

5% Participation

30% Assessments

60% Classwork

Assignment Percentages - 3-5

10% Homework

5% Participation

30% Assessments/Projects

55% Classwork

Assignment Percentages - 6-8

10% Homework

5% Participation

30% Assessments/Projects

55% Classwork

Students may receive a “0” for homework/participation. When assigned, homework should not count more than 5-10% toward each student’s grade.

4. D. Homework

Homework will include varied activities that reinforce the basic skills or extend and enrich concepts learned. Homework should not be utilized to introduce new concepts. Assignments will be made according to individual student needs and abilities. Homework assignments should not be punitive.

The purpose of work that teachers would like the students to complete at home is to develop study habits in children early in their academic lives and for students to have the opportunity to share their learning with parents. If a child does not understand their assignment after attempting to complete it with you at home, please send a note to the teacher explaining the issue.

Teachers will provide regular feedback to students and parents regarding assignments. Parents should be notified when a student routinely does not complete homework. Appropriate completion of homework assignments will be reflected in mid-term quarterly reports and under the Expected Behaviors section of the report card

4. E. Homework Policy

This is a general outline of the time required and days suggested for homework. In addition to this, unfinished class work may also be sent home for completion. All students are encouraged to read nightly. **Please note that homework may be assigned on Fridays and during School breaks.**

Kindergarten – Third Grade: Students at these grade levels will not be assigned any homework. They will be encouraged to read at least 20 minutes per night.

Fourth-Sixth Grade: Students should have 30-60 minutes of homework graduating with grade levels, four to five nights per week (Monday-Friday). Reading for enjoyment may also be assigned many nights. Social studies or science activities may also be assigned.

4. F. Academic Honesty

4. F.1. Cheating

A. Types of cheating

1. During testing

- a. Looking at another student's paper.
- b. Holding paper so that another student can read and/or copy.
- c. Using "cheat sheets," or other concealed information.

- d. Opening book to answers.
- e. Giving another student or students answers or test questions.
- f. Writing answers on desk.
- g. Sharing information via cyber or electronic communication devices.
- 2. Homework Assignments
 - a. Copying another student's answers, papers, or assignments.
 - b. Submitting written report without having read complete assignment, i.e. reading a summary instead of a book
 - c. Plagiarism of any source including the Internet.
- 3. Altering or changing answers on class papers.
- 4. Passing answers or information to other students between classes.
- 5. Paying or bartering with others to do schoolwork.

B. Disciplinary action related to cheating

1st offense: failing grade on work and parents notified.

2nd offense: failing grade on work and conference with an administrator, parents, and teacher. Other penalties will be determined at the conference.

3rd offense: parents notified; possible loss of credit in course, following an administrative hearing, consisting of parents, administration, management, and the student

Cheating and Plagiarism constitutes academic dishonesty and students can be suspended for 1-5 days. Students may justly be denied awards, privileges, and honors that the school bestows on those students that uphold the integrity of North River Charter Academy. Furthermore, any student suspended for academic dishonesty is barred from participating in any field trips and after-school activities on the days they are disciplined, including sports, practices, and games.

4. G. Special Services

North River Charter Academy offers ESE, ELL, speech, language, and OT/PT services for any student that qualifies. Documentation from your family physician or any other Doctor must be submitted, coupled with implementing and completing the MTSS process before any special services can begin. Contact your student's teacher should you feel your child needs these services.

4. H. Character Education

Character Education is one way to enhance every child's self-concept, improve behavior, enhance learning gains, reduce tardiness, absences, and misconduct that results in student suspensions. In addition, Character Education will increase a sense of purpose, citizenship, responsibility, and community. NRCA School Administration will oversee the Character Education curriculum and will disseminate the information that needs to be addressed by teachers to their students.

4. I. Conferences

Parents are required to contact their child's teacher when they wish to arrange a conference. Please send a note, email, or call the teacher directly and indicate two or three dates and times

that are convenient for you. At least one-day notice should be given to the school unless it is an emergency. There will be at least **two scheduled conference nights during** the school year. Parents will visit the school to meet with one or more teachers and said conferences will be scheduled in advance. All conferences will have a strict time limit.

4. J. Textbooks

Students are expected to take diligent care of textbooks. All students must assume full responsibility for the care of books issued to them. Books are issued by the subject area teacher and must be returned to the same teacher upon completion of the school year or upon withdrawal from school.

Responsibility for textbooks rests with the student to whom the textbook is issued. Lost books are no excuse for not doing class assignments.

The full purchase price shall be collected for lost, destroyed, or unnecessarily damaged textbooks unless the book has been in use for more than one year. Collection should never be less than 50% of the purchase on the part of any pupil to make good such damage will deprive the student of further issuance of free textbooks. Loss of books due to theft or other circumstances shall not be accepted as an excuse for non-payment. If the book is found and returned, the bookkeeper shall make a refund to the student. An invoice will be sent to the parents for payment. Any non-payment on a lost textbook will be entered into the North River Charter Academy main computer system and will prevent the student from graduating or attending events.

4. K. Tutoring Program

North River Charter Academy will offer an After-School free tutoring program for students in the Fall and Spring. The classroom teacher will refer students for the tutoring program. One teacher per grade level (Gr. 3 – 5) will be tutoring. Middle school teachers will tutor if it is necessary. The program will be from 3:30 – 4:30. Parents/Guardians of students selected for tutoring will be notified by their child's teacher. **If the students are unable to participate, they must meet with Administration to discuss the mandatory nature of tutoring.**

4. L. Pledge of Allegiance 1003.44

Each school board may adopt rules to require, in all the schools of the district, programs of a patriotic nature to encourage greater respect for the government of the United States and its national anthem and flag, subject always to other existing pertinent laws of the United States or of the state. When the national anthem is played, students and all citizens should stand at attention, men removing the headdress, except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes. The Pledge of Allegiance statement, "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," shall be rendered by students standing with the right hand over the heart.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag shall be recited at the beginning of the day in each public elementary, middle, and high school in the state. Each student shall be informed by posting a notice in a conspicuous place that the student has the right not to participate in reciting the pledge. When the pledge is given, citizens should show full respect to the flag by standing at attention, men removing the headdress, except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes. A student has the right not to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, but the student must stand.

4. M. School Parties

Any classroom parties, or any other parties on campus, **MUST** be approved by the school administration. Soda **may not** be served in the school at any time - only water, milk, or fruit juice are acceptable drinks. Approved parties may **ONLY** take place during the last thirty minutes of the school day, as per Federal Lunch Program guidelines. Any snacks brought to school from home should be healthy and purchased from a store. Any snack purchased for a party must come in with a student or left at the front desk. **NO PARTY DECORATIONS ARE PERMITTED.**

4. N. Student Birthdays

Birthday parties are not held at school. Classroom teachers will acknowledge a student's birthday in a variety of ways IF family beliefs allow. Parents are permitted to bring in a store-bought treat to recognize their child's birthday. The timing of this will also be restricted to the final thirty minutes of the school day. **Invitations for home parties must be distributed to the entire class,** so as not to interfere with our academic program, or to cause hurt feelings. Please do not have flowers or balloons delivered to your child at school. They will not be delivered to the classroom as doing so would disrupt the academic focus of our work. Additionally, items of this nature are not permitted on buses.

4. O. School Pictures/ Yearbooks

School pictures are taken twice a year with scheduled make-up days following each session. Information will be sent home for parents to complete and return if they wish to order said pictures. For Fall Picture Day, students are required to wear the normal dress code. During our Spring Picture Day, students may dress out of uniform. School yearbooks will be sold in the spring with a cost to be announced. Information will be sent home regarding yearbook sales.

4. P. School Supplies

Each grade will be participating in the Classroom Bundle for school supplies. The cost is \$40 and includes all school supplies needed for the school year. Additional supplies can be donated to the classroom, which will count toward mandatory volunteer service hours. The school provides everything needed for physical education and recess. **Therefore, students should leave their toys, games, radios, sports equipment, etc., at home. This will prevent items from becoming lost/broken or causing disruption to the school setting.**

4. Q. Club Activities

Clubs and organizations will be shared with all parents once schedules have been established. Students can join any club that is offered for their grade level. Research clearly suggests that involvement in clubs and activities is beneficial for most students. Additional clubs may be added throughout the school year, contingent upon student interest and coupled with securing a faculty sponsor and parent support. Permission forms must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian prior to a child participating in any club or activity.

4. R. Team Sports

North River Charter Academy will be offering a “team sports” program for students in grades 5-6. Our students will have the opportunity to participate in several sports throughout the year. Practices will be held after school from 3:50 p.m. until 4:45 p.m. If your child is not enrolled in the After Care School program, he/she must be picked up **promptly before 4:50 p.m.**, to avoid After Care School care charges. Those students enrolled in the After Care School program will be supervised until 6:00 PM. All students must be in good academic and behavioral standing before they can participate in any team sports activity or club. Students are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship and teamwork to take part in North River Charter Academy team sports programs.

4. S. Field Trips

The North River Charter Academy School Board believes that field trips, both in and out of the county, can be an integral part of the learning process in many areas of education. For purposes of this policy, a field trip shall be defined as an approved trip away from the school site. The field trips are for educational purposes and are aligned with Florida B.E.S.T. Standards and the School’s vision and mission.

1. An Authorization for Trip Form signed by the parent must be on file at the school for each K-6 student for him/her to make the trip.
2. Students may be denied the privilege of participating in field trips, social and/or extracurricular activities if said student(s) have been disruptive and have violated the student code of conduct or fail to conform to school rules and regulations. The final decision on whether the student may participate shall be made by the administration with documentation and input from pertinent staff. If student(s) remains on campus during an assigned field trip, the teacher is responsible for planning for the student to be supervised in another classroom. The teacher will also provide work for said student(s).
3. **ONLY** approved Level 2 Volunteers may attend and assist in supervision on field trips **per the Jessica Lunsford Act of 2005.**
4. **ALL** fines and fees must be paid in full for students to participate in field trips.

4. S.1. Overdue Balances:

Families that become overdue on balances will be subjected to the consequences listed below:

- Aftercare - Balances \$100.00 or more - Students will be removed from aftercare

- until the balance is paid in full.
- Field Trips - If the above balances are in place prior to a student field trip, the student may not be permitted to attend until balances are paid in full.

4. T. Internet Use

The school district maintains an Internet content filter as does FORZA Education Management. All Internet access by all students must utilize these filters to restrict student access to material harmful to minors as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Public school student use of telecommunications services, through school equipment or authorization, will be supervised. District procedures that comply with CIPA guidelines include technology protection measures that block or filter visual depictions that are obscene, include child pornography, or are harmful to minors. A parent or guardian wishing to deny access to the Internet must notify the school in writing. Unauthorized users of the Internet will be subject to disciplinary action.

Email use by students is not allowed without specific instructional purposes and must be monitored at all times for appropriate content. This use requires prior approval by North River Charter Academy to assure compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act (NCIPA).

Unauthorized access, including so-called hacking or other unlawful activities, will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, cancellation of privileges. Written parental permission is required prior to a student's participation in online programs that transmit personally identifiable information. The district will make all reasonable efforts in selecting online programs that ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the student and comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA requirements will be communicated annually to parents, students, faculty, and staff.

4. U. Telephone/ Cell Phone Guidelines

The office and classroom telephones are business phones, and not to be used by students except in a true emergency. School staff will assist children in placing such calls. Students will not be allowed to use the phone to make personal arrangements, such as requesting permission to go home with another student. Only emergency messages shall be taken for students. Students shall not be called from class to use the telephone or receive telephone calls.

Cell phones and Smartwatches are not permitted unless otherwise directed or instructed by North River Charter Academy staff or Administration. This includes having such devices in any silent, vibrate, or visual-only mode. Students may keep a cell phone in their bag for emergencies, but it must be turned off. Any student that is found using a cell phone or Smartwatch during the day will have the electronic confiscated and their parent or guardian may be required to pick up the device. A second offense will result in an automatic referral and the student will not be permitted to bring the phone to school for the remainder of the year.

Personal electronic devices, i.e., electronic games or any unnecessary devices deemed potentially disruptive shall not be permitted at school. The same consequences as having a cell phone will be adhered to.

Students bringing any electronic devices for a class project must make arrangements with the teacher or administration for safekeeping. Students are not permitted to record videos on their electronic devices while on school property, including whilst on the bus or on a field trip. Students should not wear a school uniform in any videos recorded for use on social media platforms whilst off campus.

Cellular devices shall be defined as any electronic device that reproduces, transmits, or records (voice, pictures, text, or any other type of media.)

The school shall not accept responsibility for any student's personal property including electronic devices.

Section 5 - Discipline

Discipline encompasses the systematic approach of guiding a student's behavior from inappropriate to exemplary standards. Our aim is not merely to reduce negative behaviors but to instill a sense of understanding and adherence to positive conduct. We strive to make the best learning environment for all students. Discipline is administered without anger or for the sake of expediency. While students may not always welcome disciplinary measures, as being apart of NRCA all students are held to high expectations and will benefit from the structure and clear expectations provided, which is essential for students to achieve their maximum potential.

The design of the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct enables the school to enforce its provisions consistently and uniformly. The administration is responsible for discipline and determines the level of the offense and its appropriate consequence. Discipline will be enforced for any violation occurring on school property and at school-sponsored events, as well as the North River Charter Academy bus stops.

If a student continues to violate school rules and regulations or if a student commits a crime off school property, reassignment to another school may occur. Students may be disciplined for engaging in other objectionable conduct even if the conduct is not specifically described below.

Students are required to follow all classroom and school rules and regulations. The teacher will send students to the office after multiple verbal warnings. Students are only sent to the office after the teacher has exhausted every strategy in the classroom.

Each administrator and educator will establish appropriate procedures for discipline in his/her classroom based on these guidelines. **The following list is not all-inclusive:**

1. There is zero tolerance for aggression, drugs, and alcohol on campus. Students who push, hit, bite, kick, harass, bully, threaten School Safety, or use the internet in a negative way will be assigned an appropriate consequence, up to and including suspension or dismissal from the school.

Items that carry pictures or slogans referring to drug culture or alcohol, profane or abusive language, and inappropriate slang language are prohibited by anyone at NRCA.

2. Students are required to demonstrate respect towards school personnel, encompassing, but not limited to, administration, teachers, staff, and substitutes.

3. Any deliberate damage to school property will necessitate replacement, repair, or reimbursement for damages by either the student or their parents. The affixing of stickers on school property is strictly prohibited including on student tablets or computers.

4. The following items, including but not limited to matches/lighters, music devices, skateboards, handheld gaming devices, toys, and weapons of any kind, are strictly prohibited on school grounds. Students are advised that disciplinary measures may be taken if they are found crafting any weapons or items resembling weapons using craft materials.

5. Students are expected to maintain cleanliness within the school premises at all times. Gum chewing is strictly prohibited inside the school premises.

6. All students will follow the established school cell phone policy. Cell phones or other personal electronic devices should not be brought to school and use is prohibited during school hours. School phones are available in case of emergency. Possession of a cell phone or other personal electronic devices during the school day will result in the equipment being collected and returned directly to the parent, multiple offenses may result in a higher discipline.

5. A. Bullying

It is the policy of the North River Charter Academy that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. Our school will not tolerate bullying and harassment. Such interactions could occur in telephone conversations, voice mail messages, face-to-face conversations, or in written communication including any social media. Bullying and harassment, as defined below are prohibited.

Bullying is a repeated form of aggression and occurs when a person(s) who perceives a power imbalance, willfully subjects another person (victim), whomever he/she may be, to intentional, unwanted, and unprovoked hurtful verbal and/or physical action(s) which result(s) in the victim feeling oppressed (stress, injury, discomfort) at any school site, bus stop, or school-sponsored activity or event.

Bullying may also occur as various repeated forms of hazing, including initiation rites perpetrated against a new student or a new member of a team. Students who engage in such conduct shall be subject to a range of punishments to include verbal or written reprimand, out-of-school suspension, or change of placement and/or expulsion.

Examples of Bullying

1. **Physical Bullying** - punching, shoving, poking, strangling, hair-pulling, beating, biting and excessive tickling.

2. **Verbal Bullying** - hurtful name-calling, teasing, and gossip.
3. **Emotional (psychological) Bullying** - rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rating/ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, or perceived sexual orientation, manipulating friendships, isolating, ostracizing and peer pressure.
4. **Sexual Bullying** - many of the actions listed above as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment, and abuse involving actual physical contact and sexual assault. In many cases, gender and cross-gender sexual harassment may also qualify as **bullying**.
5. **Cyber-Bullying** - the use of information and communication via all social media platforms, such as, but not limited to, Facebook Messenger, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, defamatory personal websites, and defamatory online personal pooling websites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to threaten or harm others, or which substantially disrupts or interferes with the operation of a school or an individual student's ability to receive an education.

Bullying, in most cases, is characterized by repeated harmful actions on the part of the bully. Personnel at all levels are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent bullying.

Bullying will not be tolerated and will lead to suspension, expulsion, and/ or transfer from North River Charter Academy School.

In addition, retaliation **will not be tolerated**. **Retaliation** is defined as "to pay back (an injury) in kind."

5. B. Harassment

State and federal law specifically prohibit harassment. Instances of harassment may result in both civil and criminal liability on the part of the individual harasser as well as the school board. Harassing activities by students or employees will not be tolerated.

Harassment is when a person continually teases, annoys, threatens, or insults another person in either a verbal, physical, or written manner. Harassment occurs when a person subjects another person to any unwelcome conduct because of sex, race, origin, religion, etc., on school property or at a school-sponsored event. Persons who engage in such conduct shall be subject to a range of punishments.

Sexual harassment is when a person bothers another person using sexual words, pictures, gestures, or conduct that the other person would find offensive. Sexual harassment can also occur when a person is forced by his or her location or situation to see or overhear sexual comments, gestures, or conduct that he or she finds offensive.

Unwanted and Unwelcome Harassment:

May include, but is not limited to: sexual comments, jokes or gestures; suggestive comments; being "sexually rated" by an individual, for example, on a scale from 1 to 10; being pressured to go

out with someone; being the recipient of catcalling; being touched in a sexual way; being intentionally brushed up against in a sexual way; spreading sexual rumors about a person; having clothing pulled in a sexual way; being shown, given, or left sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, messages or notes; being forced (because of their location) to view images of a sexual nature; being forced to kiss someone; being forced to do something sexual other than kissing; being called any term that denigrates sexual identity; having clothing pulled off or down; being spied on while dressing; or requesting sexual favors.

Confidentiality must be maintained as much as possible during any harassment investigation. Confidentiality is maintained when the identity of the people involved or the circumstances surrounding the incident are kept private. For example, you do not maintain confidentiality if you tell your friends the name of the person that harassed you.

North River Charter Academy policy forbids harassment. The school will not tolerate harassment of any kind at any of its sites or activities. Personnel, at all levels, are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent harassment. Allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated, giving due regard to the need for confidentiality.

Information related to the prevention and correction of harassment shall be provided in writing to personnel and students. Persons who engage in such conduct shall be subject to a range of punishments. Proven allegations of harassment can have serious consequences for the party deemed guilty, including but not limited to the following:

1. The range of punishment for a party found guilty of harassment could include verbal and written reprimand, out-of-school suspension, change of placement, and/or expulsion.
2. If the party deemed guilty is a school employee, the range of punishment could include written reprimand, suspension without pay, and/or termination.
3. If the party deemed guilty is neither a student nor a school employee, appropriate steps shall be taken, which could include limiting the access of this party to school property and any other action deemed necessary.

5. C. Vandalism and Defacing School Property

Vandalism in our school can cost thousands of dollars and jeopardize our lease agreement. For the students' own protection, they should stay away from the school buildings when school is not in session.

Vandalism and the defacing of school property is a serious offense. Students guilty of these infractions to their own school or to other schools in any county shall face severe disciplinary action, which could include restitution, suspension and/or expulsion and the student shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and shall be subject to arrest and prosecution. This includes spray-painting buildings and similar types of vandalism. Any damage to school property by a student is the sole responsibility of the family of the student.

5. D. Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

A student shall not possess, handle, or transport weapons of any type or any object that resembles a weapon.

Students violating this policy are subject to suspension, expulsion, transfer and/or arrest.

Examples of Weapons:

Weapons may include, but are not limited to: guns, knives, dirks (daggers), razor blades, ice picks, explosives, chains, pipes, brass knuckles, Billy clubs, Chinese stars, mace, tear gas or any mixture of chemicals used as a weapon, dangerous instruments, toy guns, or anything that resembles or could be considered a weapon on school grounds and up to 500 yards from school grounds, or at related activities are prohibited. Any student that brings a weapon to school, a school function, or on any school-sponsored transportation may be expelled, with or without continuing educational services and referred for criminal prosecution following an administrative hearing.

5. E. Zero Tolerance Offenses

North River Charter Academy has adopted a zero-tolerance policy for serious crimes involving violence, weapons, drugs, and behaviors that threaten the safety of students or personnel; illegal activities are intolerable. The 2001 Florida Legislature enacted CS/CS/HV 267 which requires school districts to adopt a policy of zero tolerance for victimization and prohibits any student who is adjudicated of certain specified felony violations against another student from attending the same school or riding on the same school bus as the victim or the victim's sibling(s).

Exceptional education students are not exempt from the provisions of this bill. However, the implementation in the case of ESE students must be provided within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C., and Chapter 33 as amended by: Public Law 105-17.

5. E. 1. Examples of Zero-Tolerance Offenses:

Zero-tolerance offenses may include, but are not limited to: alcohol; arson; aggravated battery, threat or intimidation of an North River Charter Academy employee, agent, or student; bomb threats or general threats to school population; breaking/entering of school board property; false fire alarms; homicide; kidnapping; major disruption to a school function; misrepresentation of facts resulting in public slander toward an North River Charter Academy employee; motor vehicle theft; passing counterfeit money; possession, use, or sale of a firearm, bombs, explosives or a weapon; possession, use, sale, distribution, purchase, or being under the influence of a controlled substance; possession, or purchase, either knowingly or unknowingly, of any drug paraphernalia; possession, or purchase, either knowingly or unknowingly, of any illegal contraband; sale or distribution, or purchase of any substance represented by a student as being a controlled substance; sexual battery; use of a non-weapon as a weapon; willfully and knowingly attempting to do bodily harm to an

North River Charter Academy employee, agent or student, gang related activities i.e., robbery or possession of any weapon or firearm that resembles a true weapon or firearm.

Consequences of Zero-Tolerance Offenses:

1. The student will be suspended immediately.
2. A parent or guardian will be notified.
3. The student may be suspended, expelled, or recommended for change of placement.
4. Referral to law enforcement agency as appropriate.

Consequences of Felony Drug-Related Incidents:

1. The student will be suspended immediately, and parents will be contacted.
2. The authorities must be contacted immediately.
3. Any student reprimanded with drugs or drug related incidents might be expelled or arrested.
4. The NRCA and local school board will decide if the student is permitted to return to school.

Tobacco or Tobacco Products Consequences:

1. Mandatory parent conference.
2. Referral to law enforcement.
3. Mandatory anti-tobacco education as stated in F.S. Section 386.212 and Section 569.11.
4. Out-of-school suspension as determined by the administration.

Fighting Consequences:

1. One to ten days out-of-school suspension and a mandatory meeting will be scheduled with a parent.
2. Successful completion of peer mediation, conflict resolution or anger management training.
3. Referral to law enforcement as appropriate.
4. Student may be expelled or transferred to another school depending on the incident.

****Actions that were taken clearly in self-defense without prior physical or verbal involvement shall not be considered an intentional act under this rule, but a student will still be suspended for fighting or striking a student back.**

Sexual harassment Consequences:

1. Verbal and written reprimand.
2. Mandatory parent meeting
3. Out-of-school suspension; 1 to 10 days.
4. Change of placement and/or expulsion.

Drug Possession Consequences:

1. Out-of-school suspension 1 to 10 days and mandatory parent meeting.

2. Referral to law enforcement.
3. Referral to the Juvenile Drug Court Program.
4. Permission to attend a regular school program if the student participates in a Drug Court program and/or treatment center.
5. Failure to successfully complete Drug Court program and/or treatment center may result in a recommendation for a change of placement and/or other sanctions.
6. North River Charter Academy and local school board will decide if the student returns to school.

5. F. Behavior Consequences

There is a school-wide discipline plan, however, all teachers have their own classroom rules and regulations that all students must adhere to. Each teacher will be sending this information home on the first day of school. After all behavior strategies have been exhausted in the classroom, teachers may send a student to the office. **This is always a last resort for teachers!**

***SEVERE CLAUSE: Fighting, Profanity, Disrespect, or Disruptive behavior** may result in immediate suspension from school (OSS). A parent will be contacted and may be called to pick up the student.

***Please see your child's teacher to find out his/her management system.**

***Suspensions may be given to any student that is sent to the office for violating the rules and regulations listed in this handbook.**

5. G. Search and Seizure

All students shall have the right to privacy and shall be free from unreasonable search as well as the seizure of personal property. These rights shall prevail unless there is "probable cause," then said rights must be set aside to protect the safety, health, and property of the students, staff, and school. One of our foremost goals is to ensure that each child attends a safe school where an environment exists in which teachers can teach and students can learn. Toward that end, North River Charter Academy School Board enforces a Zero-Tolerance Policy for possession of weapons or items that appear to be weapons at school.

Students have the right of privacy of their personal possessions unless there is reason on the part of the Administration or designee to believe that the student is concealing a weapon, illegal drugs or other material that is inappropriate and dangerous to themselves, others, or property; to be given prior notification of any searches unless in a case of emergency. Students have the responsibility not to carry, possess, or conceal any material that is prohibited by law, and to accept the consequences for their actions in cases where unlawful materials are found in their possession or in their lockers.

5. H. Search and Seizure Guidelines

Search in School Buildings or on School Property by the Administration

The administration retains control over space loaned to students. The administration, therefore, has the right and duty to inspect and search students' desks. If the administration reasonably suspects, upon information received, that drugs, weapons, dangerous, illegal, or prohibited matter, or stolen goods are likely to be found on the student's person or belongings, search and seizure procedures may be used to enforce school discipline and to protect the health and safety of the student and/or the student body. The fruits of such a search may be turned over to law enforcement for inspection or examination and may be the subject of criminal or juvenile court prosecution or of school disciplinary proceedings. A parent or guardian can also request that their child's book bag be searched for any items that may not be his or hers. This request must be in writing. Law enforcement may be contacted and they may conduct a search the student or their property in accordance with local laws.

If the administration has received reliable information, that evidence of a crime or stolen goods not involving school property of members of the school staff or student body is located in a certain student's locker, desk, or student's or nonstudent's automobile, and search is unrelated to school discipline or health and safety of a student or student body, the administration shall request law enforcement assistance, and procedures to obtain and execute a search warrant shall thereafter be followed.

The administration has the right and duty to interview students in investigating crimes, or reports thereof, committed during school hours or on school property without prior notification or the presence of parents. The administration may exercise its discretion in determining whether to request the assistance of law enforcement in investigating a crime, or allegation of a crime, committed in the school building or on school grounds during school hours. If assistance is requested, it shall be directed to the law enforcement agency of the municipality in which the school building is located.

If the administration requests assistance, a law enforcement officer may conduct a general investigation within the school building and interview students as possible witnesses in school during the school day. The administration or his or her designee shall be present during the interview. If the investigation focuses on a student as a prime suspect of a crime, the administration and the law enforcement officer shall follow the general guidelines herein set forth with respect to interview, search, and arrest.

If a student is a suspect or is accused of a crime committed in the school during school hours or on school property at any time, an administrator may interview the student without the presence of parents and without giving the student constitutional warning regardless of the source of information.

If a student is a suspect or is accused of a crime not involving the foregoing, or if an interview of a particular student is law enforcement instigated, the interview of such student by an administrator may be deemed “state action,” the student may be deemed “in custody,” a parent shall be notified, and constitutional warnings shall first be given to the student before a statement is taken. In any event, the voluntariness of any admission or confession of the student shall later have to be established in any criminal prosecution, juvenile court proceeding or school expulsion proceeding.

5. I. Arrest by Law Enforcement Officers

Ordinarily it should not be necessary for law enforcement officers to arrest or take custody of students during school hours at school for crimes committed outside of school hours.

No law enforcement officer shall arrest or take custody of any student in school during school hours unless upon lawful request by administration or unless the officer has “probable cause” to arrest for a violent felony or has an arrest warrant for a violent felony or juvenile commitment order, from a judge for an immediate appearance.

In cases where the student is to be taken into custody, the law enforcement officer shall first contact the administration and advise him/her of such a fact. The student shall first be summoned to the office by the administration.

In emergency situations, where the commission of a crime or offense involving felony or breach of the peace in school has been witnessed by a law enforcement officer, or if the law enforcement officer is in “hot pursuit” of the student for such crime, the officer has the legal right to take direct and unhindered action in schools. The administration must be notified of the action as soon as possible.

5. J. Student Bathroom and Locker-room Use

It is the policy of the School that all students, faculty, personnel, and guests of the School will use bathrooms, locker rooms, and dressing rooms that correspond with the individual’s biological sex at birth. This means individuals whose designated sex at birth was male will be required to use those bathrooms, locker rooms, and dressing rooms designated for men, and individuals whose designated sex at birth was female will be required to use those bathrooms, locker rooms, and dressing rooms designated for women. Individuals may also use single-occupancy bathrooms that are gender-neutral. Students are not permitted to utilize bathrooms that are designated exclusively for the school faculty. In enforcing this policy, school personnel may reasonably rely upon representations made or documentation provided by the parent or guardian at initial enrollment, or such other records available to the administration. In the event of any inconsistency in the student’s records, the administration reserves the right to request additional documentation from the parent or guardian to verify the student’s biological sex at birth. This policy shall at all times be construed under state and federal law.

In carrying out this policy, school personnel are required to maintain the privacy of all educational records as outlined in Section 1012.22, Florida Statutes, and to respect the privacy interests of all students and parents.

Three (3) levels of disciplinary action and the levels are determined by the seriousness of the act and the district Code of Conduct.

Level I Actions- To resolve Level, I discipline problems, the following options are available:

- Conference with teacher
- Parent Contact
- Conference with teacher and parent(s)
- Conference with Principal or designee
- Conference with counselor
- Behavioral Contract
- Detention (lunch)

Level II Actions- In order to resolve a Level II offense, more formal disciplinary actions shall be used. Formal actions include, but are not limited to:

- Detention (after school administrative)
- Detention (after schoolteacher)
- Time Out
- Conference with Principal or designee
- Out-of-school suspension if repeated offense
- Alternative to External Suspension

Level III Actions- In order to resolve Level III offenses, the options available are:

- Out-of-school suspension
- Dismissal from school
- Administrative review and reassignment

Section 6-Health

6. A. Child Abuse/ Neglect

Under the law, teachers are obligated to report any case of suspected child abuse. Teachers are protected under the law against a lawsuit from parents for reporting a case.

6. B. Health Issues and Medication

Illness – The health and physical well-being of all students is a matter of great concern to us. A student who is sick with a fever (100 degrees or higher), headache, diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, open sores, or similar illness should not be sent to school. A student may not return to school if they have vomited or had diarrhea within the past 24 hours. A student must be without a fever for

24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication before returning to school. Health conditions such as pink eye are highly contagious and must be properly treated before your child may return to school.

Medication - Whenever possible, medications should be given at home. However, if it is necessary for your child to receive a prescribed or over-the-counter medication at school, the parent must bring the medication to school in the original container or packaging **with a Medication Authorization Form completed and signed by the prescribing physician and the parent/guardian.**

1. All medications must be brought to school by the **parent/guardian and signed in with the office staff.**
2. Medication must be delivered to school in the container in which it was purchased (dispensed). The medication label must indicate the student's name, name of the medication, physician's name, dosage, and time (frequency) to be given. If the medication requires equipment for administration (cup, spoon, or dropper), the parent is responsible for supplying the articles labeled with the student's name.
3. A separate supply of medication must be kept at school. Medication shall not be transported between home and school on a daily or weekly basis.
4. All medication must be kept in the school office; a student is never permitted to keep any medication. Students may not carry medications at school except in specific situations, which require the written approval of the physician, parent/guardian, and administration.
5. Only medication approved by the Food and Drug Administration will be accepted for administration at school.
6. Students may not bring vitamins, in any form, to school unless a Medical Authorization Form has been completed and signed by a prescribing physician.

If medication is discontinued, or at the end of the school year medication is not taken home by the parent, it shall be destroyed. Special arrangements must be made if a student is self-medicating.

Inhaler use - a student who has experienced or is at risk for life-threatening anaphylaxis may carry an inhaler and self-administer while in school, participating in school-sponsored activities, or in transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities if the school has been provided with parental and physician authorization. The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the Department of Health, shall adopt.

Epinephrine use - a student who has experienced or is at risk for life-threatening allergic reactions may carry an epinephrine auto-injector and self-administer epinephrine by auto-injector while in school, participating in school-sponsored activities, or in transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities if the school has been provided with parental and physician authorization. The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the Department of Health, shall adopt rules for the use of epinephrine auto-injectors. North River Charter Academy and its employees and volunteers shall be indemnified by the parent of a student authorized to carry an epinephrine auto-injector of all liability with respect to the student's use of an epinephrine auto-injector pursuant to this paragraph.

6. C. Student Illness or Accident in School

When a child becomes too ill to remain in class, the parents will be contacted. For this reason, it is most important that we are notified immediately if a telephone number is changed, as emergency contact information must be kept up to date. Facilities for emergency care in school are extremely limited.

Arrangements for taking your child home **must** be made promptly. If a serious illness or injury occurs, the parent will be notified immediately. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) may be called to render medical assistance if deemed advisable by staff. The costs incurred in said emergency are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

6. D. Communicable Disease

School personnel cannot decide if a child with a rash or sores has a communicable disease. Only a physician can certify that a child is free of communicable disease. We can only call the parents and request that the child is kept at home until an official clearance has been obtained, **in writing**. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

6. E. No “Nit” Policy

“NO NIT” POLICY PROCEDURES: North River Charter Academy has a “No Nit” policy. If a child is identified as having head lice, he or she shall be excluded from school and shall not be permitted to return to school until his or her head is free from lice and nits. Nits are the white eggs that lice lay which adhere to strands of hair. Parents are responsible to provide the appropriate treatment to eliminate head lice and nits before the child returns to school. A child should miss no more than one or two days of school due to head lice. Excessive absences due to head lice shall be addressed according to the provisions of the compulsory school attendance law.

1. If a student has signs or symptoms of head lice, the clinic aide or trained staff will check the student’s hair and scalp to determine if live lice or nits are present.
2. If live lice or nits are present, the parent must pick up the child promptly and will be given instructions for treatment and removal of the nits and/or lice. All siblings will also be checked.
3. The parent must accompany the child to school after treatment and be **present during recheck**. Students who continue to have live lice or nits upon recheck may not return to class.

Please check your child frequently and notify the office if lice and/or nits are found.

6. F. Stranger Danger Procedures

The single most effective prevention of danger from strangers is parents and concerned citizens monitoring all bus stops and routes that North River Charter Academy children take to and from school.

6. G. Safety and Security

Providing a safe and secure environment for students to learn is a top priority of North River Charter Academy. Measures have been taken to ensure that staff and students are prepared in the event a crisis occurs in the school. A comprehensive Crisis Management Plan has been adopted below to guide staff through a wide variety of situations. Fire drills, tornado drills, lockdowns, evacuations are practiced, to ensure that routines and safety procedures are well established and familiar to all staff.

6. H. Crisis Management Plan

When North River Charter Academy responds with emergency measures, its sole priority is to keep all students, faculty, and staff safe. Teachers and Substitute teachers must be cognizant of and prepared to follow and expedite all emergency procedures. Oftentimes, in cases of potentially serious school safety threats, students, faculty, and staff remain in the building under a lockdown even after the school day has ended. These measures are often frustrating for parents who want to remove their children from school during a threat. The parents of North River Charter Academy will need to appreciate that the school must protect itself from all potential incoming individuals—even if the incoming individuals are parents.

6. I. Universal Precautions

6. I. 1. Blood-borne Pathogens

Universal Precautions are the steps taken to reduce the spread of blood-borne diseases from one person to another. It is important that these steps be fulfilled within the school to protect children, staff members, vendors, visitors, and others who have contact with the facility.

1. It is a requirement to wear vinyl or latex gloves when touching body fluid.
2. Wash hands before and after all emergency procedures. If your skin comes in to contact with body fluid, wash the affected area immediately with soap and water.
3. If your skin comes in contact with body fluids, report the incident at once to a school administrator or immediate supervisor. Not all reported situations will automatically be considered “exposure incidents.” Each situation will be handled on an individual basis, including the determination by OSHA standards whether the Hepatitis B vaccine will be offered.
4. Never recap, bend, or break needles. Dispose of needles in red sharps containers.

The Exposure Control Manual is in the main office of the building. If you have any questions about the prevention of the spread of blood-borne pathogens, speak with a school administrator.

Section 7- Parental Rights for Unresolved Student Welfare Complaints (Specials Magistrate)

The “Parental Rights in Education” law, also known as House Bill 1557 (2022), sets forth specific procedures for complaints or disputes falling into those categories detailed in Section 1001.42(8)(c)1.-7, Florida Statutes, and on the “Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate” form published by the Florida Department of Education and available here: (<https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7700/urlt/CSSM-16A-60791.pdf>)

The Florida Department of Education allows parents or guardians of charter school students to request the appointment of a Special Magistrate if they have been unable to resolve disputes with the school through established procedures. A Special Magistrate, who must be a qualified attorney with at least 5 years of experience in administrative law, conducts hearings where both the parent and the school present their cases regarding alleged violations of rights or procedures. This process serves as an alternative to filing a court action and culminates in a written recommendation by the Special Magistrate for consideration by the State Board of Education. Disputes concerning the educational rights of students with disabilities under IDEA 2004 are not eligible for this process. The Department notifies both parties once a decision on the appointment of a Special Magistrate has been made.

7. A. Related complaints or disputes

This includes any complaints or disputes related to the following:

- Concerns over procedures for notifying a student’s parent if there is a change in the student’s services or monitoring related to the student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school’s ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the student.
- Concerns related to any school policies or procedures that are perceived to discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting their student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being.
- Concerns over classroom instruction related to sexual orientation or gender identity, which is prohibited in grades K-8 and must be age-appropriate for all other grades.
- Concerns over student support services training developed or provided to school personnel that is believed to be out of compliance with guidelines, standards, and frameworks established by the Department of Education.

- Concerns over parental notification at the beginning of the school year about healthcare services offered by the School, including the ability to opt-out or withhold consent for any such services.
- [FOR GRADES K-3 ONLY] Concerns over whether the School provided a well-being questionnaire or health screening form to the parent and sought their permission before it was administered to the student. This only applies to grades K-3.

7. B. complaint Procedures

Complaints must be made according to Rule 6A-6.0791. Parents and guardians have the right to notify the Principal of any concerns related to the above areas. The Principal or their designee must provide a response to the parent within seven (7) days of receiving the complaint. If the dispute cannot be resolved by the Principal or designee within seven (7) days, the parent may present the dispute to the School District. The School District must attempt to resolve the dispute within no more than thirty (30) days. If the School District is unable to resolve the dispute, a parent may request the appointment of a special magistrate utilizing the “Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate for Charter School Students” form linked above. For purposes of this policy, the term “days” means business days and excludes state, federal and school holidays.

Section 8 - General Information

8. A. Important Phone Numbers and Websites

For the most up-to-date and accurate information, including school closings coming directly from Manatee County Public Schools, please rely on the school district’s emergency information sources:

- **Emergency Information Hotline** – call 1-888-994-NEWS (6397) for toll free updates in English and Spanish.
- **School District Website** – log on to <https://www.collierschools.com/>
Your 24/7 source for all school and school district information.
- **The Education Channel** – tune in to Comcast, cable 99, for the latest emergency information and school-related TV programming.

8. B. General State, District, and School Websites

- <http://www.myflorida.com>

- www.tumblebooks.com- (www.Leeschools.com/sge/mediacenter.htm)
- <http://bookadventure.com>
- <http://Google.com> - for research

These sites offer educational activities that primary students enjoy:

- <http://alfy.com/>
- <http://funbrain.com/kidscenter>
- <http://primarygames.com/>
- <http://www.Khanacademy.org>

8. C. Florida Standards Assessment preparation and research sites

- <http://www.fsassessments.org>
- <http://kz.com/login.htm>
- <http://go.grolier.com/>
- <http://discoverer.sirs.com>

**The students at North River Charter Academy are,
"TOTALLY ENGAGED, EVERYDAY!"
POWERED BY FORZA**



**“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn.”
----Benjamin Franklin**

NORTH RIVER CHARTER ACADEMY HANDBOOK AGREEMENT



Please sign and return this page of the handbook the first week of school.

I have read, understand, and reviewed the above policies with my child. I agree to abide by the policies. I understand that failure to comply with school policy may result in the dismissal of my child from North River Charter Academy.

Student Handbook Agreement

Student Signature Date

Student Name/Grade Teacher's Name

Parent /Guardian Signature Date