



# RISE ACADEMY

## PARENT - STUDENT HANDBOOK

\* \* \*

*Dedicated to Providing Children  
With a Better Prospect in Life  
Through Rigorous Education*

## MISSION STATEMENT

Rise Academy (RA) shall operate on the belief that every child has the right to an adequate educational opportunity, and that, with proper instruction and support, every child can become an academic achiever if he or she so chooses.

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Please be aware that this Handbook is updated yearly, while changes in policies and procedures may occur throughout the year. Changes that affect this Handbook will be made available to parents through notes and other forms of communication. Also understand that not every rule or procedure is necessarily described in this Handbook. There are any number of situations or circumstances where basic routines and requirements may be in place or put in place that are not described in this Handbook or elsewhere in writing.

## PARENTAL/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES AND INVOLVEMENT

As a Rise Academy parent, you must take an **active role** in your child's education. RA is committed to uniting parents and guardians, teachers, and school officials in the educational process. Whenever possible, volunteer to help supervise field trips, arrange car pools, or assist teachers in any way that you can. Attend RA board meetings to gain insight into policies and decisions of the school that may affect your child. Form relationships with the RA director and your child's teacher. Share your ideas, questions, and interests with other parents and school officials. All parents and guardians of RA students are invited to visit and observe a classroom while school is in session. When attending a parent-teacher conference, prepare your questions in advance. Ask about subjects being studied; ask how your child is progressing both academically and socially; and provide any information that will help the teacher better understand your child. Listen carefully to the teacher's recommendations on books, programs, games, or community resources for your child. **Monitor your child's homework on a daily basis and look for and read all notes that are sent home with your child.**

For your child to get the most out of our school, a concerted effort between students, parents/guardians, and RA personnel is essential. To this end, all parents must read, accept, and sign the RA parent contract prior to your child's first day in attendance at RA. With your active participation, patience, and hard work, your child can have an enjoyable, challenging, and successful educational experience at Rise Academy.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Rise Academy will not discriminate against students, parents, or employees on the basis of sex, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, academic, artistic, or athletic ability, or the district the child would otherwise attend. Students with a documented history of significant disciplinary problems may be excluded from enrollment as per Texas Education Code Sec. 12.111(a)(5)(A).

## SCHOOL AFFIRMATION

Each day at Rise Academy will begin with all students reciting an affirmative school pledge testifying to the uniqueness, possibility, and responsibility of each child. Students will be taught to define themselves inwardly based on their own uniqueness and character development. Our students will be encouraged to be creators and non-conformists and resist the kinds of peer pressure which often lead so many others down the road of permanent failure.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR AND DAILY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

The school calendar shall comply with the minimum requirements set forth in the Texas Education Code. The school week will be Monday through Friday, with the exception of certain holidays and vacation days as described by the annual school calendar.

Please note that Rise Academy's yearly calendar **DOES NOT** follow the local public school district calendar. Students **MUST** attend school on all scheduled days according to the RA calendar, not the Lubbock ISD calendar. Failure to attend school on scheduled RA days, which are off-days for the local public schools shall result in the student missing all scheduled field trips for the remainder of the year. This shall also be the case for unexcused absences during the week before and/or after scheduled vacations. Failure of the student to attend school on the days of the scheduled field trips as a mean of avoiding the consequence will result in a 3-day suspension from school, if necessary, at the beginning of the next school year.

A **free breakfast** is available to all students. Classrooms open at 7:30 for students to enter. School personnel are not available prior to 7:30 to supervise students. **Breakfast is served until 7:55.** The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. for all students. For grades Pre-k – 2<sup>nd</sup>, the day ends at 3:15 p.m. Grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> dismiss at 4:00 p.m. Parents have an additional 15 minutes after each dismissal time within which to pickup students. Parents are late in picking up students after 3:30 for pre-k – 2<sup>nd</sup> and after 4:15 for grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Consequences for Late Pick-Ups:** The first and second time students are picked-up late will result in warnings to parents. These warnings will include the statement that a third late pick-up or more will result in the school reporting the parent(s) to child protective services (CPS).

**Early pick-ups** by parents before dismissal times are inconsistent with Rise Academy's attendance policy and strongly discouraged. On occasion, an early pick-up may be necessary for a doctor's appointment, a rare instance of transportation problems, and so forth. **However, a pattern of early pick-ups for convenience sake will not be tolerated.**

## SCHOOL UNIFORM

The philosophy of RA stresses a focused, academically challenging environment free from unnecessary distractions to the educational process. To that end, students are required to dress appropriately for school wearing the official school uniform.\*

Red polo shirt (long or short sleeved) with official school logo; black knee-length shorts or long pants, black or red belt; and casual/gym shoes (see shoe policy). Black sweaters with logo are optional. Girls may wear skirts and jumpers, but not “tights” only. Tights can be worn only with a skirt. Socks need to be white, black, or red so they do not clash with the uniform colors.

Students will observe all rules of proper health and hygiene, and avoid wearing apparel that is considered disruptive to the educational program. In addition, students are prohibited from wearing any type of sandals, or large metallic chains or medallions in the school building. Only red/black gym shoes are allowed. Outdoor apparel – such as hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, boots, or any other type of headgear – must be removed by students upon entering the school building. Boys may not wear earrings. Girls may wear small stud earrings only. **Pattern haircuts, highlights, hair extensions with mixed or unnatural colors, or bizarre hairstyles are not allowed.** Any other articles of clothing or personal styles may be prohibited at the discretion of the director.

Students violating these rules will be referred to the RA Director for appropriate disciplinary action.

\*Parents who can demonstrate an inability to afford uniform shirts sold by the local Rise provider may apply to the school director for assistance.

## GRADING AND EVALUATION

RA students will be graded fairly and consistently using a traditional letter-grade range;

A+(100%)	A (93-99%)	A-(90-92%)	(Excellent)
B+(87-89%)	B (83-86%)	B-(80-82%)	(Very Good, Good)
C+(77-79%)	C (73-76%)	C-(70-72%)	(Average)
D+(67-69%)	D (63-66%)	D-(60-62%)	(Poor, Improvement Needed)
F(Below 60%)			(Failure)

Four **Report Cards** will be issued each school year – encompassing each marking period (August – October, November – December, January – mid-March, and mid-March -- May). The quality of the student’s work will be evaluated on the following basis:

- Completion and accuracy of classroom and homework assignments
- Test results that measure mastery of specific subject areas and skills
- Attendance, participation, and classroom conduct

Specific evaluation standards for each subject area are described below:

**Reading** – For grades kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup>, reading grades are a combination of comprehension and verbal fluency. Therefore, assessment through comprehension testing along with teacher observation is used to determine the grade. For grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, reading grades are determined solely on the basis of weekly comprehension tests and periodic benchmark tests.

**Language Arts** – Grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and vocabulary mastery (knowledge of definitions, usage, and context) at all will be tested on a weekly basis.

**Writing** – Specific skills (such as writing complete sentences, correcting run-on sentences, and the like) will be tested on a weekly basis. All compositions (such as summary, letters, paragraphs, etc.), will be letter graded on a per assignment basis.

**Mathematics** – Math tests will be given on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. In addition, math will be assessed by unannounced pop quizzes.

**Oratorical Recitation** – Mastery of assigned poem or speech will be tested every other week.

**Science** – (Beginning in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) Grades will be based primarily on bi-weekly tests and periodic benchmark tests. Unannounced pop quizzes may also be given. Science labs will be graded on a per assignment basis.

**Social Studies** – (Beginning in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) Mastery of social studies concepts and information will be tested for as each unit of study is completed.

**Computer Literacy** – Students will learn keyboarding, basic research skills, and how to make basic technology presentations.

## STANDARDIZED TESTS

Rise Academy students will be assessed each year, beginning at the pre-k level, with commissioner-approved and/or school-created tests. STAAR tests are required for grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>.

The first purpose of assessing children with the above-mentioned standardized tests is to determine students' level of achievement relative to grade level. The second purpose is to discern which subject areas in general need to be improved upon by the teaching staff. Finally, such testing will help identify which specific subject areas in which individual students need more assistance.

**Mandatory Saturday Sessions** – All students grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> who fail to pass bi-weekly tests or periodic benchmark tests in core subjects tested by STAAR (reading, math, science, writing, etc.) MUST attend a morning tutoring session from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on the following Saturday. There will be no exceptions or rescheduling to later Saturdays. Failure/Refusal to attend a required Saturday session will result in a one-day suspension. A second missed Saturday will result in another one-day suspension. A third missed Saturday session for failing Friday core subject test(s) will result in the student being removed from the school (expulsion).

## NO SOCIAL PROMOTION

Unlike most public schools, Rise Academy does not promote students to the next grade level if the student is not academically prepared to advance. Determination of acceptable academic progress will be made by the teacher/teachers and the school director. Measures of a student's academic performance include results from standardized test scores, weekly grades as documented on quarterly report cards, and other performance indicators. ***Please Note: Students who do not pass STAAR tests in core subjects such as reading comprehension and math must repeat that grade level if they are to remain enrolled at Rise Academy.***

## HOMework

Homework is mandatory. Each homework assignment must be neat, thorough, and completed to the best of the child's ability. Homework not returned, incomplete, or carelessly done will not be accepted and, if necessary, will be completed at school before recess. RA regards homework as an essential continuation of the school day. Teachers will assign homework on a consistent basis to reinforce classroom learning, to encourage self-discipline, and to promote independence and student responsibility. Teachers may require parent initials on daily homework assignments.

- ***Consequences for Incomplete/Not-Returned Homework:*** Any unacceptable (too messy or too many wrong answers), incomplete, or not-returned homework counts as a homework miss. Acceptable standards are determined by the student's classroom teacher. Two (2) or more homework misses within a given week results in a consequence. For grades pre-k – 2<sup>nd</sup>, the consequence is the student attending a mandatory Saturday session from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. For grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>, the consequence is the student being placed in homework detention during the student's gym time. Students with chronic homework noncompliance are placed on homework probation, which, over time, can lead to suspensions and expulsion. Any student suspended while on homework probation at the time a field trip is scheduled will not participate in that field trip.
- ***Consequences for Incomplete Classwork:*** Saturday sessions may also be required for failure to complete acceptable amounts of classwork assigned during the school day. Such classwork includes, but is not limited to, seatwork (mostly for grades kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup>), written compositions, and math packages. Efforts will be made during the week for the student to use recess and other time to catch up and complete such work. However, any such work not completed by dismissal on Friday may result in a Saturday session.

## TEXTBOOKS, EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

Textbooks and instructional materials will be provided by the school. Parents pay a one-time, \$20 annual supplies fee for each student. The school will then provide all necessary personal student supplies needed for the entire school year, such as pencils, pens, crayons, glue sticks, notebook paper, binders, folders, scissors, Kleenex, pre-k nap mats, etc.\* Non-instructional personal items, such as lunch bags or boxes and book bags, however, are not provided with this supply fee. Students may be allowed to take home textbooks and other educational materials at

the discretion of the teachers and the director. Parents are responsible for replacing any lost or damaged texts, or any other property of the school.

\*Parents who can demonstrate an inability to pay fees may apply to the school director for reductions, deferrals, or waiver.

### **ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS POLICY**

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring timely and regular classroom attendance. Keep in mind that chronic absences and tardiness interfere with the student's ability to succeed academically.

Also, keep in mind that funding for Rise Academy is based on student attendance. When students miss school, the academy loses funding for each day students are not in attendance. As a small-scale independent school, Rise Academy cannot sustain itself without receiving all available funding.

For these reasons, a combination of 3 tardies and/or unexcused absences during a set, two-week period will result in a mandatory Saturday morning session. If the student does not attend the Saturday session, then a one-day suspension is imposed.

Attendance will be taken each morning by teachers.

If a child is ill, parents must call the school the morning of the absence, by 10:00 a.m. and inform school personnel of the child's absence and the reason.

Absences will be considered excused for the following reasons:

- Illness of student
- Death in the family (to travel to attend funeral)
- Doctor/Dentist/Court appointments (afternoon appointments allowing for a partial-day attendance are strongly encouraged)
- Religious holidays as allowed by law

Absences will be considered unexcused for the following reasons:

- Illness in household other than student
- Transportation problems which are chronic or show a pattern of occurrence
- Family vacations or out-of-town situations which do not include situations or activities described above as excused absences
- Other excuses deemed by the RA director as unacceptable

In the event of a prearranged absence, the parent or guardian must request homework assignments in advance. Unexcused absences on test days will result in a grade of zero for all tests missed.

**Mandatory Retention** – To comply with Texas’ 90 % minimum attendance requirement, a total of 18 absences during the year, possibly even excused absences, will require the student to repeat his/her current grade the following year. **(COVID addition – this includes days of remote/at-home instruction)**

**Notification of Absence** – When a student is absent from school, parents must call the school **each day** the student is absent. Absences not called-in by parents are considered unexcused and are subject to the consequences which apply.

**State Law Regarding Compulsory School Attendance:** Once enrolled, a child is required by law to attend school each day for the entire school year, except in cases limited to excused absences. This requirement includes pre-k students. Parents of students with excessive absences will be referred to truancy court for criminal prosecution. Court imposed consequences include conviction of a misdemeanor and the imposition of fines from \$100 to \$500 per offense.

Texas Education Code, Section 25.095 states, in part:

- (a) . . . if the student is absent from school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year:*
  - (1) the student’s parent is subject to prosecution under Section 25.093.*
  - (2) and the student is subject to referral to a truancy court for conduct under Texas Family Code, Section 65.003(a).*

Section 25.093 states, in part:

- (a) If a warning is issued as required by Section 25.095(a), the parent with criminal negligence fails to require the child to attend school as required by law, . . .*
- (b) The attendance officer or other appropriate school official shall file a complaint against the parent in:*
  - (3) A justice court of any precinct in the county in which the parent resides or in which the school is located; or*
  - (4) A municipal court of the municipality in which the school is located.*

Truancy action against parents by Rise Academy will begin with Warnings when unexcused absences occur on three days or parts of days within a four-week period, as specified by state law.

*Rise Academy may also impose **Attendance Probation** as a consequence for excessive tardies and/or unexcused absences. Such probation may result in expulsion for continued violations.*



## EARLY DISMISSAL/SCHOOL CLOSING

Students are expected to remain in school during the entire school day. Students who must be dismissed early for appointments or emergencies must have permission by a parent or guardian in a form of a phone call, written note, or personal contact. *In the event of illness or other emergency, students will not be sent home alone. Children will only be released to a parent, guardian, or other individual who is identified by the custodial parent/guardian as having authorization to remove the student from school.*

In the event of inclement weather, school closings and delays are generally reported by local radio and television stations beginning at 6:00 a.m. Parents' phone numbers and email addresses will be entered into the school's Text Alert system. This system allows school officials to send group texts or emails to all parents in the event of a school closing or an emergency event. All parents are urged to contact the office whenever there is a change in a phone number or email address so that the Text Alert system can be updated.

## HEALTH POLICY

**Administration of Medication.** Rise personnel will avoid dispensing over-the-counter medications such as Ibuprofen or Tylenol. If a student needs to take medication during the school day, it is the parent's responsibility to leave proper instructions with school personnel as to dosage amounts and times.

Prescribed medications such as those for ADHD can be given by school personnel, but it is the parents' responsibility to provide instructions on proper dosage amounts and times. It is also the parents' responsibility to ensure that the school is supplied consistently with adequate amounts of these medications so that the student has a consistent dosage in his or her system on a daily basis. Students will be sent home if they go un-medicated and consequently become unmanageable.

**Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medication.** Students may possess and self-administer prescription medication for asthma and anaphylaxis at school or at school events. However, parents must provide a written statement from a child's doctor or health care provider attesting to the ability of the child to self-administer such medications. Students who mishandle such medications in a manner that may jeopardize the health of other students will not be allowed to continue to possess these medicines.

**Emergency Medical Treatment.** If a student has a medical emergency at school or at a school event and the parent cannot be reached, Rise staff will seek emergency medical treatment unless the parent has previously provided a written statement denying authorization.

## FIRE AND SAFETY DRILLS

Periodically, RA will conduct fire and safety drills without advance notice throughout the school year. Any occupants in the building at the time of the drill must participate. All procedures will be explained to students prior to the first drill to the greatest extent possible.

## **RISE ACADEMY CODE OF CONDUCT**

Crucial to the success of Rise Academy is a foundation based on the traditional values of personal virtue and civility. Behavior unbecoming to such values will not be tolerated.

The Board of Directors of Rise Academy has set the policy and codes of conduct. The RA Code of Conduct is grounded upon a policy of progressive discipline, with emphasis on individual student and parental responsibility, and the involvement of the teachers, staff, and director of Rise Academy. All parents must sign, as a condition of final admission to RA, a parental contract which specifies, among other requirements, that parents understand, accept, and agree to abide by, the academy's Code of Conduct.

To ensure a learning atmosphere of mutual respect, self-discipline, safety, and integrity, all students of RA will adhere to the following guidelines of appropriate conduct:

### **Category 1: Lower Level Code of Conduct Student Requirements**

Obey all school and classroom rules, including school uniform, homework, and attendance policies. Students are required to accept disciplinary consequences assigned by an authorized staff member.

Refrain from disruptive behavior such as excessive talking and noise-making; the use of profane or inappropriate language, gestures, or pictures; disrespectful and or disobedient behavior towards school staff and persons in authority; and the throwing of objects.

Refrain from forgery, cheating, or copying other student's assignments. Verbatim copying of authors without appropriate acknowledgement or permission is considered plagiarism and is unacceptable.

Electronic devices such as iPads, iPods and games are expressly prohibited. Cell phones are also prohibited from use as described elsewhere in this handbook.

Refrain from any other behaviors of equal magnitude which violate school standards of behavior.

### **Consequences for Lower Level Code Violations**

Students will always be made aware of a lower-level code infraction and will be verbally warned and/or given an appropriate consequence such as an extra work assignment or withdrawal of a privilege (loss of recess, completion of work during recess, etc.), or detention (after school). Teachers will notify RA director or other appropriate staff of the student misconduct. The director and/or appropriate staff will in turn contact the parents/guardians regarding the unacceptable behavior and inform them, either verbally or in writing, of the consequences of any subsequent offenses. If written, this may take the form of a discipline note ("Pink Slip").

Continued violations of the Lower Level Code will result in the suspension of the student. Students accumulating more violations after a first suspension will be subject to additional,

lengthier suspensions. Students accumulating additional violations after a second suspension will be subject to possible expulsion. Expulsion is defined as the permanent removal of the student from school.

Suggestions for a plan of action may be recommended or required by RA staff before the return of a suspended student. In addition, a parent may be asked to spend one day with the child in school for direct involvement in the child's discipline program.

*Category I violations of the Code of Conduct include certain non-misbehavior infractions such as repeated failure to complete homework; repeated violation of the attendance policy regarding tardiness, unexcused absences and required Saturday sessions; and repeated violation of the uniform policy. A parental plan for corrective action or probationary agreement may be imposed on those students with these infractions. Violation of these corrective action plans or probationary agreements may result in student suspension and, ultimately, expulsion.*

### **Category II: Higher Level Code of Conduct Student Requirements**

Refrain from intentional damage or destruction of property.

Refrain from inappropriate physical contact or sexual remarks.

Refrain from bullying, harassment, or other forms of intimidation, taunting, and/or fighting. This includes harassment based on a student's sex, race, ethnicity, disability, or perceived sexual orientation.

Mandatory acceptance of assigned consequences.

Refrain from repeated disruptive behavior as described in the Lower-Level Code, persistent disobedience, and/or defiance of school personnel.

Refrain from using tobacco, alcohol, or other prohibited substances.

Refrain from any behaviors of equal magnitude.

### **Consequences for Higher Level Code of Conduct Violations**

Students who are in violation of higher-level code requirements will first be issued a written notice and suspended. After one or more suspensions for violations of the Higher-Level Code of Conduct during a school year, a student may face expulsion. The progression from suspension to expulsion depends on the severity of the offence committed by the student and the number and severity of previous violations.

The definitions of suspension or expulsion are as follows:

**Suspension:** Immediate removal from school for 1-3 school days for violations of the code of conduct. The length of the suspension will be determined by the RA Director based on the circumstances of the situation. Parents and guardians will be notified of all suspensions and students must remain off school property during the suspension period.

**Expulsion:** Expulsion is defined as permanent removal of a student from attendance at Rise Academy. Although expulsions allow for an appeal process up to formal action by the RA Board of Directors, the RA director may expel a student for either Category I or II misconduct at any time.

### **Category III: Illegal Infractions**

Possession of explosives, fireworks, controlled substances, or weapons; acts of arson, bomb threats; extortion; use of an object as a weapon; extreme or repeated violations of Category II codes and acts of equal magnitude are all considered illegal or extreme offenses requiring disciplinary action and will be reported to law enforcement officials as appropriate. Violations under Category III shall require the consequence of suspension or expulsion.

#### **Sample of Rise Academy Progressive Discipline Procedures for Persistent and/or Severe Misbehavior**

*Problem:* Level I violations -- Repeated disruptive behavior; persistent disobedience:

*1st Offense:* Student is sent to the RA director's office. The parent is notified by phone or by written discipline note ("Pink Slip"). The school director, with or without the teacher, talks to the student prior to the student re-entering the classroom.

*2nd Offense:* Continued Level I violations -- Student is sent to the RA director's office. At the director's discretion, the same process is followed as with the first offense. Another discipline note will be completed and sent home to the parent. If the director deems the misbehavior to be more severe, the parent may be notified to immediately pick-up the student to go home for the remainder of the day, with the student returning to school the next day. If the misbehavior is judged to be even more repetitive and or severe than to just warrant suspension for the remainder of the day, a 1 to 3 day suspension may be imposed.

*3rd Offense:* Continued Level 1 violations -- Student is again sent to the director's office for the same or similar misbehavior. The parent is notified to pick-up the student immediately to go home. Either a first or second suspension of from 1 to 3 days is imposed. If the misbehavior is judged to be more severe than to just warrant another suspension, then the parent is notified in writing of expulsion. The parent is informed of the expulsion process, as described above, including right to appeal.

*4<sup>th</sup> Offense:* Continued Level 1 violations – Assuming that the student has not already been expelled, the student is again sent to the director's office for the same or similar misbehavior. If the misbehavior is judged to be more severe than to just warrant another

suspension, then the parent is notified in writing of expulsion. The parent is informed of the expulsion process, including right to appeal.

### **Expulsion Process**

Written notice of the expulsion will include the reasons for the expulsion, and a summary of the previous disciplinary infractions committed by the student and the consequences previously imposed before the final violation that resulted in the expulsion. This notice will also state that the parent may appeal the expulsion decision, first to the RA director. The parent may request this due-process hearing by notifying the RA director in writing within 3 calendar days of the date of the issuance of the expulsion. Failure by the parent to timely request such a hearing constitutes a waiver of rights to appeal.

A due-process hearing with the director will be held within 5 calendar days of the issuance of the expulsion notice. If the parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the RA director's decision at the conclusion of the due-process hearing, the parent or guardian may submit a written request asking for a final appeal to the RA Board of Directors. This request for appeal to the RA Board must be made within 5 calendar days of the due-process hearing with the director. The student shall remain out of school under the expulsion until the Board holds its next, regularly scheduled meeting. The decision of the Board is final and may not be further appealed.

### Inappropriate Discipline

Verbal abuse (i.e., name-calling, ethnic/racial slurs, or profanity), or physical contact intended to cause injury will not be used by RA personnel to reprimand students. However, reasonable physical force may be used as necessary to maintain order and control in a school for the purpose of providing an environment conducive to safety and learning. Reasonable physical force may also be used to restrain or remove a pupil whose behavior is interfering with the orderly exercise and performance of school district functions, if that student has refused to comply with verbal directives to refrain from disruptive behavior.

### Student Searches

RA reserves the right to inspect a student's person and/or personal effects, including bookbags or backpacks, whenever a reasonable suspicion exists that the safety of students and staff is threatened because the student is in possession of unauthorized, harmful, or illegal items. Such searches do not include invasive measures such as the removal of outer clothing (other than sweaters, jackets or coats). RA maintains control over student desks and storage areas and reserves the right to inspect them at any time without student consent or notice.

## **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT POLICY**

Texas State law allows for the use of corporal punishment in public schools. Consistent with this law, Rise Academy will reserve the right to administer corporal punishment in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Corporal punishment will be limited to spanking or swatting the student on the buttocks. The implement used shall be appropriate for the child, with “appropriateness” to be determined on the basis of factors such as age and physical condition. Generally, the implement used for pre-k and kindergarten students shall be a 5-gallon “paint stick” with no metal content. The implement for students 1<sup>st</sup> grade and above shall be a wooden “paddle” without metal content or sharp edges.

2. Corporal punishment shall be administered in a reasonable manner, with “reasonableness” to be determined on the basis of factors such as size, age, gender, and the physical condition of the student.

3. Corporal punishment shall be administered by the School Director or the Operations Director.\*

**\*A parent may give other staff such as a teacher permission to use corporal punishment. However, this other staff member cannot be given permission unless it is put in writing by the parent and approved by the director. Also, permission to use corporal punishment can only be given to another staff member if it is first given to the School Director and Operations Director.**

### **Corporal Punishment Opt-Out**

If a parent **Does Not** approve of corporal punishment as a means of discipline for their child, the parent may sign a form indicating this.

Please understand that opting-out of corporal punishment does not remove disciplinary action with respect to disciplining a child. Typically, when corporal punishment would otherwise be imposed as a disciplinary consequence, the child whose parents have opted-out will instead be suspended.

Generally, corporal punishment is used as a “last resort” punishment either (a) after a child has misbehaved several times and other forms of discipline have not worked, or (b) after the child has committed a more serious disciplinary infraction, such as hurting another student or using profane language.

If your child misbehaves in either manner described above – either repeated lower-level misbehavior or a single incident of more serious misconduct – the consequence will be a certain suspension for one to three days as an alternative to the corporal punishment.

Please also consider the fact that children in some instances may not mind missing a day or more of school and thus they may not view a suspension as having the same degree of consequence as “swats.” Further, with corporal punishment, the misbehavior is addressed in a very brief amount of time, so no school is missed as a result, unlike the case with a suspension.

## **BULLYING POLICY**

Bullying is prohibited at Rise Academy and is a Higher-Level violation of the Student Code of Conduct. As such, bullying is subject to the disciplinary consequences described in that section of this Handbook.

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in a pattern of any physical acts or verbal or written expressions that can reasonably be predicted to have the effect of causing physical harm to a student, damage to a student's property, or creating fear of harm in a student. Bullying is characterized by a *pattern* of action or threats that creates an intimidating, humiliating, or abusive environment for a student. Bullying conduct is behavior that seeks to create or exploit an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim.

Any student who believes that he or she is being bullied or believes that another student is being bullied is urged to report the alleged bullying to a Rise staff member. Any staff member who receives word that a student has experienced bullying shall notify the RA director.

### **PARENTAL VISITATIONS & OBSERVATIONS TO THE CLASSROOMS**

Parents must check in at the office first before going to any classroom on campus. This includes the delivery of lunches or other items needed by the student. Parents are NOT allowed to go directly to classrooms without first checking in at the office and obtaining a red pass which must then be presented at the classroom door before entering.

Rise Academy generally has an "open door" policy which allows parents to sit in classes for observational purposes. Limitation of such observational visits will only occur in circumstances when the parent's presence causes a distraction to the child or other children. In these cases, the classroom teacher is authorized to ask the parent to leave the room. Parents of younger students (pre-k & kindergarten) are advised to bear in mind that children often deal with "separation anxiety" more effectively when parents refrain from lingering in the classroom too long during the first few days of the school year. **(COVID addition: Parent visits to classrooms are greatly discouraged until further notice. If a parent does enter a classroom, she or she must first be screened in the office as per the "Visitor" policy for COVID.)**

### **LUNCH POLICY**

Rise Academy has no school lunch program or cafeteria. **Therefore, parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that children are provided with an adequate lunch each day.** Please keep in mind that Rise has no refrigerator or microwave oven for student use. Please do not send children to school with food that must be kept refrigerated/frozen, or that must be heated. Students must not leave school property during the lunch period unless authorized by the Rise staff. Year after year, Rise Academy office staff has experienced continual, time-consuming, and very unnecessary disruptions due to excessive numbers of parents failing to provide their children with lunch on a timely basis. **Therefore, all students must arrive at school in the morning with their lunch. Parents will not be allowed to deliver lunches to the school later in the day after classes have started at 8:00.** This includes lunches when parents

call in orders to fast-food providers (such as Domino's Pizza) to then have lunches delivered to the school by these providers.

**Students Without a Lunch:** The first time a student is without a lunch, the parent will be called to bring food. This first missed lunch will result in a warning to the parent. If the student is without a lunch a second time, **the school will Not call the parent to bring food. Instead, the student will be given a very basic, ready-to-eat burrito that can be quickly heated in a microwave oven.** The parent will then be given a second warning. **If a student does not have a lunch for a third time or more, the school will again provide the student with a burrito. After this third time, however, the parent(s) will be reported to child protective services for neglect.**

**(2021-22 addition: Rise administration is working to provide a reliable free lunch service to all students. Such a service may be forthcoming later during the 2021-22 school year.)**

## FIELD TRIPS

Participation in field trips ***is a privilege*** that can be lost. There is no absolute guarantee that every student regardless of circumstances will automatically attend all field trips. The loss of field trip privileges can occur under certain circumstances. As explained in the Attendance section of this handbook, unexcused absences on days just before or just after holidays, as well as on Lubbock ISD "off" days will result in the loss of field trips. In addition, certain serious and/or persistent behavior infractions by a student can result in loss of field trip participation. For example, 3 "pink" student misconduct reports during a semester results in the student's loss of field trip privileges. Being on homework suspension during the time when a field trip is scheduled also results in no field trip participation. Further, it is a requirement that students not participating in field trips must still attend school on those days. Such absences on field trip days as retaliation for the student's loss of the field trip privilege will result in an unexcused absence, and the denial of that student's privilege to attend later field trips, either the next semester or the following year's first semester.

## TRANSPORTATION

RA has no bus or transportation program for students. All parents/guardians who wish to take advantage of an RA education for their children are responsible for arranging safe and reliable transportation to and from school. RA will actively assist parents and guardians in combining their resources to form car pools and other transportation strategies.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are discouraged from bringing excessive amounts of money or other items of value to school. RA is not liable for lost or stolen items and cannot guarantee protection of personal property. Students who bring money or other valuables to school do so at their own risk. Children who bring toys to school risk losing them if such toys become a distraction of any kind in the classroom.



**Cell Phones and Electronic Devices:** Cell phone use or possession by students is not allowed at Rise Academy anywhere on campus during the academic school day (including lunch time). Cell phones can be brought on campus only if they are placed immediately in the designated container in the student's homeroom before classes begin. Phones can then be retrieved from that designated container after dismissal at the end of the day. Students caught with cell phones at any other time shall first have the phone taken and returned to the parent. Students caught with a phone a second time shall have the phone confiscated by the school and kept until the end of the school year. No compensation of any kind shall be provided for this confiscation – no exceptions. Rise Academy is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of student cell phones.

All electronic devices that are not cell phones, such as “smart watches,” iPads, Playstations, Kindles, tablets, or any similar devices are not allowed on campus at any time unless explicit permission is given by the RA director. Such devices shall also be confiscated without compensation and kept by the school until the end of the school year.

### **SCHOOL DIRECTORY**

Rise Academy does not publish or maintain a student directory. Therefore, no personally identifiable information of students or parents will be disclosed to the public for any reason; this includes other public schools, unless a particular student's educational records are being transferred because the student has enrolled in another school.

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF 2021-22 PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK**

My signature indicates that I have received a copy of the 2021/22 Rise Academy Parent/Student Handbook.

My signature further indicates that I will abide by the rules and policies contained in the Handbook, and that, as the parent of the Rise Academy student, I will have read the Handbook by the first day of the school year.

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(print)

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(print)

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(print)

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Circle Date: 7/31/21 OR 8/03/21; \_\_\_\_\_