



**TWO RIVERS**  
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

Updated: September 2025

# STAFF HANDBOOK

**Summary of Changes:** Below is a summary of the changes and updates that have been made.

- [Dress Code](#) - added greater specificity
- [Social Media](#) - added recommendation to make all accounts private, and AI generated content
- [Religious Holidays](#) - updated to up to 3 days of paid leave
- [Voting](#) - added language around providing two hours of time off
- [PTO Donation Bank](#) leave option with basic policy overview has been added.
- [School Closure Caused by Inclement Weather](#) - added “During periods of school closure caused by inclement weather, all Level I Essential Employees will be required to work onsite. All members of the Leadership Council will be required to work remotely. All other employees may be required to work remotely, at the discretion of their supervisor.”
- [Classroom Pets](#) - added requirements and approval process for classroom pets
- [Corporal Punishment](#) - Section updated to reflect recent training from Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI).
- [Guidance on Breaking Up Students Fights](#) - Updated language in alignment with CPI.

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## TWO RIVERS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

Two Rivers Public Charter School Staff:

You are a part of a talented team of devoted educators and employees. Our mission is to nurture a diverse group of students to become lifelong, active participants in their own education, develop a sense of self and community, and become responsible and compassionate members of society. I thank you in advance for your commitment to our mission and willingness to work together as a team to achieve it!

This Handbook is designed to acquaint you with Two Rivers Public Charter School (“Two Rivers” or the “School”), its policies and procedures, and general information concerning working conditions, employee benefits, and expectations regarding your employment. Every effort has been made to make the information in this Handbook as accurate as possible. This Handbook describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by Two Rivers to benefit its employees. All employees bring to our organization an array of valuable skills and experiences, and we are so grateful to have each of you as part of our “crew.”

Directives set forth in this Handbook are not intended to create a contract, nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind between Two Rivers and any of its employees. The provisions of this Handbook have been developed at the discretion of the administration. No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question. As the need may arise, Two Rivers, in its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any directive or portion of this Handbook. When appropriate and/or necessary, modification may occur at any time, with or without prior notice. Actual policies and procedures will control if they should be different from those set forth in this Handbook. No individual has the authority to alter, revise, amend, or revoke any policy or procedure orally or in writing without the express written consent of Two Rivers’ Executive Director. Should you have any questions regarding any matter within this Handbook, please confer with your supervisor or the HR Team.

Two Rivers is a place for children and adults to learn, excel, be challenged, and grow. I look forward to your contribution to our mission and to your personal success as a valued member of our team.

Sincerely,

Belicia Reaves  
Executive Director

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT**

I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Two Rivers Staff Handbook, adopted **September 8, 2025**. I understand that the Handbook sets forth the terms and conditions of my employment with the School as well as the duties, responsibilities and obligations of employment with the School. I understand that School has provided me various alternative channels to raise concerns of violations of this Handbook and School policies and encourages me to do so promptly so that the School may effectively address such situations, and I understand that nothing herein interferes with any right to report concerns, make lawful disclosures, or communicate with any governmental authority regarding potential violations of laws or regulations. I agree to abide by and be bound by the rules, policies and standards set forth in the Handbook.

I acknowledge that, except where required otherwise by applicable D.C. law, my employment with the Two Rivers is at-will, meaning that it is not for a specified period of time and that the employment relationship may be terminated at any time for any reason, with or without cause or notice, by me or the School. I further acknowledge that only Two Rivers' Executive Director or their authorized representative has the authority to enter into an agreement that alters the fact that my employment with Two Rivers is at-will. Any such agreement must be in writing and signed by the Executive Director of Two Rivers or their authorized representative.

I understand that I am responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the contents of these policies and procedures. I further understand that all of the policies and procedures contained herein are subject to change at the sole discretion of Two Rivers' Executive Director, but that all such revisions, deletions or additions must be in writing. No oral statements or representations can change the provisions of the Handbook. I understand these policies are not intended to be all-inclusive. I further understand that nothing in these policies and procedures creates a contract of employment, that I am an employee at-will, and that my employment may be terminated at any time, either by me or the school, with or without cause. Furthermore, the school's policy of at-will employment can only be changed as stated in the prior paragraph. I recognize that changes in these policies will in no way alter the at-will nature of my employment.

I understand and acknowledge that nothing in this Handbook or in any other document or policy is intended to prohibit me from reporting concerns to, filing a charge or complaint with, making lawful disclosures to, providing documents or other information to or participating in an investigation or hearing conducted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, National Labor Relations Board or any other federal, state or local agency charged with the enforcement of any laws.

I also understand and acknowledge that nothing about the policies and procedures set forth in this Handbook should be construed to interfere with any employee rights provided under state or federal law, including Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act, including the right to communicate with others concerning wages, hours, benefits, and other terms or conditions of employment; to self-organize, form, join or assist labor organizations; to bargain collectively through representatives of the employees' choosing; to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection; or to refrain from engaging in such activities.

I further acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the School's Equal Employment Opportunity ("EEO") Policy and Policy Prohibiting Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation. I agree to comply with these policies.

I further acknowledge that I have received written notice of my right to request a reasonable accommodation under the Protecting Pregnant Workers Fairness Act of 2014.

I understand that if I feel I have been subject to discrimination, sexual harassment, prohibited harassment, or retaliation for conduct that may violate the School's EEO Policy and Policy Prohibiting Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation, or if I am aware of such conduct, I should immediately report the matter to my immediate supervisor, the Human Resources Department, my next level supervisor, the designated Compliance Coordinator, or any other leadership team member or member of management. I acknowledge that, if I am a non-exempt employee, I was "on-the-clock" (i.e., I recorded my time or made sure I was clocked in) when reviewing the Employee Handbook and signing the Acknowledgement forms.

I have read and understand the above statements.

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Printed Employee Name

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Employee Signature

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Date

[TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE]

## **SECTION 1: GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

### **A. Introduction and Purpose**

This Staff Handbook has been prepared to introduce you to Two Rivers Public Charter School Inc. (“Two Rivers” or the “School”) and its policies and procedures. This Handbook summarizes the current policies, procedures, and benefits that generally apply to your employment at the School and is intended to serve as a guide to you during your employment. Staff are required to be aware of and follow the policies included in the Handbook, especially the policies that are a condition of employment

Directives set forth in this handbook are not intended to create a contract, nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind between Two Rivers and any of its employees. Employment with Two Rivers is at-will. This means that employment may be terminated at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice by you or by Two Rivers. Nothing in this Handbook or any oral statement shall limit the right to terminate at will. The provisions of this handbook have been developed at the discretion of the administration. No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question. As the need may arise, Two Rivers, in its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any directive or portion of this handbook. When appropriate and/or necessary, modification may occur at any time, with or without prior notice. Actual policies and procedures will control if they should be different from those set forth in this handbook. No individual has the authority to alter, revise, amend, or revoke any policy or procedure orally or in writing without the express written consent of Two Rivers’ Executive Director. If and/or when modification of this Handbook occurs, replacement pages generally will be provided to you and it will be your responsibility to keep your copy of this Handbook updated.

This Handbook has been prepared to acquaint employees with the School and to provide a ready reference to answer most questions regarding employment. One of your first responsibilities is to become familiar with the contents of this Staff Handbook. Please carefully read the Handbook in its entirety and keep it handy for future reference. The contents of this Handbook constitute only a summary of certain employee benefits, personnel policies, and employment practices in effect at the time of publication. Where there are questions about insurance or other benefits, the benefit plan documents govern.

This Handbook supersedes all previous Staff Handbooks, as well as all memoranda which may have been issued on subjects covered herein. In addition, this Handbook replaces all policies that were in effect prior to the approval of this Handbook.

## **B. Issue Reporting**

Two Rivers strives to create a supportive and transparent work environment that fairly recognizes the expertise of our staff and allows them to bring their whole selves to work each day. Two Rivers believes that the working conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other charter/independent schools in this area. If employees have concerns about working conditions or compensation, they are encouraged to voice such concerns openly and directly to their supervisor or an HR Specialist.

Two Rivers does not require that employees refrain from disclosing the amount of their wages to other Two Rivers employees and will not discharge, discipline, or otherwise discriminate against employees because they make such disclosures. Certain exceptions apply for employees who have access to other employees' wage information as part of their job responsibilities. Furthermore, nothing in this Handbook prohibits an employee from reporting concerns, making lawful disclosures, or communicating with any governmental authority about conduct the employee believes violates any laws or regulations. Employees who have questions about this policy should contact the HR Team.

If concerns regarding safety, wage and hour, or discrimination are not appropriately addressed by the administration, the Department of Employment Services, specifically the Office of Wage-Hour (OWH), is to be contacted as that office is the designated enforcement agency for the concerns about safety, wage and hour, or discrimination. The OWH can be contacted at 202-671-1880 or via e-mail at [owh.ask@dc.gov](mailto:owh.ask@dc.gov). The office is located at 4058 Minnesota Avenue, NE, Suite 4300 Washington, D.C. 20019. The office is open Monday –Thursday 8:30-4:30 and Friday 9:30-4:30.

## **C. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy**

Two Rivers is an equal opportunity employer. In accordance with both federal anti-discrimination law and District of Columbia law, the School- prohibits discrimination and harassment against employees, applicants for employment and interns based on any protected characteristic, including, but not limited to:

- Race (including traits historically associated with race, such as hair texture and hairstyle, including but not limited to braids, locks, and twists);
- Color;
- Gender identity and expression;
- Sex (including pregnancy, lactation, childbirth, or related medical conditions);

- Sexual orientation;
- Religion or creed;
- Age (forty (40) and over);
- National origin or ancestry
- Citizenship or immigration status;
- Physical or mental disability;
- Genetic information (including testing and characteristics); or
- Any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.

In addition to the categories set forth above, it is the policy of the School to prohibit discrimination, harassment or retaliation against an employee based on all categories protected under District of Columbia laws including race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, breastfeeding and reproductive health decisions), national origin, disability, age (18 and over), personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family responsibilities, matriculation (e.g., being enrolled in a college or university or in a business, nursing, professional, secretarial, technical or vocational school), political affiliation, genetic information (including family medical history), lawful use of tobacco products, source of income, place of residence or business, unemployment status, homeless status or status as a victim or the family member of a victim of domestic violence, a sexual offense or stalking. Any employee's failure to comply with the above policies could result in corrective action, including termination of their/their employment.

Two Rivers includes "gender identity and expression" in its equal employment opportunity policy to clarify that discrimination against transgender and gender non-binary individuals is prohibited. This policy is consistent with our workplace philosophy that all employees should be treated fairly and with respect. "Gender identity and expression" is included in the list of characteristics that are protected under Two Rivers' policies and documents prohibiting discrimination, including but not limited to the Equal Employment Opportunity, and Policy Against Workplace Discrimination and Retaliation.

Additionally, Two Rivers prohibits retaliation against any person by another employee or by the School for reporting prohibited discrimination or for filing, testifying, assisting or participating in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by a government enforcement agency.

This policy extends to all job applicants and employees and to all aspects of the employment relationship, including the hiring of new employees and the training, transfer,

promotion, discipline, termination, compensation and benefits of existing employees.

Two Rivers expects all employees to act in accordance with our equal employment opportunity policy, and to take all steps necessary to maintain a workplace free from discrimination, harassment and retaliation.

Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Employees with questions or concerns relating to equal employment opportunity, including complaints of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, and accommodation requests, are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of: Mary Gornick, Chief Human Resources Officer, [mgornick@tworiverpcs.org](mailto:mgornick@tworiverpcs.org), 202-546-4477

As required by Title IX, Two Rivers does not (and is required not to) discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. This non-discrimination requirement applies to admission to and employment with Two Rivers. Inquiries into issues related to Title IX may be referred to Two Rivers' Title IX Coordinator: Mary Gornick, Chief Human Resources Officer, [mgornick@tworiverpcs.org](mailto:mgornick@tworiverpcs.org), 202-546-4477, or externally to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Two Rivers will make reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified applicant or employee and to the religious obligations of an employee as required by law, unless to do so would cause an undue hardship on the operation of the School.

#### **D. Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy**

Two Rivers is committed to providing equal opportunity in employment to qualified individuals with disabilities. A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity of an individual, including certain episodic impairments and conditions in remission. The School agrees to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified individuals without regard to disability in all employment practices including the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, layoff or terminations, rates of pay or other forms of compensation and benefits and selection for training.

Two Rivers will attempt to reasonably accommodate disabled employees and job applicants to permit them to perform the essential functions of their jobs in a safe and efficient manner. The School will afford reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees with a known disability provided that the accommodation does not cause undue hardship to the School or, irrespective of the accommodation, that such individuals do not pose a direct threat to the health and safety of themselves or others.

A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a job, an employment practice, or the work environment that makes it possible for a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential job functions, or enjoy an equal employment opportunity, or obtain equal job benefits. Depending on the circumstances, a reasonable accommodation might involve the restructuring of a job to modify non-essential functions, providing modified work schedules or extended leaves of absence, modifying facilities to make the workplace more readily accessible, providing or modifying equipment, or reassignment of a current employee to a vacant position for which the individual is qualified.

To permit Two Rivers an opportunity to attempt to reasonably accommodate them, employees with disabilities must inform their supervisor and/or the designated HR Specialist of the disability and suggest, on a confidential basis, how Two Rivers may reasonably accommodate them. Two Rivers may require medical confirmation (either from the employee's healthcare provider or a healthcare provider chosen by the School) in evaluating the employee's condition, applicable work limitations, and potential accommodations as a part of this process. In addition, Two Rivers expects its employee to participate with it in the process of trying to achieve an accommodation that is reasonable from the standpoint of both the employee and Two Rivers. All information will be kept confidential, to the extent possible.

Employees with life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer, heart disease, and HIV disease, often wish to continue their normal pursuits, including work, to the extent allowed by their condition(s). Two Rivers enthusiastically supports this endeavor so long as employees are able to meet performance standards. As with other disabilities, Two Rivers will make reasonable accommodations to employees with such conditions, will keep medical information confidential, and will treat employees with a disability in a manner consistent with the treatment of others.

Employees are expected to cooperate with colleagues with disabilities and should be aware that employees with the life-threatening illnesses listed above do not pose a threat to their co-workers or those with whom they interact in ordinary workplace contact. Employees with questions or concerns about life-threatening illnesses are encouraged to contact their supervisor and/or the HR Specialist.

## **E. Policy Against Workplace Discrimination & Retaliation**

### **Discrimination, Including Harassment, & Retaliation Prohibited**

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VI”), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975 (“ADEA”), and the District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977, it is Two Rivers’ policy that employees and their work environment should be free from all forms of prohibited discrimination, including harassment, and retaliation. Two Rivers does not, and will not, permit employees to engage in prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. Discrimination, harassment (sexual or otherwise), and retaliation by any employee, administrator, or visitor of Two Rivers is strictly prohibited.

It is the School’s policy that no employee is to engage in discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, breastfeeding, and reproductive health decisions), national origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibilities, disability, veteran status, genetic information, political affiliation, protected status (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in a statutory complaint process), or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law. Consequently, discrimination or harassment of any kind based upon verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility towards an individual because of their race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, breastfeeding, and reproductive health decisions), national origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, genetic information or other status protected by federal, state, or local law and that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment, is strictly prohibited.

Prohibited discrimination and harassment may include, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, jokes, or other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual’s race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, breastfeeding, and reproductive health decisions), national origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibilities, disability, veteran status, genetic information, political affiliation or other status protected by federal, state, or local law.

Moreover, prohibited sexual harassment includes unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment

decisions affecting the individual; or

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

**Sexual harassment is defined by the D.C. School Safety Omnibus Act as:**

Any unwelcome or uninvited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, stalking, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that can be reasonably predicted to:

- Place the victim in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person;
- Cause a substantial detrimental effect to the victim's physical or mental health;
- Substantially interfere with the victim's academic performance or attendance at school; or
- Substantially interfere with the victim's ability to participate in, or benefit from, the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school (DC Law 22-94 § 38-952.02(5)).

**Sexual harassment is defined by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 as:**

- The conditioning of an aid, benefit or service of the institution on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e. quid pro quo);
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the institution's education program or activity; and
- Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking (34 C.F.R. § 106.30(a)).

**Sexual harassment includes various forms of offensive behavior. The following is a partial list:**

- Unwanted sexual advances.
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
- Visual conduct: leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, websites, emails or text messages.
- Verbal conduct: making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, sexually explicit jokes, comments about an employee's body or dress.
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions

- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentary about an individual's body, sexually degrading words to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations.
- Physical conduct: touching, assault, impeding or blocking movements.
- Retaliation for making harassment reports or threatening to report harassment.

This policy also protects employees from harassment by parents, vendors or other visitors. If harassment occurs on the job by someone not employed by Two Rivers, the procedures in this policy should be followed. This policy applies to members of the community who sexually harass any community member, regardless of gender identity. Additional details can be found in section EE. Sexual Harassment Policy.

### **Other Types of Harassment**

Harassment on the basis of any Protected Characteristic is prohibited. Prohibited harassment may include behavior similar to the illustrations above pertaining to sexual harassment. It also includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal conduct including taunting, jokes, threats, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs based on an individual's protected status;
- Visual and/or written conduct including derogatory posters, photographs, calendars, cartoons, drawings, websites, social media, emails, text messages or gestures based on an individual's protected status;
- Sharing or watching pornography or sexually demeaning depictions of people, including AI-generated and deepfake images and videos;
- Mimicking or mocking a person's disability, accent, or religious garments, jewelry, or displays; and
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching or blocking normal movement because of an individual's protected status.

### **Reporting Violations**

Any employee who believes that they are being discriminated against, harassed or retaliated against by a coworker, administrator, visitor or another individual, whether employed by Two Rivers or not, or who believes their employment is being adversely affected by such conduct, whether directed at that employee or another employee, must immediately report the concerns to their supervisor or the HR Team. All employees, including supervisors, have an obligation to stop all forms of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation from occurring and must report conduct which they observe that violates this Policy to their supervisor or the HR Team. If an employee believes it is not appropriate to discuss their situation or someone else's situation with their supervisor or the HR Team then the employee must inform the Executive Director, any other member of the administration with whom the employee feels

comfortable, or current Chair of the Board of Trustees of Two Rivers. The employee must provide their supervisor, the HR Team, the Executive Director, or Chair of the Board enough information so that they know that the employee is making a complaint of discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation. The employee may initially make a verbal complaint of discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation, but it must be followed up in writing.

If any supervisor or another manager is the alleged harasser or otherwise believed to be violating this policy, the employee must report the alleged conduct to Human Resources – reporting directly to the offending supervisor directly is not sufficient. If the complaint is against the Executive Director, the employee should report the matter to the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Two Rivers. Employees are not required to report any prohibited conduct to a supervisor or manager who may be hostile, who has engaged in such conduct, who is a close associate of the person who has engaged in such conduct, or with whom the employee is uncomfortable discussing such matters. Any supervisor or manager who receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, or retaliation or receives information about such conduct must also immediately report it to Human Resources.

Two Rivers' procedure for resolving complaints is available to all employees without fear of retaliation. All employees should be aware that they will not be subjected to any adverse and/or retaliatory action as a result of reporting any conduct believed to be in violation of this Policy Against Workplace Discrimination & Retaliation or being related to or in close association with a complaining employee. Further, Two Rivers will not take action against any employee because they make a good faith report of inappropriate conduct. However, an employee is still subject to performance management expectations and procedures. An employee who believes that retaliation has resulted from the reporting of prohibited conduct must immediately report this in the manner set forth above.

If you have a concern or problem, do not assume that Two Rivers is aware of it. It is every employee's responsibility to bring complaints and concerns to Two Rivers' attention so that the School can help resolve them. All allegations of harassment and/or discrimination will be timely, thoroughly and objectively investigated. Two Rivers is committed to taking appropriate corrective action to end the harassment or discrimination and prevent the misconduct from recurring. Two Rivers will maintain the confidentiality surrounding the investigation to the extent possible, consistent with a thorough and objective investigation and to the extent permitted or required under applicable law. Two Rivers complies with the law in conducting investigations and expects all employees to fully cooperate with an investigation, except when voluntary compliance with an investigation is being requested.

Complaints of sex-based harassment will be addressed through Two Rivers' Preventing and Addressing Sexual Abuse Policy which can be found at [our website](#). A copy of the policy can also be requested through Two Rivers' Title IX Coordinator:

Mary Gornick, Chief Human Resources Officer  
[mgornick@tworiverpcs.org](mailto:mgornick@tworiverpcs.org)  
202-546-4477

Within thirty (30) days of receiving the written complaint, Two Rivers will issue a written determination summarizing the course of the investigation, assessing whether the evidence substantiates the complaint made, and identifying the appropriate resolution as necessary. This timeline may be extended for good cause with written notice of any extension being provided to the complainant.

### **Appeals**

If the complainant is not satisfied with Two Rivers' decision, the complainant may appeal in writing to the Executive Director within ten (10) business days of the date of the written decision summarizing the outcome of the investigation. The written appeal must contain all documentation from the initial complaint and the complaint's reasons for appeal.

Within thirty (30) calendar days from receiving the written appeal, Two Rivers will respond in writing to the complainant as to the result of that appeal and the reasons therefore.

### **Prohibition Against Retaliation**

Two Rivers prohibits retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, uses the complaint procedures provided above, reports prohibited discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment or retaliation, objects to such conduct or filing, testifies, assists or participates in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by a governmental enforcement agency. The initiation of a good faith complaint of harassment or retaliation will not be grounds for disciplinary action, even if the allegations cannot be substantiated or the employee was mistaken about aspects of the complaint. Individuals who believe they have been subjected to retaliation or believe that another individual has been subjected to retaliation, should report this concern to Human Resources. Any individual who makes a complaint that is demonstrated to be intentionally false may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Complainants also have the right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights by: (1) mailing the complaint to Director, District of Columbia Office, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; (2) faxing it to (202) 453-6021; or (3) filing it electronically at: [www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html](http://www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html). For more information, you can contact OCR at (202) 453-6020 (voice), (877) 521-2172 (TDD), or [ocr.dc@ed.gov](mailto:ocr.dc@ed.gov).

## **F. Whistleblower Policy**

It is the intent of Two Rivers to operate at all times in compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws and requirements as well as in compliance with the policies of the DC Public Charter School Board, and in an ethical manner. This policy is intended to encourage employees to raise any serious concerns with regard to compliance and/or ethical behavior, and thereby further this intent. Nothing in this Handbook prohibits an employee from reporting concerns, making lawful disclosures, or communicating with any governmental authority about conduct the employee believes violates any laws or regulations.

### **Reporting Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of all employees to report legal and ethical violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

### **Reporting Process**

If any employee reasonably believes that a practice or action of Two Rivers is in violation of law or ethical behavior, and is not being addressed in accord with existing policies, e.g., the Staff Handbook, a formal verbal complaint citing the Whistleblower Policy must be made by the employee to the Executive Director or the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Within three (3) workdays, this formal verbal complaint must be put in writing by the employee and filed with the Executive Director or Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Any employee making such a complaint must be acting in good faith, without malice to Two Rivers, and have reasonable grounds to believe that the information disclosed indicates a violation. An allegation by an employee proven to be malicious, recklessly or knowingly false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and subject to established procedures.

### **Handling of Reported Violations and the Investigation Process**

The recipient of the written complaint, i.e. the Executive Director or the Chair of the Board of Trustees, must acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the sender, in writing, within five (5) workdays.

All complaints must be promptly investigated and appropriate actions must be taken as warranted by the investigation. No party charged in a complaint with a violation under the Whistleblower Policy may investigate that complaint. The Executive Director or the Chair of the Board of Trustees may employ outside resources to assist in the investigation if deemed necessary.

Reports of violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an investigation.

### **No Retaliation for Good Faith Reporting of Violations**

Two Rivers will not retaliate against an employee who, in good faith, reports a legal or ethical violation or suspected violation, or against anyone participating in an investigation of an alleged violation. However, an employee is still subject to performance management expectations and procedures.

Any employee or Board member who retaliates against an individual who has reported a violation or suspected violation in good faith, or against anyone having participated in an investigation of an allegation, will be subject to discipline. Any individual who reasonably believes he, she or they have been retaliated against in violation of this policy shall follow the same procedures as for filing a complaint outlined within this Handbook.

### **G. Problem Solving Policy**

If there is something about your job that is bothering you, you should get it out in the open and discuss it with the appropriate individuals. The School cannot address your concerns or questions unless you tell us what we can do to help.

Employees should feel free to discuss any work-related issues they wish with the administrators. If you have a problem, we recommend that you utilize the following steps to try to resolve it:

- You must first discuss any concerns with your supervisor. Your supervisor, most often, is in the best position to handle your concern(s).
- If your supervisor cannot resolve your concern(s), if you are not satisfied with the resolution offered by your supervisor, or you do not feel comfortable discussing the concern with your supervisor, you should discuss the matter with a member of the HR Team.
- If a member of the HR Team cannot resolve your concern(s), if you are not satisfied with the resolution, or you do not feel comfortable discussing your concern with a member of the HR Team, you should then discuss the matter with the Executive Director or any other member of the administration that you feel comfortable with.

In the event that you do not feel that you can discuss a problem with your supervisor, a member of the HR Team, or the Executive Director, you must contact the current Chair of the Board of Trustees, whose contact information may be obtained from the school's

website.

If you inform us of any concern or problem, we will try to respond to it as quickly as possible under the circumstances and will keep any information shared during the process confidential to the extent possible under the circumstances. The School will take whatever action it deems necessary or appropriate before, during, or after the procedures set forth in this Policy. The School's decision concerning the resolution of issues raised pursuant to this Policy is final.

This Problem Solving Policy is not intended to be a substitute for the normal employee-supervisor relationship, nor can it be substituted for a spirit of collaboration and goodwill. Ongoing communication remains the most effective way to develop and enhance favorable working relationships.

The procedures set forth in this Problem Solving Policy do not apply to incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. All incidents of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation must be reported to and will be investigated by the School in accordance with the procedures set forth in the School's Policy Against Workplace Discrimination & Retaliation.

#### **H. Policy Against Workplace Violence**

Two Rivers is very concerned about the increased incidents of workplace violence in our society and, therefore, has taken steps to help prevent incidents of violence from occurring in your place of employment. To that end, Two Rivers expressly prohibits any acts or threats of violence by any current or former employee against any other employee in or around that workplace or elsewhere at all times. The School will not tolerate any acts or threats of violence against employees, students, visitors, vendors, or other persons at the worksite at any time or while its employees are engaged in business on behalf of the school, whether at or away from the worksite.

Two Rivers has adopted a zero-tolerance policy concerning work-related violence. Threats or acts of violence—including intimidation, bullying, physical or mental abuse and/or coercion—will not be tolerated.

Work-related violence is any intentional conduct that is sufficiently severe, abusive or intimidating to cause an individual to reasonably fear for their own personal safety or the safety of their family, friends and/or property such that employment conditions are altered or a hostile, abusive or intimidating work environment is created for one or more employees. The conduct prohibited by this policy applies to conduct by all persons involved in our operations, including employees, supervisors, managers, temporary or seasonal employees ("employees"), agents, clients, vendors, customers, or any other third-party interacting with the School ("third

parties”).

Examples of work-related violence include, but are not limited to:

- Threats or acts of violence occurring on School premises, regardless of the relationship between the parties involved in the incident.
- Threats or acts of violence occurring off School premises involving someone who is acting in the capacity of a representative of the School.
- Threats or acts of violence occurring off School premises involving an employee if the threats or acts affect the business interests of the School.
- All threats or acts of violence occurring off School premises, of which an employee is a victim, if we determine that the incident may lead to an incident of violence on School premises; and
- Threats or acts of violence resulting in the conviction of an employee or agent of the School, or an individual performing services for the School on a contract or temporary basis, under any criminal code provision relating to violence or threats of violence when that act or the conviction adversely affect the legitimate business interests of the School.
- Examples of conduct that may be considered threats or acts of violence under this policy include, but are not limited to:
  - Threatening physical contact directed toward another individual.
  - Threatening an individual or the individual’s family, friends, associates or property with harm.
  - The intentional destruction or threat of destruction of the School’s or another’s property.
  - Menacing or threatening phone calls.
  - Stalking.
  - Veiled threats of physical harm or similar intimidation; and/or
  - Communicating an endorsement of the inappropriate use of firearms or weapons.

Workplace violence does not refer to workplace arguments or debates that are zealous or impassioned, provided there is no resort to any form of coercion. Discussions about sporting activities, popular entertainment, politics, or current events are not considered workplace violence when there is no threat of violence being directed to the workplace or any individual connected with it. Rather, workplace violence refers to behavior that demonstrates an intention to engage in violence, condones violence in our workplace, or targets any individual with acts or threats of violence.

If you encounter threatening behaviors, follow the steps detailed below for reporting a threat.

### **Procedures for Reporting a Threat**

All potentially dangerous situations, including threats by coworkers, should be reported immediately to any management member. Reports of threats may be maintained confidentially to the extent maintaining confidentiality does not impede Two River's ability to investigate and respond to the complaints. All threats will be investigated promptly. All employees must cooperate with all investigations. No employee will be subject to retaliation, intimidation, or disciplinary action due to reporting a threat under this policy.

If Two Rivers determines, after an investigation, that someone has violated this policy, Two Rivers will take prompt corrective action. No provision of this policy statement or any other provision in this policy, shall alter the at-will nature of employment with Two Rivers. Two Rivers will make the sole determination of whether and to what extent, threats, or acts of violence will be acted upon by the School. In making this determination we may undertake a case-by-case analysis in order to ascertain whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that workplace violence has occurred.

If the employee is the recipient of a threat made by an outside party, that employee should follow the steps detailed in this section. Two Rivers needs to be aware of any potential danger in its offices to take effective measures to protect everyone from violence by other employees or by anyone else.

This policy in no way prohibits employees from engaging in activities that are protected under applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to any activity that is protected under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act, which includes the right of employees to speak with others, engage in debates and protest about their terms and conditions of employment. No provision of this policy statement or any other provision in this policy alters the at-will nature of employment with the School. The School will make the sole determination of whether and to what extent, it will act upon threats or acts of violence. In making this determination, the School may undertake a case-by-case analysis in order to ascertain whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that work-related violence has occurred.

#### **I. Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") and District of Columbia Family and Medical Leave Act ("DC FMLA") Policy**

Two Rivers complies with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA"), the District of Columbia Family and Medical Leave Act of 1990 ("DC FMLA"), and any other applicable state or local laws in providing a leave of absence without pay for eligible employees. No greater or lesser leave benefits will be granted than those set forth in the state or federal laws. In certain situations, federal law requires that provisions of state law apply. In any case, employees will be eligible for the most generous benefits available under applicable law.

Please contact your supervisor as soon as you become aware of the need for FMLA leave. Employees are expected to provide prompt notice to the School of any change(s) to an employee's return to work date. Accepting other employment, continuing to work in another job, or filing for unemployment insurance benefits while on leave may be treated as voluntary resignation from employment, unless you and the School have agreed, in writing, otherwise.

### **Federal Family and Medical Leave - Employee Eligibility**

To be eligible for FMLA Leave benefits, you must: (1) have worked for the School for a total of at least 12 months prior to the date of the request for leave; (2) have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months as of the start of the leave; and (3) work at a location where at least 50 employees are employed by the School within 75 miles, as of the date the leave is requested.

### **Reasons for Leave**

State and federal laws allow FMLA Leave for various reasons. Because an employee's rights and obligations may vary depending upon the reason for the FMLA leave, it is important to identify the purpose or reason for the leave. FMLA Leave may be used for one of the following reasons:

- (1) the birth, adoption, or foster care of an employee's child within 12 months following birth or placement of the child ("Bonding Leave");
- (2) to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition ("Family Care Leave");
- (3) an employee's inability to work because of a serious health condition ("Serious Health Condition Leave");
- (4) a "qualifying exigency," as defined under the FMLA arising out of a spouse's, child's, or parent's active duty or call to active duty as a member of the military reserves or National Guard in support of a "contingency operation" declared by the U.S. Secretary of Defense, President of Congress, as required by law ("Military Emergency Leave"); or
- (5) to care for a spouse, child, parent or next of kin (nearest blood relative)—who is an Armed Forces member (including the military reserves and National Guard) undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list—with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty that may render the individual medically unfit to perform his or her military duties ("Military Caregiver Leave").

## **Length of Leave**

The maximum amount of FMLA Leave will be twelve (12) workweeks in any 12-month period when the leave is taken for: (1) Bonding Leave; (2) Family Care Leave; (3) Serious Health Condition Leave; and/or (4) Military Emergency Leave. However, if both spouses work for the School and are eligible for leave under this policy, the spouses will be limited to a total of 12 workweeks off between the two of them when the leave is for Bonding Leave or to care for a parent using Family Care Leave.

The maximum amount of FMLA Leave for an employee wishing to take Military Caregiver Leave will be a combined leave total of twenty-six (26) workweeks in a single 12-month period. A "single 12-month period" begins on the date of your first use of such leave and ends 12 months after that date.

If both spouses work for the School and are eligible for leave under this policy, the spouses will be limited to a total of 26 workweeks off between the two when the leave is for Military Caregiver Leave only or is for a combination of Military Caregiver Leave, Military Emergency Leave, Bonding Leave and/or Family Care Leave taken to care for a parent.

Under some circumstances, you may take FMLA Leave intermittently—which means taking leave in blocks of time, or by reducing your normal weekly or daily work schedule.

To the extent required by law, some extensions to FMLA Leave may be granted when the leave is necessitated by an employee's work-related injury/illness or a "disability" as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or applicable state or local law. Certain restrictions on these benefits may apply.

## **Notice and Certification of Need for FMLA Leave**

### **(i) Bonding, Family Care, Serious Health Condition, and Military Caregiver Leave Requirements**

Employees are required to provide:

1. when the need for the leave is foreseeable, 30 days advance notice or such notice as is both possible and practical if the leave must begin in less than 30 days (normally this should be the same day the employee becomes aware of the need for leave or the next business day);
2. when the need for leave is not foreseeable, notice must be given within the time prescribed by the School's normal absence reporting policy, unless unusual circumstances prevent compliance, in which case notice is

- required as soon as is otherwise possible and practical;
3. when the leave relates to medical issues, a completed Certification of Health-Care Provider form within 15 calendar days of when it is sent to the employee by the school and the form must be turned into the HR Specialist (for Military Caregiver Leave, an invitational travel order or invitational travel authorization may be submitted in lieu of a Certification of Health-Care Provider form);
4. periodic recertification (upon request); and
5. periodic reports during the leave.

Certification forms are available from the Human Resource Specialist. At the School's expense, the School may also require a second or third medical opinion regarding your own serious health condition. Employees are expected to cooperate with the School in obtaining additional medical opinions that the School may require.

When leave is for planned medical treatment, you must try to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the School's operation. Please contact the HR Team prior to scheduling the planned medical treatment.

#### **(ii) Military Emergency Leave Requirements**

Employees are required to provide:

1. as much advance notice as is reasonable and practicable under the circumstances;
2. a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders when the employee requests leave; and
3. a completed Certification of Qualifying Exigency form within 15 calendar days, unless unusual circumstances exist to justify providing the form at a later date.

Certification forms are available from the HR Team.

#### **(iii) Failure to Provide Certification and to Return from Leave**

Absent unusual circumstances, failure to comply with these notice and certification requirements may result in a delay or denial of the leave. If you fail to return to work at your leave's expiration and have not obtained an extension of the leave, the School may presume that you do not plan to return to work and have voluntarily terminated your employment.

#### **Compensation During Leave**

Generally, FMLA leave is unpaid. However, you may be eligible to receive benefits through State-sponsored or School-sponsored wage-replacement benefit programs. If you are eligible to receive these benefits, you may also choose to supplement these benefits with the use of accrued PTO, to the extent permitted by law and School policy. The use of paid benefits will not extend the length of an FMLA leave.

### **Benefits During Leave**

The provisions of the School's various employee benefit plans govern continuing eligibility during FMLA leave, and these provisions may change from time to time. The health benefits of employees on FMLA leave will continue during the leave at the same level and under the same conditions as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the leave period.

The School will continue making contributions for your group health benefits during your leave on the same terms as if you had continued to work. This means that if you want your benefits coverage to continue during your leave, you must also continue to make any premium payments that you are now required to make for yourself or your dependents. For those employees not on intermittent FMLA leave, employees will be given the option to remit premium payment on a monthly basis to Two Rivers, or to have the balance deducted from the employee's first paycheck upon returning from leave. In some instances, the School may recover premiums it paid to maintain health coverage if you fail to return to work following an FMLA leave.

### **Job Reinstatement**

Under most circumstances, you will be reinstated to the same position held at the time of the leave or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. However, you have no greater right to reinstatement than if you had been continuously employed rather than on leave. For example, if you would have been laid off had you not gone on leave, or if your position has been eliminated during the leave, then you will not be entitled to reinstatement.

Prior to being allowed to return to work, an employee wishing to return from a Serious Health Condition Leave must submit an acceptable release from a health care provider that certifies the employee can perform the essential functions of the job as those essential functions related to the employee's serious health condition. For an employee on intermittent FMLA leave, such a release may be required if reasonable safety concerns exist regarding the employee's ability to perform their duties, based on the serious health condition for which the employee took the intermittent leave.

If an employee can return to work with limitations, the School will evaluate those limitations and, if possible, will reasonably accommodate the employee as required by law. If accommodation cannot be made, the employee will be medically separated from the School.

“Key employees,” as defined by law, may be subject to reinstatement limitations in some circumstances. If you are a “key employee,” you will be notified of the possible limitations on reinstatement at the time you request leave.

A [Notice to Employees Of Rights Under FMLA](#) is attached to this policy.

### **District of Columbia Family and Medical Leave**

Under the District of Columbia Family Medical Leave Act, employees who have worked at least 1,000 hours during the preceding 12-month period are eligible for 16 weeks of unpaid family leave **and** 16 weeks of unpaid medical leave during any 24 month period. If two family members are employed by the School, the School may limit the total number of family leave workweeks to which the family members are entitled during the 24-month period to 16 workweeks. The School may also limit the number of workweeks to which family members may take family leave simultaneously during the 24-month period to four workweeks. The entitlement to family leave expires 12 months after the birth or placement of the child with the employee.

Family leave may be used for the birth of a child of the employee, the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care, placement of a child with the employee for whom the employee permanently assumes responsibility, or for the care of a family member who has a serious health condition.

“**Family member**” is defined as: (1) a person to whom the employee is related by blood, legal custody, or marriage; (2) a child who lives with an employee and for whom the employee permanently assumes and discharges parental responsibility; or (3) a person with whom the employee shares or has shared, within the last year, a mutual residence and with whom the employee maintains a committed relationship. A “**child**” includes a person under the age of 21, a person, regardless of age, over the age of 21 who is substantially dependent on the employee due to a physical or mental disability, or a person under the age of 23 who is a full-time student at an accredited college or university.

A “**committed relationship**” is a domestic partnership (as defined in section 2(4) of the Health Care Expansion Act of 1992; D.C. Official Code § 32-701(4)); a familial relationship between two people, established by certain factors, such as mutual economic interdependence (e.g., joint bank accounts, shared leasing); domestic interdependence,

including the public presentation of the relationship and the exclusivity of the relationship; the length of the relationship; and the intent of both people to stay committed in the relationship, as evidenced by things such as a will or life insurance

If the necessity for leave is foreseeable, employees must provide reasonable prior notice. Certification by a healthcare provider may be required. Employees are entitled to return to their previous or equivalent positions unless during such leave a reduction in force or layoff has resulted in the loss of their positions. Employees may elect to substitute any paid leave for family and medical leave. During family or medical leave, employees are entitled to the continuation of available group health benefits subject to continued payment by employees of their premium contributions.

This leave generally will run concurrently with qualifying Federal Family and Medical Leave.

### **Non-Retaliation**

Two Rivers will not interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under the FMLA. Two Rivers will also not discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA or for the person's involvement in any proceeding under or relating to the FMLA. If you feel that you have been retaliated or discriminated against due to your assertion of FMLA-protected rights, participation in an FMLA-related proceeding or any other reason, you are required to immediately contact your supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law which provides greater family or medical leave rights. For additional information: 1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243); [www.wagehour.dol.gov](http://www.wagehour.dol.gov).

### **J. Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA)**

In accordance with the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (“PWFA”), Two Rivers will make reasonable accommodations for known physical or mental limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions of a qualified applicant or employee, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operations of Two Rivers.

“Known physical or mental limitations” are those that the applicant, employee or their representative has communicated to Two Rivers. Employees or applicants who wish to

inform Two Rivers of such a limitation and/or request a reasonable accommodation under this policy should contact Human Resources, preferably specifying in writing what barriers or limitations prompted the request.

### **Key Definitions:**

- The PWFA provides reasonable accommodations to qualified employee's or applicant's known limitations related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition, unless the accommodation will cause the employer an undue hardship.
- "Pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition" includes, but is not limited to:
  - Endometriosis.
  - Infertility or fertility treatments.
  - Miscarriages or stillbirth.
  - Current pregnancy, past pregnancy, potential pregnancy.
  - Lactation.
  - Use of contraception.
  - Menstruation.
  - Having or choosing not to have an abortion.
- "Qualified" means that the employee either (1) can perform the essential functions of the job, or (2) cannot perform the essential functions of the job, but this inability is "temporary" and could be performed in the near future.
- "Temporary" is defined as lasting for a limited time, not permanent, and may extend beyond in the near future. A pregnant employee is assumed to be able to perform the essential functions in the near future, since they could do so within 40 weeks. For a non-pregnant employee protected under the PWFA, the "near future" analysis will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

### **Reasonable Accommodations:**

Possible reasonable accommodations under the PWFA, including, but are not limited to:

- Frequent breaks
- Sitting or standing
- Schedule changes, part-time work, and paid and unpaid leave
- Telework
- Parking
- Light duty
- Making existing facilities accessible or modifying the work environment
- Job restructuring
- Temporarily suspending one or more essential functions
- Acquiring or modifying equipment, uniforms, or devices
- Adjusting or modifying examinations or policies

The following “simple modifications” or “predictable assessments” will generally be found to be reasonable accommodations that do not impose an undue hardship:

- Allowing an employee to carry or keep water near and drink as needed.
- Allowing an employee to take additional restroom breaks as needed.
- Allowing an employee whose work requires standing to sit and whose work requires sitting to stand as needed.
- Allowing an employee to take breaks to eat and drink as needed.

When determining whether an accommodation poses an “undue hardship,” Two Rivers will consider:

- The length of time the employee will be unable to perform the function.
- Whether there is other work available for the employee.
- the nature and frequency of the function.
- Whether the employer has provided other employees in similar positions with temporary suspensions.
- Whether other employees or temporary employees can perform or be hired to perform the function.
- Whether the function can be postponed or remained unperformed for a length of time.

To request an accommodation, the employee “must identify the limitation (the physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions) and that the employee needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation.” **The request may be made either in writing or verbally to the Human Resources team ([hr@tworiverspcs.org](mailto:hr@tworiverspcs.org)).**

The PWFA prohibits an employer from requiring a qualified employee with a known limitation to take leave, either paid or unpaid, if another effective reasonable accommodation exists, absent undue hardship and unless the employee requests a leave of absence.

### **Supporting Documentation:**

Two Rivers will only seek supporting documentation if it is reasonable to do so under the circumstances. Two Rivers will not request supporting documentation:

- When the limitation and need for a reasonable accommodation is obvious.
- When the employer already has sufficient information.
- When the request is for a predictable assessment.
- When the request is for a lactation accommodation.
- When the employer’s policy or practice permits employees without known limitations under the PWFA to receive the requested modification without submitting supporting documentation.

Two Rivers prohibits discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. Two Rivers also will not interfere with any individual's rights under the PWFA or take adverse action against a qualified applicant or employee because they request or use reasonable accommodations in accordance with this policy, report or oppose discrimination under the PWFA, or participate in a proceeding involving an alleged violation of the PWFA. Individuals who believe they have been subjected to, or believe that another individual has been subjected to, prohibited discrimination, retaliation or coercion should report it immediately to Human Resources.

#### **K. Transfers, Promotions, and Internal Hiring**

Two Rivers believes in giving employees opportunities to realize their full potential. Accordingly, it is generally our preference to fill vacant positions through transfers or promotions of current, qualified employees. We reserve the right to hire external applicants when, in our judgment, it is in the best interests of the School.

Employees interested in another role at Two Rivers, must apply through our Internal Career Center. All internal applicants who meet the qualification requirements of the position will be granted a first round interview. Two Rivers encourages employees to talk with their supervisor about applying to other positions within the organization. If advancing to the first round of the interview process, employees must inform their supervisor prior to the interview.

For more detailed information on the internal hiring process, see the [Two Rivers Staff Policy Procedures Handbook](#).

#### **L. Employment At Will**

Employment with the School is at will, unless state law provides otherwise or as otherwise specified in a written employment agreement. This means employment with the School is not for any specified period and may be terminated by you or the School at any time, for any or no reason, with or without cause or advance notice. In connection with this policy, the School reserves the right to modify or alter your position, in its sole discretion, with or without cause or advance notice, through actions other than termination, including demotion, promotion, transfer, change in reporting relationships, reclassification or reassignment. In addition, the School reserves the right to exercise its managerial discretion in imposing any form of discipline it deems appropriate.

Nothing in this Handbook or any oral statement shall limit the right to terminate at-will. This at-will employment policy is the sole and entire agreement between the employee and

the School regarding the fact that employment with the School is at-will. No manager or supervisor has any authority to enter into a contract of employment express or implied that changes the fact that employment with the School is at-will. The at-will nature of your employment with the School cannot be changed except in a written agreement, signed by you and the Executive Director, and which specifically states the parties' intention to change the at-will nature of the employment.

#### **M. Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The School is dedicated to protecting the safety, health, and well-being of its employees and students. We recognize that drug and alcohol abuse poses a direct and significant threat to this safe workplace goal, and to the goal of providing a productive and efficient working environment for all employees. Through the implementation and enforcement of this policy, we seek to achieve a workplace free of the effects of substance abuse. In applying this policy, the School will comply with all relevant federal, state, and local laws.

1. It is the intent of Two Rivers to provide a working environment free from the use of non-prescribed drugs and alcohol. Given the risks that arise if employees are attempting to perform their duties while using or having used drugs or alcohol, Two Rivers has adopted a zero-tolerance policy. As such, Two Rivers strictly prohibits the illegal sale, purchase, use, or possession of or reporting to work under the influence of any intoxicating substances, non-prescribed narcotics, hallucinogenic drugs, marijuana, or other non-prescribed controlled substances while on Two Rivers' premises and/or property and/or during working hours. In addition, employees are prohibited from using alcohol during working hours and from reporting to work under the influence of alcohol. The violation of this policy is grounds for immediate dismissal.
2. To help ensure a safe and healthy working environment, employees may be asked to provide body substance samples (such as urine, saliva and/or blood) to determine the illicit or illegal use of drugs and alcohol. Refusal to submit to drug testing will be considered to be a positive result, with disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, as a consequence. A positive drug or alcohol test may also result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment. Additionally, employees may be asked to cooperate in personal and/or facility searches. Refusal to cooperate with these procedures may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
3. The proper use of medication prescribed by your physician is not prohibited; however, we do prohibit the misuse of prescribed medication. Employees' drug use may affect their job performance, such as by causing dizziness or drowsiness. It is

the employee's responsibility to determine from their physician whether a prescribed drug may impair safe job performance and to notify the Executive Director or their supervisor of any job restrictions that should be observed as a result, so that a determination can be made regarding their capacity to perform the essential functions of their jobs, either with or without reasonable accommodation. Employees will not be required to disclose the medication they are on or the medical condition for which they are taking the medication except for job-related reasons and business necessity. To the extent possible, Two Rivers will keep this information confidential. The School reserves the right to transfer, reassign, and/or place on leave of absence an employee, or to take other appropriate action as necessary, during the time such employee uses medication that may affect their ability to safely perform assigned duties. The School will comply with all requirements pertaining to providing reasonable accommodations to the extent required by applicable law

## **N. Conflicts of Interest**

**In General** – As a Two Rivers employee, you owe a strict duty of loyalty to the School. You may not directly or indirectly benefit from or possess any interest in any contract, agreement, or transaction relating to the property, facilities, or operation of Two Rivers. The failure to comply with this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

**Outside Employment** – Employment outside the School is allowed to the extent that the outside employment does not pose a conflict with employment by the School. Conflicts of interest, time, competition, or confidentiality will not be tolerated because any conflict would be detrimental to Two Rivers as a whole. Outside employment is strictly prohibited whenever it conflicts with the business or other interests of the School or raises the appearance of, or potential for, any conflict of interest. Outside employment must be fully disclosed to and discussed with your supervisor or the HR Team and any questions regarding outside employment should be directed to your supervisor or the HR Team. The failure to comply with this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

**Employment of Relatives** – The School does not prohibit the employment of persons who are related either by marriage or blood or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage. However, the administration may disallow employment placement where one would be directly supervised by a relative, or the relationship creates the potential for favoritism or conflict of interest. Therefore, employees must disclose to the HR team or the Executive Director a relationship by marriage or blood to another employee or other similar relationship.

**Employment Discussions** – Employees should refrain from discussing matters of employment such as wages, performance evaluations, or grievances with persons in their capacity as parents and/or guardians of the School’s students. However, Two Rivers does not require that employees refrain from disclosing the amount of their wages to other Two Rivers employees and will not discharge, discipline, or otherwise discriminate against employees because they make such disclosures. Certain exceptions apply for employees who have access to other employees’ wage information as part of their job responsibilities. Furthermore, nothing in this Handbook prohibits an employee from reporting concerns, making lawful disclosures, or communicating with any governmental authority about conduct the employee believes violates any laws or regulations. Employees who have questions about this policy should contact the HR Specialist. Failure to comply with this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

This policy in no way prohibits employee affiliations or activities that are protected under applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to any activity that is protected under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act. including the right to communicate with others concerning wages, hours, benefits, and other terms or conditions of employment; to self-organize, form, join or assist labor organizations; to bargain collectively through representatives of the employees’ choosing; to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection; or to refrain from engaging in such activities.

## **O. Contracts/Budgetary Commitments**

Two Rivers employees cannot, and have no authority to, obligate the expenditure of Two Rivers funds, sign contracts, or enter into agreements on behalf of the School. The Executive Director or Chief Operating Officer must approve all non-budgeted items requisitioned from the current and approved fiscal budget. Whether within approved budgetary allotment, or not, no one is permitted to commit or promise dollars for any reason, to any source, without prior approval from the Executive Director or Chief Operating Officer.

## **P. Dress Code**

Two Rivers recognizes that **as an EL Education school**, educators are often involved in movement and activities that necessitate casual attire. While casual attire is permitted, the School expects all employees to dress in a neat and professional manner **that demonstrates a commitment to serving as a role model for our students**, and to use sound judgment and discretion in dressing and grooming.

Unacceptable attire includes transparent or revealing attire, which shows cleavage, abdomen, or undergarments; prioritize pants that fit well and do not ride low; items that are dirty; items that are torn, frayed above the knee; or items with profanity or inappropriate slogans. Bottoms should be of an appropriate length, meaning that bottoms must reach the staff member's fingertips if their hands are relaxed by their sides. When in doubt, staff should discuss with their supervisor concerning attire.

Reasonable Accommodations: Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent employees from wearing a hair or facial hair style that is consistent with their cultural, ethnic or racial heritage or identity. The School will reasonably accommodate exceptions to this personal appearance, grooming and hygiene policy if required due to an employee's sincerely held religious beliefs or practices or disability. Employees who need such an accommodation should contact their supervisor or Human Resources. This policy will be interpreted to comply with applicable local, state or federal laws.

Violation of these rules is subject to discipline, up to and including termination if the problem persists or if the clothing, grooming or personal hygiene concern is particularly inappropriate for the workplace.

#### **Q. Pregnancy and Lactation Accommodation**

For up to one year after the birth of an employee's child, Two Rivers will provide the employee a reasonable amount of lactation break time each time the employee needs to express breast milk for their child. Employees needing breaks for lactation purposes may use ordinary paid rest breaks or may take other reasonable break time when needed. If possible, the lactation break time should run concurrently with scheduled meal and rest breaks already provided to the employee.

If the lactation break time cannot run concurrently with meal and rest breaks already provided or additional time is needed for the employee, the lactation break time will be unpaid for non-exempt employees.

Employees will be relieved of all work-related duties during any unpaid break. Where unpaid breaks or additional time are required, employees should work with their supervisor or Human Resources regarding scheduling and reporting the extra break time.

Because exempt employees receive their full salary during weeks in which they work, all exempt employees who need lactation accommodation breaks do not need to report any extra break time as "unpaid."

For lactation breaks, the School will provide employees with the use of a room or a private area, other than a bathroom or toilet stall, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public. The School will make a reasonable effort to identify a location within close proximity to the work area for the employee to express milk. This location may be the employee's private office, if applicable.

Two Rivers will otherwise treat lactation as a pregnancy-related medical condition and address lactation-related needs in accordance with the PWFA and other applicable laws.

Employees should discuss with their supervisor and Human Resources regarding the location for storage of expressed milk. In addition, employees should contact their supervisor or Human Resources before their return to work following the birth of a child to identify the need for a lactation area.

Employees who believe they have not been provided lactation break time and the use of a room or private area in accordance with this policy and federal law should immediately notify their supervisor or Human Resources. Two Rivers will not retaliate or discriminate against an employee because they file a complaint or institute any proceeding under or related to the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, testify in any such proceeding or serve on an industry committee.

## **R. No-Smoking Policy**

Smoking at Two Rivers (on grounds or in buildings) is prohibited. No-smoking extends to within 25 feet of the school buildings. Smoking includes, but is not limited to, the use of tobacco and marijuana products, including cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, vaping, and electronic cigarettes. The School's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment includes no smoking in all campus public areas, including, but not limited to, the faculty lounge and School grounds, including personal vehicles parked on campus. This policy applies equally to all employees, students, parents, and visitors. Smoking by employees is never, under any circumstances, permitted in the presence of students, including off-campus School trips and/or events. Employees who are found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **S. Expectations**

**What Employees Can Expect** - All Two Rivers employees can expect the following:

- To be treated with respect and courtesy in all matters.

- To be free from harassment or discrimination of any kind from any School employee, parent, guardian, or visitor.
- To be treated fairly in the event of any employment-related dispute and to be able to express personal points of view without fear of retaliation.
- To be paid, on a regular basis, the amounts due for the work performed.
- To receive all employment benefits for which one is eligible, in accordance with the provisions of this Handbook and the applicable benefits plan documents.

**What Two Rivers Expects of Employees** - The School expects that its employees will:

- Be at work on time every working day. Two Rivers' normal operating hours are between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. You are expected to be available to work during the core hours outlined in your offer letter. Daily and weekly work schedules may be changed from time-to-time, as required to meet the School's operational needs.
- Observe proper decorum, including adherence to dress codes and proper courtesies and respect in all dealings with students, parents, guardians, visitors, and fellow employees.
- Avoid discussing employment-related matters with other staff members as well as School parents and guardians. However, Two Rivers does not require that employees refrain from discussing employment-related matters with other Two Rivers employees and will not discharge, discipline, or otherwise discriminate against employees because they make such disclosures.
- Be responsible for individual work areas, keeping them neat and in a manner presentable to the School's parents, guardians, and visitors.
- Not abuse employment benefits and allowances.
- Be punctual and focused on your duties and responsibilities.
- Adhere to all Two Rivers policies and rules.
- Ask questions when unsure of the School's policy or procedure in any situation, no matter how trivial the situation may seem.
- Maintain the School's reputation and community standing when at or when away from the School.
- Maintain a professional relationship at all times with students, and avoid engaging in any conduct with a student which creates the appearance of impropriety or inappropriate conduct.
- Report to your supervisor or the HR Team staff or student conduct which is adverse to Two Rivers' effort to create a nurturing, welcoming, and safe environment for all students.

## **T. Work Habits**

For the benefit of Two Rivers and its employees, instances of insubordination, absenteeism, and tardiness will not be tolerated. These conditions are difficult to define and will be

considered on an individual basis of circumstance and fact. Such offenses may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment. Questions regarding the School's policies regarding work habits should be directed to your supervisor or the HR Team.

**Core Hours** - Two Rivers expects all full-time employees to work a 40 hour work week, in accordance with the hours outlined in their offer letters. School-based employees, including teachers, assistant teachers, counselors, and related service providers must be present at least 15 minutes prior to the arrival of students and must be present at least 15 minutes after the dismissal of students. For teachers with fewer than 28 hours in front of students, they will be asked to assist with substitute coverage, lunch, recess duty, and other duties as assigned by the principal. 12-month employees must begin their day no later than 9:00 am and must end their day no later than 6:00 pm, unless otherwise approved by the direct supervisor as required by the School's operational needs. 12-month employees should operate with a standard schedule that is approved by the direct supervisor and ensures teams meet all operational and coverage needs, which includes events such as after school events and activities. School based leadership teams must be present for arrival and dismissal. All non-exempt employees will be required to be provided a non-duty unpaid lunch.

**Attendance** – Your job is extremely important. The School and its students, parents, guardians, and employees depend upon you to handle your share of the responsibilities. For this reason, if you find it necessary to be absent from or late for work, it is imperative that you notify your supervisor in advance unless health or other reasons makes it impossible, or on or before the time you are scheduled to report for work unless health or other reasons make it impossible. Always discuss your absence or tardiness directly with your supervisor.

**Absenteeism** – Abuse of the School's policies regarding Paid Time Off ("PTO"), including, but not limited to, absences beyond those allowed by policy, may be regarded as absenteeism. Every employee is an important part of the daily operation of the School and absences impair efficiency. While extenuating circumstances may sometimes occur, employees are expected to report to work according to the terms and conditions of employment. Absenteeism will be discussed with an employee by their supervisor and may be cause for discipline, up to and including termination of employment, depending upon the individual circumstances and facts.

**Tardiness** – All Two Rivers employees are expected to report to work promptly and punctually according to their set schedules. Occasionally, unforeseen circumstances may disrupt punctuality, but employees are expected to maintain their set schedules. Excessive tardiness will be discussed with an employee by their supervisor and may be cause for discipline, up to and including termination of employment, depending

upon the individual circumstances and facts.

**Early Departures** – It is important that each employee arrives at work when expected and remains until the end of the workday. When you are not at work when required, it can have an adverse effect on the performance of the School and your co-workers. Excessive early departures will be discussed with an employee by their supervisor and may be cause for discipline, up to and including termination of employment, depending upon the individual circumstances and facts.

**School Closures Caused by Inclement Weather** – Two Rivers follows the District of Columbia Public Schools (“DCPS”) regarding school closures caused by inclement weather:

- If DCPS is open, Two Rivers is open;
- If DCPS is closed, Two Rivers is closed; and
- If DCPS has a delayed opening, Two Rivers has the same delayed opening.

During periods of school closure caused by inclement weather, all Level I Essential Employees will be required to work onsite. All members of the Leadership Council will be required to work remotely. All other employees may be required to work remotely, at the discretion of their supervisor.

**Insubordination** – Insubordination occurs when an employee refuses to comply with the instructions of their supervisor(s), and/or when an employee is rude to or disrespectful of their supervisor(s). An act of insubordination may be cause for discipline, up to and including termination of employment, depending upon the individual circumstances and facts.

## **U. School Property**

### **Maintenance and Use of School Property**

Employees are responsible for all School property, materials, or written information issued to them while employed by the School. Employees must maintain and use all School property, facilities, and equipment properly. Employees should treat these School assets with care and respect and guard against loss, damage, waste, or abuse. We want employees to be cost-conscious and to consider opportunities to improve operations and control expenses.

Report any faulty equipment or damage to equipment to your supervisor immediately. This information could save a big repair job later and help keep the equipment in good condition. Also, it could prevent a possible injury to you or a fellow employee. Take care of the

equipment you use and don't misuse it. Willful damage will result in termination of employment.

Using School time, property, or facilities for reasons not directly related to School business or removing or borrowing School property without permission is strictly prohibited.

Employees must return all School property to the School immediately upon the request of the administration or upon the termination of employment. The School may take any appropriate action to recover its property.

- Two Rivers recognizes that, on occasion, employees need to make local or long-distance telephone calls, use the copier, or use the fax machine. Two Rivers trusts that employees will only use these services and supplies when necessary and will keep their use to a minimum.

**Use of Personal Appliances:** In compliance with fire safety requirements, the following personal appliances are not permitted in classrooms and offices:

- Coffee Makers
- Refrigerators
- Microwaves
- Air Fryers or Electric Grills
- Space Heaters (approval required)
- Air Purifiers

If an employee requires the use of one of these personal appliances as part of medical accommodations, the employee should contact [hr@tworivesrpcs.org](mailto:hr@tworivesrpcs.org) to request an accommodation.

## **V. Communicable Diseases**

Two Rivers provides a work environment that promotes employee and student wellness and supports employees, who suffer from serious infectious diseases. All employees being diagnosed with an infectious disease must report this to the HR Team immediately. An employee, who has been diagnosed with an infectious disease, must obtain a release from their doctor before the employee will be permitted to return to work. In the case of testing positive for COVID-19, an employee may return after five days of isolation and must be masked until day ten (10) of the infection period. The following is a list of diseases, which have been identified by the Department of Health and Human Services, CDC to be infectious and communicable diseases.

- COVID-19 (Coronavirus)
- Hepatitis (all types) – affects liver

- Salmonella – typhoid fever
- Norovirus – gastroenteritis
- Shigella – intestinal virus
- Staphylococcus infections – nose or skin infection
- Streptococcus infections – strep throat
- Campylobacter Jejuni – intestinal virus
- Cryptosporidium Parvum
- Entamoeba Histolytica – intestinal parasite
- Escherichia Coli – intestinal virus
- Giardia Lamblia – intestinal parasite
- Taenia Solium – tapeworm
- Vibrio Cholerae – intestinal virus
- Yersinia Enterocolitica – intestinal plague

**School Closures Related to Communicable Diseases** - If the School should need to close due to a communicable disease outbreak, Two Rivers is committed to supporting students and families while ensuring that safety remains paramount. Details about the procedures for a school closure related to communicable diseases can be found in the [supplemental procedures guide](#).

## **W. Safety**

Prevention is the key to safety. To make Two Rivers a safe place to work, it is important that you observe the following safety rules:

- Do not smoke.
- Always ask for instruction before using any type of equipment with which you are not entirely familiar and experienced.
- Immediately pick up anything you drop on the floor or any foreign object you see on the floor (“clean as you go”).
- Wet floors – even a few drops of liquid – cause more accidents than anything else. To help prevent accidents caused by wet floors, please observe the following:
  - Wipe up any spills at once, using proper materials.
  - Pick up spilled ice and mop dry.
  - Report all leaks to the Operations Team through FMX.
  - If you must walk on wet, slippery floors, slow down and take shorter steps than you normally would.
  - Keep aisles, halls, and walkways free from electric cords or hoses.
  - Ask your supervisor for instructions on lifting heavy objects so as to avoid

serious injury. Get help if an object is too heavy or bulky to handle safely alone.

There are instances when, no matter how careful you are, you may have an accident. If an accident happens, please notify your supervisor immediately and complete the [Staff Incident Report Form](#).

## **X. Emergencies**

**In Case of Fire** – Call 911 and give the operator the information necessary for the fire department to respond. Then call or otherwise speak with the Executive Director, COO, or Principal and notify them of your call.

**In Case of Medical Emergency** – Identify the condition of the victim to determine the correct course of action. If the situation appears serious, or, if there is any doubt, call 911 and ask for emergency medical assistance. Then call or otherwise speak with the Executive Director, COO, or Principal and notify him/her of your call. Then do what you can to respond to the victim.

## **Y. Security Policy**

**General** – The School prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, and other improper materials. Offices, desks, lockers, and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees but remain the sole property of the School. Accordingly, they, as well as vehicles on School premises, or any other articles found with an employee, can be inspected by any agent or representative of the School at any time, either with, or without, prior notice, in accordance with federal, state, and local law.

**Environmental Expectations** – It is incumbent upon every employee to extend a concerted effort in maintaining a litter- and trash-free environment. The appearance of our school buildings, classrooms, hallways, and grounds depends on every person's conscientious effort to be responsible for maintaining an attractive campus.

**Protection of Property** – The School wishes to discourage theft or unauthorized possession of the property of its employees, parents, guardians, students, vendors, and guests. Thus, all individuals who enter the School should take special care to secure all items of value, including purses, laptop computers, backpacks, and the like. The School assumes no liability for items stolen or missing from the School.

## **Z. Visitors in the Workplace**

To provide for the safety and security of students, employees, and the facilities at the School, only authorized visitors are allowed on the campus grounds. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensures the security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare, and avoids potential distractions and disturbances.

All visitors must enter the School at the designated entrance and proceed to the main office to register their presence on the grounds of the School. An employee is responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitor and the employee must accompany their guest throughout the School at all times. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If an unauthorized individual is observed on the School premises, ask the individual why they are in the School, and immediately notify a member of the Operations Team

If the safety of any employee or student becomes threatened by any individual, whether a visitor or an unknown intruder, that individual should be asked to leave the school grounds. Employees should never attempt to expel such individuals. Rather, the Metropolitan Police Department should be called to handle and evaluate the situation if the individual refuses to leave. If trespassers resist an instruction to leave the School or disobey a reasonable, repeated request, immediately call 911.

**Former Employees and Dismissed Students** – Former employees who are terminated for cause by the School are not permitted to return to the School for any type of visitation for any reason. Former dismissed students will not be allowed access to the School without the approval of the School Administration Team.

**Employees' Children and Dependents** - If you are a Two Rivers staff member and your child attends Two Rivers as a student, we welcome your child(ren) coming with you to school in the mornings. If your child(ren) is with you in the morning prior to the start of school, they must be supervised by you, and should not be interfering with your preparations for the day or with other people's preparation for the day. Under no circumstances should your child(ren) be by themselves or walking around the building unaccompanied.

Your children may not spend the day with you or even a portion of the day while you are **scheduled to work**, including **Wednesday professional learning afternoons**, and professional learning days when students are not present. Students who are not Two Rivers students cannot spend the day in other classrooms as a student. We welcome your child(ren) and other family members to after-school events such as Literacy Night, Math Night, or after-school potlucks. If you want your child(ren) to attend events that happen during the school day (e.g. Dance Competition or Community Meeting), first seek the approval of your supervisor, and

then ensure that another adult accompanies your child(ren) to provide child care.

## **AA. Use of Equipment and Vehicles**

Equipment in the School's possession may be expensive and may be difficult to replace. Therefore, when using such property, employees are required to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines. Employees shall notify the Operations Team if any equipment (copy machines, computers, telephones, and the like) appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair.

The use of an employee's personal vehicle while acting in the scope of their employment is prohibited, unless approved, in writing, in advance, by the Executive Director, Director of Operations, or Principal or is an essential responsibility of an employee's position. The School strictly prohibits an employee from providing transportation to a student in their personal vehicle. The failure to comply with this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If an employee chooses to use an employee-owned vehicle during work hours for company business, the employee should obey all traffic laws and refrain from the prohibited behaviors outlined in our Drug and Alcohol Policy. For those employees whose primary job responsibilities require them to use an employee-owned vehicle during work hours for company business, Two Rivers will conduct driving record checks every two years.

## **BB. Confidentiality Policy**

It is vital to the continued success of the School that information in student files, proprietary information, and trade secrets be kept confidential. Both during and after their employment, employees may not directly or indirectly use or disclose the School's confidential information and/or student information to coworkers, individuals, School parents or guardians, or entities outside the School, except as necessary to the performance of their duties for the School and authorized by the Executive Director or the law. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to: School records, papers, and files, including student files; information regarding new projects or anticipated projects; personal information regarding student, parent, or guardian; internal operational issues (including costs, pricing information, and budgets); student lists; financial data; business plans and proposals; and data and other information received in confidence from any other entity. Additionally, relationships and transactions with students' parents and/or guardians are considered privileged and should not be discussed outside of the School without prior express permission.

Similarly, the School's documents and other information should be protected from the

sight of unauthorized individuals. Unless permitted by law, under no circumstances may the contents of School documents or other documents prepared for a student, parent, or guardian be disclosed to third parties without the prior approval of the Executive Director. Documents reflecting information about a student, parent, or guardian of the School may not, as a rule, be used as forms in other transactions with third parties if such use might reveal the name of (or other identifying or confidential information about) a student, parent, or guardian of the School.

Further, School information shall not be shared with other employees of the School when that information is not required in the official conduct of the other employee's duties or does not relate to the terms and conditions of their employment. This also applies to the information contained in the School's computer network, and employee files, whether paper or electronic, shall not be accessed without an official requirement for such access.

Two Rivers does not require that employees refrain from disclosing the amount of their wages to other Two Rivers employees and will not discharge, discipline, or otherwise discriminate against employees because they make such disclosures. Certain exceptions apply for employees who have access to other employees' wage information as part of their job responsibilities. Furthermore, nothing in this Handbook prohibits an employee from reporting concerns, making lawful disclosures, or communicating with any governmental authority about conduct the employee believes violates any laws or regulations.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information will result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment. If you have any questions as to whether particular information is confidential, please discuss this with the Executive Director.

### **CC. Communications and Media Relations Policy**

No communications on behalf of Two Rivers (other than standard reporting or form letters approved by the Executive Director or Principal to parents, guardians, and/or external contacts shall be made without the consent and prior approval of the Executive Director or Principal.

Because much of the information we work with is confidential or sensitive in nature, this policy equally applies to communications with the mass media (i.e. radio, television, newspaper, Internet, reporters, *etcetera*), and under no circumstances shall any contact be made with or received from the mass media on behalf of Two Rivers without first contacting and receiving approval of the request from the Executive Director or current Chair of the Board of Trustees.

All papers, articles, speeches, media responses, or presentations to persons or entities on behalf of Two Rivers must be first approved by the Executive Director or current Chair of the Board of Trustees, prior to communication, publication, or presentation. This policy covers information set forth in the School's Confidentiality Policy, as well as any data, research, or general opinions about TWO RIVERS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL INC., Two Rivers, and/or Two Rivers' employees, students, parents, guardians, and/or programs.

#### **DD. Electronic Communications Policy**

Two Rivers uses email and other electronic equipment to conduct its business. All of these services and equipment, including information transmitted or stored on them (collectively, "information network" or "network"), are the sole property of the School. Although the School respects the privacy of its employees, there may be times when it may have to access employee communications and computer files, as it considers appropriate and in accordance with applicable law, for operational, security, and other reasons.

Employees should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of Two Rivers-provided communications equipment, systems, or networks. The School expressly reserves the right to monitor and examine any communications made using Two Rivers-provided equipment, systems, network traffic or other aspects of the School's communications systems, without employees' permission, including, but not limited to, voice mail, email, Internet usage, computer files, and employees' computers, to the extent permitted by federal, state, and local law.

The use of the School's information systems is intended for business purposes. The use of any communication services and equipment (including, but not limited to, mail; email; courier services; facsimiles; telephone and voicemail systems; pagers; computer networks; computers; copy machines; on-line services; the Internet; the world wide web; social media platform; computer and data files; video equipment, tapes, and discs; tape recorders and recordings; cellular telephones; and bulletin boards) for private and/or personal purposes is strictly prohibited.

Each day that the School is open, employees are expected to check and respond to email and voicemail messages on a regular basis.

Employees (and students) are not permitted to install any software or courseware on any computer without approval from the COO.

All passwords and codes are the property of Two Rivers. No employee may use a password or code that has not been issued to that employee or that is unknown to the School. Employees who violate this policy or attempt to circumvent any electronic security measure are subject to

disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Unacceptable uses of the School's communication services and equipment (collectively, "information network" or "network") is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment. Examples of such unacceptable uses are:

- Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright laws
- Using the network for financial or commercial gain
- Degrading or disrupting system performance equipment
- Vandalizing the data of another user
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities
- Invading the privacy of individuals
- Logging into and/or using another user's account
- Posting another person's communications without consent
- Sending or posting anonymous, derogatory, obscene; or inflammatory messages
- Destruction of computer hardware or software
- Using the network to view, read, or display offensive, sexual, or otherwise pornographic material
- Playing games
- Offering or providing products or services through the School's network
- Political lobbying
- Making deliberate attempts to spread computer viruses
- Attempting to circumvent any filtering or administration control
- Sending anonymous messages
- Creating and/or distributing any message that may constitute intimidating, hostile, defamatory, or offensive material based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, and any other factor protected by applicable law. The School's policy prohibiting harassment applies fully to the operation of the email system, Internet postings, and or School computer use.
- In general, and any violation of that policy is grounds for discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.
- Posting chain letters or engaging in spamming
- Adjusting, connecting or disconnecting components without authorization
- Using the School's network to engage in any other illegal act

The School, in its discretion, reserves the right to monitor and access any matter created on, received through, or sent from the network. Employees do not have a privacy right in any matter created on, received through, or sent from the network. Any employee who becomes aware of misuse of the network or this policy should promptly contact the Executive Director

or COO.

**Social Media Policy:** The School recognizes the growing importance of online social media and networks as a communication tool. The School takes no position on employees' decisions to participate in the use of social media networks. The School has developed the following guidelines for the personal use of social media:

- Employees are prohibited from disclosing information on any social media network that is confidential or proprietary to the School or to a third party that has disclosed information to the School (e.g. personally identifiable student information)
- When posting content related to the school or education in general, staff must make it clear that their views are personal and do not represent the official stance of Two Rivers Public Charter School.
- Employees are prohibited from acting as a spokesperson for the School or posting as a representative of the School.
- Staff members are expected to refrain from posting or sharing content that may disparage, demean, or otherwise harm the reputation of the school, its employees, students, families, or any other stakeholders.
- Use images, videos, and sound that are appropriate and legal.
- Photos of students who have denied media release must not be published online or in print, even in password-protected sites.
  - Employees should contact the **Communications Associate** for a list of students whose parents have denied media release.
  - Students with media releases can be named only by first name, but should not be associated with a caption for a photo or video. First names may be associated with a student in photos or video behind password-protected accounts.
- Use good judgment in publicizing specific dates, times, and locations for external field studies.
- Staff members should maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students and must avoid personal or private interactions with students on personal social media accounts.
- If a staff member comes across any inappropriate or concerning content related to the school on social media, they should report it to their supervisor or the designated administrator promptly.
- **Two Rivers highly recommends that all employees make their social media accounts private.**
- **Staff members may not use AI to violate School rules or policies, including AI image or voice generator technology.**

**Use of Personal Electronic Devices** - While at work, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using their personal devices as is expected for the use of company devices. Two Rivers' policies pertaining to harassment, discrimination, retaliation, proprietary information, confidential information, and ethics apply to employee use of personal devices for work-related activities.

Excessive personal calls, emails, or text messaging during the workday, regardless of the device used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. Employees should refrain from usage of personal devices that interfere with their job responsibilities and ability to effectively carry out the duties of their position. Employees should be mindful of where personal devices are being used, and should make efforts to take personal calls in private spaces such as staff lounges, empty classrooms, and offices. Additionally, when working with students, parents, or other staff members, earbuds or headphones should not be in use.

Nonexempt employees may not use their personal devices for work purposes outside of their normal work schedule without authorization in advance from management. This includes reviewing, sending and responding to emails or text messages, responding to phone calls, or making phone calls.

Nothing in the policy is intended to prevent employees from union organizing activity or from discussing the terms and conditions of employment for the purposes of concerted action, consistent with the National Labor Relations Act and other applicable laws.

## **EE. Miscellaneous Policies**

**Lawful and Ethical Conduct of Business** – All business must be conducted in a lawful and ethical manner in accordance with applicable laws and regulations in the respective jurisdictions.

**Non-Solicitation During Working Hours** – In order to maintain efficient operations and to respect the rights of its employees, the School prohibits solicitations of any kind for any cause when the soliciting or solicited employee is on School property during working time. Solicitation includes, but is not limited to, the solicitation for membership in any organization, the solicitation of gifts, money pledges or subscriptions, circulation of petitions, and/or the sale of merchandise, tickets, or raffles. Similarly, the School prohibits the distribution of literature (which is not required to be distributed in the course of School operations) in working areas or during times when the distributor or recipient is working on the School business. The distribution includes, but is not limited to, the distribution of such things as merchandise, leaflets, pamphlets, newspapers, petitions, pictures, pins, buttons, and/or handbills. Non-employees are prohibited at all times from entering the School to solicit or

distribute literature. The School may make limited exceptions to this policy for certain charitable causes.

**Political Activities** – The School will make no contribution to a political party or candidate for political office.

**Use of Two Rivers' Limited and Reserved Parking** - Two Rivers has limited and reserved parking as outlined below:

- 4th Street Campus - three (3) spots on the alley side of the upper school
- Young Campus - the upper lot (loading dock)

The parking spots are assigned by the Director of Operations, based on the operational needs of the school. For employees seeking a medical accommodation to park in a reserved parking area, contact [hr@tworiverspcs.org](mailto:hr@tworiverspcs.org) to request a medical accommodation. Please note that medical accommodations only apply to the employee. Employees should only park in these spaces if assigned by the Director of Operations.

## SECTION 2: MAJOR POLICIES CONCERNING STUDENTS

### A. Corporal Punishment

Two Rivers Public Charter School prioritizes the safety and dignity of every student. Staff are trained to use de-escalation techniques rooted in **Responsive Classroom, Zones of Regulation, and Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI)** methods to support students in regaining control during moments of escalation.

**Physical restraint is only used in extreme circumstances** specifically, when a student's behavior presents an **imminent risk of serious physical harm** to themselves or others, and only after non-physical strategies have failed or been deemed inappropriate. In such cases:

- Only staff trained and certified in **CPI or Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)** may implement physical restraint.
- All restraints must be **last resort, reasonable, and proportionate**:
  - **Last resort**: All other strategies have been exhausted.
  - **Reasonable**: The response matches the threat based on the student's size, strength, and intent.
  - **Proportionate**: The physical intervention used does not exceed the harm it aims to prevent.
- **Parents/guardians will be notified the same day** a restraint occurs, in accordance with our Restraint Notification Policy.

**Corporal punishment and physical discipline are strictly prohibited.** This includes slapping, shaking, pushing, pinching, or any form of physical force used to punish or correct behavior. Violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee who witnesses or becomes aware of inappropriate physical contact must report it immediately to the Principal or Executive Director.

### B. Legal Requirements for Reporting Child/Student Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Verbal Abuse, Et Cetera

D.C. Code § 16-2301(23) defines the term "abused child" to mean a child whose parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker inflicts, or fails to make reasonable efforts to prevent the infliction of, physical or mental injury upon the child, including excessive corporal punishment, an act of sexual abuse, molestation or exploitation, physical abuse, or an injury that results from exposure to a drug-related activity in the child's environment.

In addition, negligence which leads, or could lead, to physical injury including non-provision of food, clothing, shelter, medical attention, or reasonable supervision is

considered to be abusive. Therefore, it is incumbent that any School personnel who are aware of matters concerning this type of negligence report such information to the proper authorities, appropriate Two Rivers administrator (Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Special Education, or supervisor). The Executive Director should be made aware of all reports by the Two Rivers administrator.

Pursuant to D.C. Code § 4-1321.02, “any person . . . who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child known to him or her in his or her professional or official capacity has been or is in immediate danger of being a mentally or physically abused or neglected child, shall immediately report or have a report made of such knowledge or suspicion to either the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia or the Child and Family Services Agency.”

Persons required to report such abuse or neglect include every physician, psychologist, medical examiner, dentist, person involved in the care and treatment, school official, teacher, social services worker, daycare worker, mental health professional, and residential child care worker.

In addition to those persons who are required to make a report, any other person may make a report to the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia or the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Human Services.

**TO REPORT ABUSE/NEGLECT, CALL (202) 671-7233**

**FOR 24-HOUR CRISIS COUNSELING, CALL (888) 793-4357**

Schools are an important source for referrals of child sexual or physical abuse. When injuries or behaviors are observed that lead anyone to believe the student may have been abused, or if a child voluntarily discloses the nature of abuse, the teacher or other staff person should report such suspicion and/or allegation immediately to the school administrator (Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Special Education, or supervisor), who will assist the staff member in contacting the Metropolitan Police Department or Child Protective Services. It is not the duty of School personnel to validate the abuse, but rather to report it.

All school personnel should be mindful of the importance of **minimizing the number of interviews** to which a child is subjected regarding the incident or the abuse. Therefore, the person who first obtains the disclosure is the only person at the School who should speak to the child, unless otherwise authorized by an administrator. The adult to whom the disclosure was made or who observed the injuries should thereafter communicate with other

adults as necessary to report the known or suspected physical or sexual abuse to School authorities, who will convey such information to the appropriate authorities.

You should also immediately report any suspicious observations to an administrator. However, reporting suspected or known abuse or neglect internally within the school does not relieve an individual of their legal obligation to make an external report to CFSA.

When any employee reasonably suspects or believes that another staff member may have crossed the boundaries specified in this policy, they must immediately report the matter to a School administrator. All reports shall be as confidential as possible consistent with a thorough and objective investigation, and to the extent permitted or required under applicable law. It is the duty of the administrator to investigate and thoroughly report the situation. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness or concern of student behavior that crosses boundaries or where a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse, including, any incident in which a student engages in improper communications with the employee. Such reports should include a summary of the student's communication, as well as the time, date, and method of communication. If abuse is suspected, employees must immediately report the suspected abuse as mandated reporters pursuant to the Two Rivers Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Policy.

### **C. Abuse Prevention**

Two Rivers prohibits actions of student sexual abuse by school staff. Any behavior by school staff toward a student that is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature and would reasonably cause the student to feel uncomfortable is prohibited, regardless of whether such behavior is complained of by the student, the behavior is overtly sexual, or such behavior could constitute a crime. These behaviors may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The school takes seriously all allegations of student sexual abuse. When the school knows or reasonably should know that such an act has occurred, the school shall take immediate action and follow the procedures outlined in this policy. The school shall act upon any knowledge of abuse, regardless of whether the student who was abused has filed a complaint or has otherwise notified the school.

Below is a list of appropriate and inappropriate interactions with students that all employees are expected to abide by and understand if inappropriate behaviors are observed, employees should report the observations to the appropriate administrator (Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Special Education, or supervisor).

## Physical Interactions with Students

Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Side hugs</li> <li>● Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs</li> <li>● Pats on the shoulder or back</li> <li>● Handshakes</li> <li>● High-fives and hand slapping</li> <li>● Verbal praise</li> <li>● Pats on the head when culturally appropriate</li> <li>● Touching hands, shoulders, and arms</li> <li>● Arms around shoulders</li> <li>● Holding Hands (with young students in escorting situations)</li> <li>● Allowing preschool or kindergarten students to sit on personnel’s knees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Full-frontal hugs</li> <li>● Kissing of any kind between staff and students</li> <li>● Showing affection in isolated areas</li> <li>● Personnel sleeping in a bed with a student</li> <li>● Allowing students, older than kindergarten, to sit on personnel’s knees</li> <li>● Wrestling</li> <li>● Piggyback rides</li> <li>● Tickling</li> <li>● Allowing a child to cling to a personnel’s leg</li> <li>● Any type of massage given by or to a student</li> <li>● Any form of affection that is unwanted by the student or the personnel</li> <li>● Touching stomach, bottom, chest, or genital areas</li> </ul>

## Verbal Interactions with Students

Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Positive reinforcement</li> <li>● Appropriate jokes</li> <li>● Encouragement</li> <li>● Praise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Name-calling</li> <li>● Compliments relating to physique or body development</li> <li>● Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving students in the personal problems or issues of personnel</li> <li>● Secrets</li> <li>● Cursing</li> <li>● Off-color or sexual jokes</li> <li>● Shaming</li> <li>● Belittling</li> <li>● Derogatory remarks</li> <li>● Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate students</li> <li>● Derogatory remarks about the student or their family</li> </ul>

## Contact Outside of School

Appropriate Outside Contact	Inappropriate Outside Contact
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Taking groups of students on an outing, with parents' knowledge and written permission</li> <li>● Attending functions at a student's home, with parents present for the duration</li> <li>● Home visits, with parents present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Taking one student on an outing</li> <li>● Taking any number of students on an outing without the parents' written permission</li> <li>● Visiting a student in the minor's home without a parent present</li> <li>● Entertaining a student in the home of a staff member</li> <li>● A lone student spending the night with a staff member</li> </ul>
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**One-on-One Interactions:** When meeting one-on-one with a student, do so in a public place where you are in full view of others. If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by. A staff member should never be alone in a room with a student with the door locked. If you need to be in a room that is not observable from the outside (e.g. during counseling), you should:

- Share your meeting schedule with the Principal and your supervisor; only meet with students during scheduled times
- Invite your supervisor to randomly drop by unannounced
- Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted in writing to the Principal and supervisor.

**Gift Giving:** Adults that engage in sexual abuse often groom minors by giving gifts, thereby endearing themselves to the minor. They might instruct the student to keep the gifts a secret, which then starts teaching the student to keep secrets from parents.

For this reason, staff should only give gifts to large groups of students (i.e., an entire crew or team), and only if administrators are made aware of and approve the gift.

**Communication with Students:** Employees of Two Rivers should only engage in electronic communication with students using the employee's Two Rivers email address and the student's Two Rivers email address. Electronic communication should only pertain to school-related matters. Employee's personal phone numbers should never be shared with students.

#### **D. Bullying Prevention Policy**

Bullying prevention begins with the establishment of a safe and respectful culture that enables all community members to thrive. Two Rivers works hard to establish and maintain a safe environment where children are able to take social and academic risks, develop social skills, celebrate differences, and become responsible and compassionate members of society.

Bullying is not acceptable at Two Rivers. Two Rivers staff must report incidents of bullying they witness or are made aware of to one of the school administrators listed below. Two Rivers administrators are charged with responding to incidents of bullying and investigating reports of bullying. Reports of bullying can be made to:

4th Street

McKenzie Baecker, Principal (mbaecker@tworiverspcs.org)  
Marcus Brown, Assistant Principal (mbrown@tworiverspcs.org)

Young Elementary

Megan DeRitter, Principal (mderitter@tworiverspcs.org)  
Delonna Gibbs, Assistant Principal (dgibbs@tworiverspcs.org)

Young Middle

Ashley Stone, Principal (astone@tworiverspcs.org)  
Derrick Miles, Assistant Principal (dmiles@tworiverspcs.org)

The administrator will create a written report of a bullying incident and include the incident in Two Rivers reports of bullying incidents to the citywide coordinator. A full copy of Two Rivers Bullying Policy can be found [here](#).

## **E. Student Medication**

All student medications shall be administered by staff who have received medication administration training, additional information can be found in the [Family Handbook](#).

## **E. Student Files Policy**

The confidentiality of students' files is of the highest priority. Student files are secured in the school's administrative spaces. There are appropriate employees who have a justifiable need for specific access to such files, and only the Executive Director, or designee, and the Principal may determine the right to examine any file. All student file requests must go through the Registrar. If staff are requesting access to student records, they must send an email to the Registrar account stating the use of the student record and the date they need it by. This excludes Special Education leaders and staff. Absolute caution must be exercised in not allowing other staff/students/parents to have access to a student's file(s). When non-primary guardians are requesting access to student records, please also check with the Registrar to ensure there is nothing in place prohibiting that parent's access. Failure to maintain student files confidentially will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **F. Classroom Visitation**

It is the practice of Two Rivers to promote active, healthy, ongoing contact and teamwork between students and families. As a parent-founded school, we embrace family participation and classroom visits. Parents and guardians need not call in advance to visit, however, families are encouraged to contact teachers in advance, whenever possible. Additionally, in an effort to minimize distractions, families are encouraged to limit their visits to 45 minutes. Additional details can be found in our [Family Handbook](#).

## **G. Guidance on Breaking Up Student Fights**

Two Rivers does not condone physical violence by teachers, staff, students, or families. Teachers and staff must refrain from using physical force as the primary technique to stop fights. If a physical altercation occurs, staff may intervene to separate students and prevent injury, but only in ways that do not involve prohibited physical discipline. Breaking up a fight must focus on immediate safety, using calm verbal directives and physical redirection only when necessary to prevent harm.

The incident must be reported immediately to the Principal and when appropriate, the Director of Special Education and recorded using the Student Incident Report form ([linked here](#)).

## **H. Classroom Pets**

All classroom pets require approval from the Principal and Director of Operations, and must be an essential component of the school-adopted curriculum.

Classroom pets must be limited to animals that are bred in captivity, and necessary to achieve the learning objectives of the curriculum. DC Official Code 8-1851.01 states that only appropriately sized animals with good temperaments may be introduced into the classroom. The provision limits classroom use to instructional purposes only. DC Official Code 8-1808(h)(1) specifies that only the following animals can legally be kept in the District: domesticated dogs, cats, rodents, and rabbits, and captive-bred species of common cage birds, non-poisonous snakes, fish, and turtles that are not kept for commercial purposes. Turtles fewer than 4 inches in diameter are illegal under federal law. There are no exemptions for classroom use, therefore, animals such as small lizards, amphibians, or hedgehogs are prohibited.

Once approved by the Principal and Director of Operations, teachers must communicate in advance with parents/guardians so that they know a pet will be present in the classroom.

Students' health and any allergies and sensitivities of students must be considered. If parents/guardians disclose allergies or sensitivities, the classroom pet will not be permitted.

All classroom pets should be examined by a veterinarian prior to being introduced to a classroom. The animals should be up to date on all vaccinations and follow all of the veterinarian's guidance on proper handling, habitat, feeding, care, and other conditions appropriate for that kind of pet. The law also requires that the animals are cared for in a humane manner and that sufficient food and water are provided. Moreover, the storage of food must be kept sealed in "rodent proof" containers (hard plastic, such as Rubbermaid or Tupperware). Animals may not remain at the school during holiday. They must be taken home by the teacher or a designee. Animals must be adopted or given to a humane organization when the animal is no longer needed for classroom purposes.

## **SECTION 3: EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND EMPLOYMENT RECORDS**

### **A. Employment Requirements**

After making an employment offer, Two Rivers will conduct a reference check on all employees. In compliance with all applicable District laws, including the School Safety Omnibus Act of 2018, all employees will be required to go through a fingerprinting and background check process with the DC Metropolitan Police Department (DCMPD), twenty-year review of employment history where the scope of employment involved direct interaction with children, a character reference, and review of the National Associate of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification Clearinghouse. Additionally, DC MPD background checks will be conducted every other year during employment.

Two Rivers relies upon the accuracy of the information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process, such as resumes, interviews, verification of previous employment, and letters of recommendation. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data will result in Two Rivers' exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment. If the person has been hired and is actually working in their position, employment may be terminated.

As required by the School Safety Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018, all applicants and employees must provide the following:

1. Name, address, phone number, and other relevant contact information for current employer and previous employers for the preceding 20 years where the scope of employment involved direct interaction with children;
2. Contact information for at least one character reference;
3. Authorization/consent for disclosure of complete history records by previous employers and a release of those employers from liability that may arise from the disclosure or release of records;
4. Written affirmations as to whether or not the individual:
  - a. Has ever been the subject of any child abuse or sexual misconduct investigation by any employer, state licensing agency, law enforcement agency, or CFSA (or other state's equivalent) that did not result in a finding that the allegations were false or the alleged incident was not substantiated;
  - b. Has ever been disciplined, discharged, nonrenewed, asked to resign, resigned from or otherwise separated from employment while allegations of child abuse or sexual misconduct were pending or under investigation or due to an adjudication or finding of child abuse or misconduct;
  - c. Has ever had a license, professional license, or certificate suspended,

surrendered or revoked while allegations of child abuse or sexual misconduct were pending or under investigation, or due to an adjudication or finding of child abuse or sexual misconduct.

## **B. Verification of Employment Eligibility**

As required by law, all employees of Two Rivers must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification form (i.e., Form I-9) within the first three (3) business days of employment. Employees must provide evidence of their right to work and verification of identification. This information and documentation will be used only for compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and not for any other purpose. The School must be informed immediately by any employee whose employment eligibility changes or terminates after the start date of their employment. Any employee who is unable to provide appropriate documentation within the first three (3) days of employment, as determined by the HR Team, will be immediately separated from the School in accordance with School policy. Changes in immigration status must be reported to the HR Specialist as soon as they occur. Failure to make such a report or any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the School's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment, or if the person has been hired, the School's termination of their employment.

**Worker's Permit:** If you are a minor, you must have a current Worker's Permit before you begin work.

**Tax Status Consideration:** All employees must fill out a W-4 Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate and a State equivalent of a Federal W-4, where applicable.

**New Hire Forms:** All employees must complete all employment-related forms and return them to the HR Team.

### **C. Offer Letters**

Where applicable, a formal agreement specifying details of employment, salary, benefits, basic job description, and the like, will be prepared upon intent to hire. Signatures and dates will be required from the employee and the Executive Director or their designee. However, nothing in an offer letter shall alter the at-will nature of your employment with Two Rivers. This means that employment may be terminated at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice by you or by Two Rivers.

### **D. Personnel Data Changes**

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the HR Team of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, beneficiaries, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times.

### **E. Personnel Records**

If you would like to review your official personnel file while you are employed by Two Rivers, you must make this request, in writing, to the HR Team. Your request will be granted or denied at Two Rivers' discretion. If granted, the review of your records will be accommodated at a mutually convenient time in the presence of an HR Team member. Personnel records may not leave the school because they are confidential and the property of Two Rivers. Only authorized members of the administration have access to personnel files. Removal or alteration of any personnel documentation, including the file itself, or information pertaining to any individual, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

It is important that the School's personnel records are correct, complete, and up-to-date. Please notify the HR Team of any changes in employee information including, but not limited to, the name and contact information for the person to call in case of an emergency, and changes in name, marital status, address, telephone number, beneficiaries, or dependents.

### **F. Employment Classifications**

**Regular Full Time:** Regular Full Time employees are those individuals who are working the equivalent of 40 hours per week. These employees are eligible for full benefits offered by the School.

**Regular Part-Time:** Regular Part-Time employees are those individuals who work fewer than 40 hours per week. These employees are eligible for benefits at a reduced rate or in accordance with respective benefit plan allowances. If an employee works fewer than 30 hours per week they will not be eligible for health or dental benefits.

**Temporary:** Temporary [full- or part-time] employees are those individuals who are hired for a specific task over a limited, defined period of time. These employees may be eligible for benefits offered by the School or in accordance with respective benefit plan allowances.

**Exempt and Non-exempt Designation:** The Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”) provides for two categories of employees – exempt and non-exempt.

- **Exempt:** An exempt employee is one who works in a bona fide executive, administrative or professional position, as defined by the FLSA and applicable state law. The nature of an exempt position may require an exempt employee to work beyond regularly scheduled hours in a given workweek. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay and are not covered by the overtime pay provisions of the federal FLSA and applicable state law.
- **Non-exempt:** A non-exempt employee is one who does not meet the standards for exempt status under the FLSA. Non-exempt positions are eligible to receive overtime pay, in accordance with the FLSA and applicable state laws, and are required to account on an hourly basis for all time worked, as well as PTO and other leave time used. A supervisor must approve overtime work before it is performed, and such approval must be in writing. Working overtime without prior written approval will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**Essential and Nonessential Designation:** When one or more schools in our network closes or delays opening essential employees, who are considered directly responsible for the safe opening or closing of schools, must report to their school site as scheduled to complete time-sensitive work, when needed. Essential Employees ensure critical business functions and school operational functions continue when the building is closed. When the buildings are closed, this does not mean that the school is closed and in most cases will mean that non-essential employees will work remotely. School closures for the purpose of defining essential and nonessential employees do not include regularly scheduled holidays and breaks. Additional details can be found in the [supplemental procedures guide](#).

Level I Essential Employees	
Facilities & Operations Staff	Network Facilities Manager

<b>Level II Essential Employees</b>	
<b>Two Rivers Executive Team</b>	Executive Director Special Projects Manager for the Office of the Executive Director Chief Operating Officer Chief Academic Officer Chief of Staff <b>Chief Human Resources Officer</b>
<b>Two Rivers School Leadership</b>	Principal Assistant Principal School Culture Coordinator Dean of Students Campus Director of Special Education
<b>School Administrative Staff</b>	Front Desk Associate Business Manager
<b>Facilities &amp; Operations Staff</b>	Director of Operations Technology Services Manager Food Service Manager Business and Finance Manager <b>Business Operations Associate</b>

## **SECTION 4: EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION**

### **A. Payroll Procedures**

Prior to the end of an employee's first month of employment, all necessary benefit information must be completed, forms processed, offer letter signed, resume on file, signed employee handbook, and new employee orientation must have been completed.

Paychecks - Employees of Two Rivers are paid twice a month (semi-monthly) on the 7th and 22nd of each month.

Salaried employees are paid in arrears, which means that time worked for the 1st - 15th of the month is included on the second paycheck of the month and the 16th - the end of the month on the first paycheck of the month.

In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a holiday or weekend, employees will receive payment on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday.

Employees may have pay directly deposited into their chosen bank accounts. Employees will receive an itemized statement of wages when a direct deposit is used. If an employee does not elect to use direct deposit and their paycheck is lost, stolen, or destroyed, a fee will be assessed to cover the costs associated with replacing such paychecks.

Any live checks will be available at 1227 4th Street NE, unless otherwise notified.

In order to receive the entire yearly salary specified in the offer letter, employees are required to fulfill the duties outlined in the offer letter. Employees who resign their position or are asked to leave before the end of the school year receive only those wages earned through their last day of employment.

Non-returning, school-year employees will be terminated in June of their final school year, unless the employment is terminated prior to the end of the school year. Benefits for non-returning, school-year employees will end as of June 30.

### **B. Payroll Corrections**

Two Rivers takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid on the scheduled payday. In the event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy

to the attention of the HR Team so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

### **C. Pay Deductions**

The law requires that Two Rivers make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable federal, District of Columbia, and local income taxes. Two Rivers must deduct Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security "wage base." Two Rivers matches the amount of Social Security taxes paid by each employee.

If employees have questions concerning why deductions were made from their paychecks or how they were calculated, the HR Team can assist in providing answers.

### **D. Timekeeping**

Accurately recorded time worked is the responsibility of every hourly, nonexempt employee (this Section 4.D. does not apply to Teachers, Assistant Teachers, and all other exempt employees). Federal and District of Columbia laws require Two Rivers to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties. Nonexempt employees must accurately record the time they begin and end their work. Nonexempt employees must also accurately record the time they begin and end breaks.

A supervisor must approve overtime work before it is performed, and such approval must be in writing. Working overtime without prior written approval will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

A schedule is provided for all who submit time records and it is expected that employees will adhere to scheduled hours.

Altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records or recording time on another employee's time record will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Nonexempt employees should report to work no more than seven (7) minutes prior to their scheduled starting time and should not stay more than seven (7) minutes after their scheduled stop time without express prior written authorization from your supervisor.

## **SECTION 5: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

This section provides a brief description of the employee benefit plans in effect. To the extent that the information in this section conflicts with the benefit plan documents, the benefit plan documents control. If you have any questions about Two Rivers' employee benefits programs or need further clarification of the benefits described, please contact the HR Team. Additionally, employees can access additional information about the employee benefit plans on the employee documents intranet.

**The benefits programs described in this section are subject to change, either with or without notice, at the discretion of the administration of Two Rivers.**

### **A. Length of Service and Hire Date**

Your hire date and length of service are important factors in determining your eligibility for Two Rivers' benefits programs. Your date of hire will be the date used to determine eligibility for benefits. Prior service in the same or different employment category may not count toward eligibility for benefits.

Your length of service is the period of continuous employment with the School since your most recent hire date.

### **B. Health Insurance**

Two Rivers offers health insurance for eligible employees and their dependents. Please consult with the HR Team for the current information on the coverage and costs for the employee and dependent health insurance. In the event the plan documents differ from any of the descriptions contained herein, the language in the plan documents will prevail.

### **C. Continuation of Health Insurance Coverage (COBRA)**

Health insurance coverage expires on the last day of the month during which termination, leave of absence, or another qualifying event occurs. In accordance with the provisions of COBRA, employees who are covered under the School's health insurance plan at the time of a qualifying event may elect to continue health insurance coverage for themselves, their spouses, and/or their dependents at their own expense.

A notification of COBRA continuation will be provided to employees at the beginning of a qualifying event.

#### **D. Workers' Compensation Insurance**

The School provides workers' compensation insurance, covering all employees while working. Although you should use caution in your work and follow all safety requirements and procedures set forth by the School, any kind of injury while on the job should immediately be brought to the attention of your immediate supervisor and Human Resources. An accident report must be completed as soon as possible. An employee must be out for the first 3 days to receive worker's compensation benefits.

#### **E. Paid Leave**

**Paid Time Off** – Unless otherwise specified, all full-time employees will be given Paid Time Off (PTO) to use for vacations, sick leave, leave under the District of Columbia Accrued Safe and Sick Leave Act (ASSLA) and Earned Sick and Safe Leave Amendment Act (ESSLA), and personal days. School-year staff, including teachers, assistant teachers, counselors, and related service providers will be given nine (9) days per school year. All 12-month staff will be given fifteen (15) days per year, except for 12-month staff required to work over certain break periods, including the COO, Registrar, and Enrollment and Recruitment Associate, who will be given twenty (20) days per year.

PTO will be calculated based on the employee's base rate of pay at the time PTO is taken and will not include any special forms of compensation. Two Rivers advances PTO to employees at the beginning of the school year for school-year staff and July 1<sup>st</sup> for 12-month staff.

If an employee resigns or is terminated from employment before having earned the PTO, they must pay back any PTO used that has not been earned.

Two Rivers does not provide monetary payment to school-year employees for unused PTO days upon the termination of employment, unless approved by the Executive Director. Two Rivers will provide monetary payment to 12-month employees for a maximum of 60 hours of unused PTO days upon the termination of employment. If an employee terminates employment and is rehired within one (1) year of the termination, Two Rivers will reinstate accrued, but unused PTO to the extent required by law.

For school-year staff, PTO allotment will begin accruing at the start of the school year and stop accruing the final duty-day of the school year. A maximum of 32 hours (four days) of unused PTO may be carried over to the next school year. **Unused PTO may be transferred to the Leave Donation Bank. Additional details can be found in the [supplemental procedures guide](#).**

Twelve-month staff's PTO will accrue from July 1 to June 30. With approval from the supervisor and Executive Director, a 12-month employee may be advanced PTO beginning June 1<sup>st</sup> for the upcoming year. A maximum of 60 hours of unused PTO may be carried over to the next year. **Unused PTO may be transferred to the Leave Donation Bank. Additional details can be found in the [supplemental procedures guide](#).**

The availability of PTO does not override the application of Two Rivers' attendance policy, which is designed to help ensure a dependable and consistent workforce. Employees may be disciplined, including termination of employment, for violating Two Rivers' attendance policy even though they still have available PTO.

***Requesting and Usage of PTO*** – If an employee wishes to use PTO for vacation or other personal purposes, the employee must submit a PTO request for the proposed day(s) off to an employee's supervisor through the current system used for payroll and time-off requests. Requests for use of PTO for vacation/personal purposes must be made in writing submitted and approved in advance by the employee's supervisor.

Vacations/personal days must be scheduled in such a way that work responsibilities can be assigned to others and on-going operations will not be disrupted. To ensure that this occurs, employees must schedule their vacations/personal days with the employee's supervisor at least seven (7) days in advance of the desired leave. Any preferences in the granting of PTO for vacation purposes will be based upon the employee's length of service with the School and the situation. The School reserves the right to deny or reschedule requests for PTO for vacation/personal purposes based on the needs of the School. Failure to comply with the denial of a request for scheduled PTO may result in discipline, including termination of employment. PTO for vacation/personal purposes will be included with base pay in the paycheck covering the days in which the vacation/personal day was taken. Two Rivers does not provide monetary payment to its employees for unused PTO days upon the termination of employment.

***Unscheduled PTO*** – If an employee is unable to report for work due to illness, injury or another emergency, the employee may use PTO days if they properly notify the School of their inability to report for work before their reporting time, preferably the night before the unscheduled PTO is taken, but in no event no later than 7:00 am on the day of the absence for instructional staff and no later than one hour prior to scheduled report time for non-instructional staff. Properly notifying the School means calling, texting, or emailing your supervisor at the contact number or email address designated by your supervisor. If PTO is used for 3 or more consecutive days for illness or injury, substantiating medical documentation ("reasonable certification") must be provided to Two Rivers upon request. Failure to comply with

the directives set forth herein may result in discipline, including termination of employment.

**Accrued Sick and Safe Leave** (District of Columbia Employees) – Two Rivers complies with the District of Columbia Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act of 2008, as amended, and the Earned Sick and Safe Leave Amendment Act (ESSLA).

- Employees may use available PTO to cover absences related to their own or a family member's illness or for absences related to sexual abuse, stalking, or domestic violence.
- PTO may be used when: (1) the employee or their family member is sick (resulting from physical or mental illness or injury); (2) the employee or their family member needs routine or preventative medical care; or (3) the employee needs time off to seek medical care, shelter, counseling, a court order, or other services related to the employee or employee's family member being a victim of sexual abuse, stalking or domestic violence.
- *A family member* includes a spouse, domestic partner, parents of a spouse, children (including foster children and grandchildren), spouses of children, parents, brothers and sisters, and the spouses of brothers and sisters.
- Employees should follow the process for requesting PTO for vacation/personal purposes when time off under ASSLA and ESSLA is foreseeable. If the need for ASSLA and ESSLA leave is unforeseeable, the employee should notify their supervisor orally within 24 hours of the employee learning of the need for time off.
- Two Rivers will not discipline or take any other adverse action against an employee for proper use of ASSLA and ESSLA leave. Any employee who believes in good faith that he/she/they has been retaliated against for exercising rights under ASSLA and ESSLA, or for, in good faith, filing, testifying, assisting or participating in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted regarding a perceived violation of ASSLA and ESSLA should report that concern to the School in accordance with the procedures set forth in the School's Policy Against Workplace Discrimination & Retaliation.

**Doctor/Dentist Appointments** – Personal appointments for doctors or dentists should be made on the employee's personal time. If appointments during scheduled work hours cannot be avoided, several days advance notice of your absence to your supervisor is required, and an employee will have to use accrued, unused PTO to the extent permitted by law.

**Instructional Staff PTO Exclusions** – Unless legally required or if for bereavement leave, a PTO day **will not** be granted to Instructional Staff on the days listed below, **unless otherwise approved by the supervisor**. If time off is taken on a PTO Exclusion date, it will

be unpaid. Instructional Staff includes teachers, assistant teachers, deans, principals, assistant principals, counselors, related service providers (RSP), special education directors, and directors of instructional programming.

- The first scheduled day of the school year;
- The last scheduled day of the school year;
- The day preceding or the day following any holiday or break;
- Staff orientation and in-service days;
- Staff development program days, including Wednesday afternoons. RSP will be permitted to take PTO on Wednesday afternoons when not required to attend PD, as determined by the Principal and approved by the Director of Special Education. In order to be eligible for PTO all required paperwork must be up to date. RSP must attend Crew before starting PTO.
- All state-mandated standardized testing days.

**Leadership Council PTO Exclusions** - Unless legally required or if on bereavement leave, a PTO day will not be granted to leadership council members on the days listed below. If time off is taken on a PTO Exclusion date, it will be unpaid **unless otherwise approved by the supervisor.**

- Leadership Council June retreat days
- Leadership Council meetings, unless PTO was approved prior to the scheduling of the meeting
- All staff August orientation days (unless approved by the Executive Director)
- First day of school

**All Staff PTO Exclusions** - Unless legally required or if on bereavement leave, a PTO day will not be granted to any employee on the days listed below. If time off is taken on a PTO Exclusion date, it will be unpaid **unless otherwise approved by the supervisor.**

- Compliance and accreditation review days;
- August orientation opening circle;
- August orientation closing circle;
- June closing circle.

**Bereavement Leave** – Regular Full-Time employees will be granted, with pay, five (5) days of bereavement leave in the event of the death of an immediate member of the employee’s family. Examples of immediate family members include: parent, step-parent, spouse, partner, siblings, step-siblings, children, miscarriages, children to whom the employee is the legal guardian, fiancé or fiancée, spouse’s parents, spouse’s child by a previous marriage, grandparent, spouse’s grandparent, spouse’s grandchild, or grandchild. If you have an

immediate family that is not listed here, please reach out to the HR team.

Full-time salaried employees are allowed up to three (3) days of paid bereavement leave following the death of an aunt, uncle or other close family member.

In the event of the death of a close friend, or if you would like to take additional leave beyond the time allotted above, you may be granted bereavement leave without pay or use PTO at the discretion of your supervisor.

**Religious Holidays** – An employee may use up to three (3) days of Religious Leave to attend special religious services or to observe religious holidays in observance of sincerely held religious beliefs. If needed, additional time off may be granted through the use of PTO or unpaid leave.

**Holidays** – Two Rivers observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Emancipation Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day Labor Day
- Indigenous Peoples' Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Regular Full-Time employees and Regular Part-Time employees will receive regular pay for these recognized holidays. A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will usually be observed on the preceding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will usually be observed on the following Monday.

**School Breaks** – Employees may receive additional paid time off during school breaks, such as Winter Break and Spring Break, as determined annually by School management based on the school calendar and the required responsibilities of the position. To ensure essential, time-sensitive work is completed, the following employees will be required to work during Spring Break: COO, Registrar, Facilities Manager, and the Enrollment and Recruitment Associate. The Facilities Manager will be required to work during Winter Break.

The schools will be closed for all employees for a total of five (5) days in December and early January, which includes Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day with two additional days to be approved by the direct supervisor. No employees, essential or non-essential will be required to work during these days.

**Jury Duty** – If called for jury duty, Two Rivers will pay the employee for the actual days spent serving on the jury. An employee is not eligible for paid leave if they would not have earned wages while serving on jury duty.

- An employee must provide the School with reasonable notice of time off needed for jury duty. As such, the School asks that employees request leave at least three (3) days in advance of the date for jury duty, and requires that employees submit a copy of their jury duty notice to their immediate manager with the leave request. In addition, upon returning to work, an employee must provide their immediate supervisor with a copy of a release form signed by the Court.
- Exempt (salaried) employees may be required to continue to meet their assigned responsibilities while serving on jury duty.
- All employees must report for work during court recesses of four (4) hours or more.

**PTO Donation Bank** - In instances where a Two Rivers staff member is not eligible for or has exhausted DC Paid Family Leave and short-term disability, and has an ongoing medical emergency, or need to care for a spouse, child, or parents who has experienced a medical emergency, or is adversely affected by a natural disaster (as declared by the Federal Government), they may apply for leave from the PTO donation bank. To be considered eligible, the applicant must have been employed by Two Rivers for one year and cannot be on a Performance Improvement Plan. Additional details can be found in the [supplemental procedures guide](#).

**Paid Time Off Violations** - Failure to comply with the paid time off policies may result in disciplinary action, including a written warning, corrective action letter, performance improvement plan, or the termination of employment, depending upon the individual circumstances and facts.

## F. Other Types of Leave

In addition to the types of leave described above, Two Rivers provides the following types of leave:

**Military Leave** – The School will grant military leave to eligible employees in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws.

## **Leave for Appearance as Witness**

If subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness, an employee will be granted unpaid leave. Under such circumstances, an employee may use any of their accumulated PTO days.

- An employee must provide the School with reasonable notice of time off needed for a court appearance required by a subpoena. As such, the School asks that employees request leave at least three (3) days in advance of the date for the court appearance and requires that employees submit a copy of their subpoena to their immediate supervisor with their leave request.
- All employees must report for work during court recesses of four (4) hours or more.
- If an employee is a party to a legal proceeding, the School will consider requests for leave on a case-by-case basis, subject to the D.C. Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act.

**Voting** – Employees should make every effort to complete their voting for federal, state, or local elections during non-work hours. **If an employee is not able to vote during non-work hours, an employee will be granted at least two (2) hours of leave to vote. Additional time off in the form of PTO may be used beyond the two hours, but must be approved by the supervisor.**

**Parental Leave** – Employees working in the District of Columbia are entitled to parental leave. Unless granting leave would disrupt the School’s business and leave would make the achievement of production or service delivery unusually difficult, qualifying employees may take a total of 24 hours of leave during any 12-month period to attend or participate in school-related events for their children. The following individuals qualify for parental leave: (1) a parent, legal guardian, or individual with legal custody of a child; (2) an aunt, uncle or grandparent of a child; or (3) a person married to a parent, legal guardian, individual with legal custody, aunt, uncle or grandparent of a child. Employees wishing to take parental leave must provide their supervisor with 10 days notice of the need for leave, unless the leave is not reasonably foreseeable. Parental leave is unpaid, but employees may substitute PTO for unpaid leave. Employment benefits and seniority shall not be lost during leave.

**Family and Medical Leave** – See Family and Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) Policy (Section 1.H).

**Leave of Absence** – There is no “Leave of Absence,” unless required by law (or, where applicable, employment contract). If you are not legally or contractually entitled to a leave of absence, you may leave your employment with the School at any time. We expect that you will give proper notice. However, the School is under no obligation to rehire you in the same position or a similar position should you desire to return as a School employee. Your re-employment will depend upon, but not be limited by, the needs of the School for an

employee such as yourself and the circumstances under which you left the School. Any benefits you enjoy as an employee will not continue, except as provided by COBRA. Any seniority you accumulate while employed by the School will be forfeited upon your termination, and will not be credited to your status should you return as a School employee.

**Flextime** - The operating days and hours of Two Rivers are generally Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. All employees are expected to be at work during their prescribed core hours unless approval is granted by your immediate supervisor for a flexible work schedule for a specific date or dates. Supervisors approve flextime on a case-by-case basis. The supervisor will approve or deny the flextime request based on staffing needs, the employee's job duties, and the employee's work record. A flextime arrangement may be suspended or canceled at any time. Exempt employees must depart from any flextime schedule to perform their jobs. Non-exempt employees may be asked to work overtime regardless of a flextime schedule.

**DC Paid Family Leave** - On July 1, 2020, the District of Columbia began administering paid leave benefits. [DC workers can now apply for paid family leave](#). The Paid Leave Act provides up to:

- 12 weeks to bond with a new child
- 12 weeks to care for a family member with a serious health condition
- 12 weeks to care for your own serious health condition, including 2 weeks of prenatal care

For inquiries regarding the Paid Family Leave program, please contact the Office of Paid Family Leave at [does.opfl@dc.gov](mailto:does.opfl@dc.gov) or visit our website [dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov](http://dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov). Individuals that require assistance due to hearing impairment, please call 711 to access TTY services.

## **G. Retirement Plan**

If employees meet the eligibility requirements they can participate in the School's retirement plan. Details concerning the requirements for eligibility and the benefits provided by this plan are set forth in a summary booklet and the plan documents, all of which can be obtained from the HR Team. In the event the plan documents differ from any of the descriptions contained herein, the language in the plan documents will prevail.

## **H. Travel Policy**

Various travel expense limitations and guidelines have been established and are detailed in the [supplemental procedures guide](#). Staff are authorized to travel or to incur expenses on behalf of the organization when, in the judgment of the Executive Director or designee, the best

interests of the organization will be served. The Executive Director, or designee, shall approve all travel expenses before any expense is incurred. After incurring travel expenses, employees shall attest to all expenses reported on the expense form, except where noted, in the procedures guide. Employees should thoroughly review the Travel Policy section of the [supplemental procedures guide](#) before travel to ensure all guidelines are followed.

**I. Remote Work & Telework**

Eligible Employees may request a formal telework arrangement after having been employed with Two Rivers for a minimum of 90 days of continuous, regular employment and must have demonstrated satisfactory performance. To participate in teleworking, a teleworking agreement must be completed and signed by a Two Rivers' Human Resources representative, the employee, and the employee's supervisor. Two Rivers supports teleworking for employees with job duties that lend themselves to this arrangement provided certain requirements are met. All positions do not lend themselves to teleworking arrangements. Suitability for teleworking depends on job content, rather than job role, title, or work schedule. Employees should achieve and maintain an acceptable job performance level to qualify for teleworking. Additional details on the Remote Work and Telework Policy and Procedures can be found in our [supplemental procedures guide](#). Eligible positions are included in the chart below:

Eligible	Ineligible	Ineligible During School Year, but Eligible During Summer Months
Executive Director Special Projects Manager Chief Academic Officer Chief of Staff Data Manager Attendance and Records Coordinator Enrollment and Recruitment Coordinator Chief of Human Resources Human Resources Specialist Hiring and Recruitment Coordinator Communications Associate Development and Donor Manager Director of Family Engagement Senior Director of Special Populations School Psychologist Director of Mental Health Speech-Language Pathologist	Network Facilities Manager Teacher Assistant Teacher Counselor Front Desk Associate	Content Director Director of Social Emotional Learning Principal Assistant Principal Campus Director of Special Education Dean of Students School Culture Coordinator Food Service Manager Technology Service Manager Director of High School Placement & Alumni Support

Occupational Therapist Special Education Compliance Manager Chief Operating Officer Director of Operations Business & Finance Manager Business Manager Business Operations Associate		
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**J. Staff Admission Preference**

Children of Two Rivers staff may receive enrollment preference to Two Rivers. The School Reform Act ([Title 38, Subtitle IV, Chapter 18](#)) limits the number of employees’ children enrolled at 10% of the school’s total student body. Only full-time employees who are DC residents are eligible for the preference. Below is Two Rivers’ criteria for giving enrollment preference to children of staff members. The Two Rivers staff member may receive enrollment preference if:

- A permanent, full-time staff member when applying and continues to be a permanent, full-time staff member through the student’s start date. For purposes of staff preference only, a full-time staff member is defined as working at least 30 hours per week.
- Has worked at Two Rivers at least one year before the student’s start date;
- Lives in Washington, DC at the time of school registration/enrollment (usually the spring before the student starts school) and remains living in Washington, DC while the child attends Two Rivers;
- The child must meet the required grade level age by September 30;
- Must meet all requirements as defined by OSSE and the My School DC lottery to enroll in a DC school.
- Staff preference will be granted one-time per child. Once enrolled, staff cannot use staff preference to transfer a child between campuses; however, they may leverage eligible siblings or transfer preferences.
- Staff preference will be granted for use at one Two Rivers campus. The staff member may state their preferred location. If not stated, then preference would be assigned to the higher ranked campus.

**L. Employee Evaluations and Performance Supports**

Two Rivers believes a thoughtful learning community roots practice in theory, demonstrates theory in practice, and gives all participants an opportunity to learn and lead. Goal setting and receiving feedback on your performance is an integral structure that serves this purpose to

grow every educator as a learner and leader.

All employees and supervisors will meet throughout the year (e.g. beginning of the school year, middle of year, and end of year) to establish goals, document progress towards goals, and outline additional support, as needed. The supervisor and employee should be in close communication in-between formal meetings about any changes in action steps and provide ongoing performance feedback.

Additional details can be found in our [supplemental procedures guide](#).

## **SECTION 6: EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE**

### **A. Violations**

Violation of the School's rules, policies, and procedures or the failure to adhere to the standards as set forth in this Handbook, or as otherwise communicated to an employee, may result in disciplinary action, which may take the form of an oral or written warning, suspension, or immediate discharge, depending upon the facts and circumstances of the situation. Disciplinary action will be instituted at the discretion of the Executive Director in accordance with the severity of the violation committed by the employee. Any disciplinary action taken against an employee will be documented in the employee's personnel file.

In general, the following are conduct, which will result in immediate discipline, up to, and including termination of employment (this list is illustrative and is in no way exhaustive):

- Discourtesy to a student, parent, and/or guardian
- Insubordination
- Intoxication
- Corporal punishment
- Misconduct
- Dishonesty
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of firearms or illegal substances on the School's property
- Theft or removal or possession of the School's property
- Violation of School policies and/or procedures
- Falsification of School records, including time records
- Working under the influence of alcohol or recreational/illegal drugs
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Any sexual and/or inappropriate contact by an employee with a student or other minor child
- Unacceptable job performance, conduct, and/or attendance
- Conduct which is injurious to the School

If an employee violates Two Rivers policies the supervisor will follow the disciplinary steps below. Depending upon the severity of the policy violation, the supervisor, with the approval of the Executive Director, reserves the right to take any disciplinary action deemed appropriate, including immediate termination.

1. Verbal warning
2. Written warning
3. Formal write up, in which HR is copied and the write up is added to employee's employment file

## **B. Workplace Investigations**

The Human Resources (HR) Team investigates reported allegations of policy violations related to staff employment issues. The HR Team will determine if a workplace investigation is necessary in order to address the complaint based on the nature and severity of the complaint and the information provided.

Human Resources, in conjunction with the Executive Director, will evaluate whether an administrative leave is appropriate in circumstances which are deemed to be egregious or a safety concern.

- 1. Reporting Violations or Requesting an Investigation:** A report or request may be made via phone call, email ([hr@tworiverspcs.org](mailto:hr@tworiverspcs.org)), or verbally to a member of the HR Team.

Additional details can be found in the [supplemental procedures guide](#).

## **SECTION 7: TERMINATION**

### **A. Voluntary Terminations**

Unless otherwise agreed upon in writing, you are an employee at will. As an employee at will, you have the right to terminate your employment with the School at any time and for any reason, with or without notice. Voluntary termination of employment by you can be accomplished in the following ways:

**Resignation** – Resignation occurs when you officially ask to be separated from employment. As a general rule, employees should, whenever possible, submit written notice of their resignation to their immediate supervisor at least two (2) weeks in advance of the intended last day of employment. The last day of employment cannot end on a holiday. In addition, once an employee has submitted a notice of their resignation, the School will not grant paid leave to the employee, unless the employee provides the School with a physician's note documenting the inability to work. The School reserves the right to relieve resigning employees of their duties immediately in situations where, in the School's sole discretion: (1) the notice period is unnecessary; (2) employment through the notice period could result in disruption of the operations of the School; or (3) the School has other valid business reasons.

**Failure to Report to Work** – If an employee fails to report to work as scheduled without calling in to report the absence for two (2) or more consecutive workdays, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily abandoned their job, and employment will be terminated.

### **B. Involuntary Terminations**

Unless otherwise agreed upon in writing, you are an employee at will, and, as such, the School has the right to terminate your employment at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

### **C. Return of Property**

If employment is terminated for any reason, employees will be required to return all School property (including, but not limited to laptops, cell phones, keys, security cards, pagers, radios, and any other School records, documents, materials, data or other proprietary information belonging to the School) to the Operations Team.

### **D. References and Letters of Recommendation**

Pursuant to the School Safety Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018 (“Omnibus Act”), no employee, contractor, or agent of Two Rivers may assist an individual in obtaining a job involving direct interaction with minors if they know or have probable cause to believe that the individual engaged in sexual misconduct or sexual abuse regarding a child or student in violation of DC or federal law. This prohibition does not apply if the information giving rise to probable cause has been properly reported to law enforcement and any other authorities as required by Federal, State, or local law; AND

- The matter has been officially closed or the prosecutor or police with jurisdiction over the alleged misconduct has investigated the allegations and notified school officials that there is insufficient information to establish probable cause that the school employee, contractor, or agent engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of the law;
- The school employee, contractor, or agent has been charged with, and acquitted or otherwise exonerated of the alleged misconduct; or
- The case or investigation remains open and there have been no charges filed against, or indictment of, the school employee, contractor, or agent within 4 years of the date on which the information was reported to a law enforcement agency.

In order to ensure compliance with this policy, the following steps will be taken:

- All employees will be notified in writing of this policy and the prohibition against assisting employment of perpetrators of sexual abuse upon hiring and at least annually through the Staff Handbook.
- All Two Rivers board members will be notified in writing of this policy and the prohibition against assisting the employment of perpetrators of sexual abuse upon appointment to the board and at least annually.
- All contractors will be notified in writing of this policy and the prohibition against assisting the employment of perpetrators of sexual abuse upon hiring and at least annually.

Any school employee, contractor, or agent who knowingly assists another school employee, contractor, or agent who is known or believed to have engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Two Rivers staff handbook, up to and including termination of employment.

The Two Rivers human resources team shall maintain records of all allegations of sexual misconduct, child abuse, or the failure to report child abuse, as well as the outcome of any subsequent investigation for all school employees, contractors, or agents. The human resources team shall provide this information when contacted by another LEA or school that is considering hiring the applicant.

References and/or letters of recommendation for departed or departing employees are not provided as a matter of right. To ensure compliance with the Omnibus Act, requests for

references and/or letters of recommendation should only be completed by the direct supervisor. No other employee, except for a member of the human resources team, should complete references and/or letters of recommendation. The School will only provide a departed or departing employee's prospective employers with their dates of employment, rate of pay, and job classification. The School will not provide further information to prospective employers unless the former employee provides written and signed authorization to the direct supervisor.

No board member of Two Rivers should provide an employment verification or recommendation, either verbal or written, on behalf of a current or former Two Rivers employee. Requests for employment verification or recommendations received by a board member should be forwarded to the human resources team at [HR@tworiverspcs.org](mailto:HR@tworiverspcs.org).

#### **E. Severance**

Two Rivers will only provide severance to employees that have been employed by Two Rivers for ten (10) or more years and whose positions have been eliminated by Two Rivers, unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director. Employees who have been employed for 10-14 years will receive two weeks of severance pay. Employees who have been employed for 15 years or more will receive four weeks of severance pay.

# Your Employee Rights Under the Family and Medical Leave Act

## What is FMLA leave?

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law that provides eligible employees with **job-protected leave** for qualifying family and medical reasons. The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) enforces the FMLA for most employees.

Eligible employees can take **up to 12 workweeks** of FMLA leave in a 12-month period for:

- The birth, adoption or foster placement of a child with you,
- Your serious mental or physical health condition that makes you unable to work,
- To care for your spouse, child or parent with a serious mental or physical health condition, and
- Certain qualifying reasons related to the foreign deployment of your spouse, child or parent who is a military servicemember.

An eligible employee who is the spouse, child, parent or next of kin of a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness **may take up to 26 workweeks** of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember.

You have the right to use FMLA leave in **one block of time**. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, you may take FMLA leave **intermittently in separate blocks of time, or on a reduced schedule** by working less hours each day or week. Read Fact Sheet #28M(c) for more information.

FMLA leave is **not paid leave**, but you may choose, or be required by your employer, to use any employer-provided paid leave if your employer's paid leave policy covers the reason for which you need FMLA leave.

## Am I eligible to take FMLA leave?

You are an **eligible employee** if **all** of the following apply:

- You work for a covered employer,
- You have worked for your employer at least 12 months,
- You have at least 1,250 hours of service for your employer during the 12 months before your leave, and
- Your employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of your work location.

Airline flight crew employees have different "hours of service" requirements.

You work for a **covered employer** if **one** of the following applies:

- You work for a private employer that had at least 50 employees during at least 20 workweeks in the current or previous calendar year,
- You work for an elementary or public or private secondary school, or
- You work for a public agency, such as a local, state or federal government agency. Most federal employees are covered by Title II of the FMLA, administered by the Office of Personnel Management.

## How do I request FMLA leave?

Generally, to request FMLA leave you **must**:

- Follow your employer's normal policies for requesting leave,
- Give notice at least 30 days before your need for FMLA leave, or
- If advance notice is not possible, give notice as soon as possible.

You **do not have to share a medical diagnosis** but must provide enough information to your employer so they can determine whether the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. You **must also inform your employer if FMLA leave was previously taken** or approved for the same reason when requesting additional leave.

Your employer **may request certification** from a health care provider to verify medical leave and may request certification of a qualifying exigency.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

State employees may be subject to certain limitations in pursuit of direct lawsuits regarding leave for their own serious health conditions. Most federal and certain congressional employees are also covered by the law but are subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management or Congress.

## What does my employer need to do?

If you are eligible for FMLA leave, your employer **must**:

- Allow you to take job-protected time off work for a qualifying reason,
- Continue your group health plan coverage while you are on leave on the same basis as if you had not taken leave, and
- Allow you to return to the same job, or a virtually identical job with the same pay, benefits and other working conditions, including shift and location, at the end of your leave.

Your employer **cannot interfere with your FMLA rights** or threaten or punish you for exercising your rights under the law. For example, your employer cannot retaliate against you for requesting FMLA leave or cooperating with a WHD investigation.

After becoming aware that your need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, your employer **must confirm whether you are eligible** or not eligible for FMLA leave. If your employer determines that you are eligible, your employer **must notify you in writing**:

- About your FMLA rights and responsibilities, and
- How much of your requested leave, if any, will be FMLA-protected leave.

## Where can I find more information?

Call 1-866-487-9243 or visit [dol.gov/fmla](http://dol.gov/fmla) to learn more.

If you believe your rights under the FMLA have been violated, you may file a complaint with WHD or file a private lawsuit against your employer in court. **Scan the QR code to learn about our WHD complaint process.**



WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



## NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES

### Information on Paid Family Leave in the District of Columbia

Your employer is subject to the District of Columbia's Paid Family Leave law, which provides covered employees paid time off from work for qualifying parental, family, medical, and prenatal events. For more information about the Paid Family Leave program, please visit the Office of Paid Family Leave's website at [dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov](https://dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov).

#### Covered Workers

To receive benefits under the Paid Family Leave program, you must work for a covered employer in DC. To find out if you are a covered worker, you can ask your employer or contact the Office of Paid Family Leave using the contact information below. Your employer is required to tell you if you are covered by the Paid Family Leave program. Additionally, your employer is required to provide you information about the Paid Family Leave program at these three (3) times:

1. At the time you were hired;
2. At least once a year; and
3. If you ask your employer for leave that could qualify for benefits under the Paid Family Leave program.

#### Covered Events

There are four (4) kinds of Paid Family Leave benefits:

1. Parental leave - receive benefits to bond with a new child for up to 12 weeks in a year;
2. Family leave - receive benefits to care for a family member for up to 12 weeks in a year;
3. Medical leave - receive benefits for your own serious health condition for up to 12 weeks in a year; and
4. Prenatal leave - receive benefits for prenatal medical care for up to 2 weeks in a year.

#### Maximum Leave Entitlement

Each kind of leave has its own eligibility rules and its own limit on the length of time you can receive benefits in a year. The maximum amount of leave for any combination of parental, family, and medical leave is 12 weeks. However, there is an exception for pregnant women who take prenatal leave. Pregnant women are eligible for 2 weeks of prenatal leave while pregnant and 12 weeks of parental leave after giving birth, for a maximum of 14 weeks.

#### Applying for Benefits

If you have experienced an event that may qualify for benefits, be sure to apply no more than 30 days after your event. You can learn more about applying for benefits with the Office of Paid Family Leave at [dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov](https://dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov).

#### Benefit Amounts

Paid Family Leave benefits are based on the wages your employer paid to you and reported to the Department of Employment Services. If you believe your wages were reported incorrectly, you have the right to provide proof of your correct wages. The current maximum weekly benefit amount is \$1,153.

#### Employee Protection

The Office of Paid Family Leave does not administer any job protections for District workers who take leave from work. However, some job protections may be available under laws and regulations administered by the District's Office of Human Rights (OHR).

Under the Universal Paid Leave Act, the Office of Paid Family Leave is required to provide notice of the following:

1. That retaliation by a covered employer against a covered employee for requesting, applying for, or using paid-leave benefits is prohibited;
2. That an employee who works for a covered employer with under 20 employees shall not be entitled to job protection if he or she decides to take paid leave pursuant to this act; and
3. That employees have a right to file a complaint with OHR if they feel they have been retaliated against for requesting, applying for, or using paid leave.

For more information on OHR and job protections, please visit the following web address: [ohr.dc.gov](https://ohr.dc.gov).

For more information about Paid Family Leave, please visit the Office of Paid Family Leave's website at [dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov](https://dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov), call 202-899-3700, or email [does.opfl@dc.gov](mailto:does.opfl@dc.gov).

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