



# **RePublic Schools Core Family Handbook**

**2026-2027**

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## OUR SCHOOLS



| Jackson, Mississippi Region |               |                                           |                   |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| School Name                 | Grades Served | Address                                   | Main Office Phone |
| Revive Collegiate           | K-4           | 5301 Old Canton Rd.<br>Jackson, MS 39211  | 601.345.1310      |
| Smilow Collegiate           | K-4           | 787 E. Northside Dr.<br>Jackson, MS 39206 | 769.524.5340      |
| Smilow Prep                 | 5-8           | 787 E. Northside Dr.<br>Jackson, MS 39206 | 769.524.5330      |
| Reimagine Prep              | 5-8           | 309 W. McDowell Rd.<br>Jackson, MS 39204  | 601.941.0844      |



| Nashville, Tennessee Region |               |                                               |                   |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| School Name                 | Grades Served | Address                                       | Main Office Phone |
| Liberty Collegiate Academy  | 5-8           | 3515 Gallatin Pike<br>Nashville, TN 37216     | 615.564.1965      |
| Nashville Prep              | 5-8           | 1300 56th Ave N<br>Nashville, TN 37209        | 615.921.8440      |
| RePublic High School        | 9-12          | 3307 Brick Church Pike<br>Nashville, TN 37207 | 615.921.6620      |

Find us online at [republiccharterschools.org](https://republiccharterschools.org)

## OUR VISION, MISSION, AND CORE VALUES

The mission of RePublic Schools is to operate and support schools that are rooted in love, achievement, and belongingness. RePublic Schools is deeply committed to preparing scholars to enter, succeed in, and graduate from the college of their choice, and we understand that in order to succeed in this mission, we must foster student achievement in concert with providing a school environment that is loving and actively fosters a sense of belonging. We do this in service of our mission: that every child in the South attends a school that prepares them to navigate and change the world.

### *Our Vision*

Every child in the South attends a school that prepares them to navigate and change the world.

### *Our Mission*

We run and support public schools that are anchored in love, achievement, and belongingness.

## Our Core Values



### **BUILD BELONGINGNESS**

We believe in a school community where every student feels known, valued, and supported. By embracing differences, we prepare students to lead with purpose and create meaningful change in their communities and beyond.



### **STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE**

We believe achieving excellence is a challenging journey. We maintain high standards and endeavor toward excellence each day.



### **CREATE JOY**

We believe that joy is the undercurrent of the work we do. We choose to see and create the joy that is with us and around us, and we actively work to spread that joy to others.



### **BECOME BETTER TOGETHER**

We believe that each member of our community brings a unique and valuable perspective. We honor and celebrate these perspectives, and we know that our differences make us stronger.



### **PURSUE GROWTH**

We believe that we can and must get better. We constantly seek to both support each other and also improve our work.

# FAMILY-SCHOOL COMPACT

Staff at RePublic Schools, along with the parents and scholars involved in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), collectively affirm that this compact embodies our mutual commitment to foster an educational environment rooted in love, achievement, and belongingness. This agreement delineates the shared obligation of parents, scholars, and the entire school community to enhance scholar academic success. By endorsing this compact, all parties pledge to undertake the necessary actions to cultivate a partnership dedicated to helping scholars reach the state's rigorous academic benchmarks through practices grounded in our core values. The Family School Compact, aims to operationalize our mission within the 2025-2026 academic year, ensuring that every decision and action aligns with our mission of operating schools grounded in love, achievement, and belongingness.

## As a RePublic PARENT/GUARDIAN, I will:

- See that my child attends school regularly, according to the school calendar dates.
- See that my child arrives at school on time and attends classes according to the set school hours.
- Communicate with my child about his/her school lessons and activities daily.
- Insist that all my scholar's assignments are completed.
- Review scholar progress reports and quarterly report cards.
- Communicate with my child's teachers through phone calls, emails, and by attending conferences.
- Support my child and RePublic Schools by attending school events
- Take responsibility for my child's behavior.
- Make a conscious effort to assist my child in maintaining a balanced schedule (school work, family time, extracurricular activities, etc...)
- Communicate with the school when any changes occur in address, phone numbers, or health related issues.
- Set an example of respectful behavior toward all school faculty and staff.

## As a RePublic SCHOLAR, I will:

- Behave in a safe and respectful manner, as to not disrupt the learning environment of others.
- Follow all school rules and expectations.
- Be a good citizen by doing what is right, showing respect to adults and peers, and taking responsibility for my actions.
- Maintain adequate attendance, including being on time for school and all classes.
- Have all necessary materials for every class, so that I am prepared to complete the given tasks.
- Do my best on all assignments, ask for help when I need it, and turn in all assignments on time.
- Do my best to regularly access my grades via a teacher or PowerSchool and make up any missing work to maintain good academic standing.
- Give my parents or the adult who is responsible for my welfare all notices and information received by me from my school every day.
- Take pride in my school and realize that I play a part in the overall success and perception of RePublic Schools.

### As a SCHOOL, we will:

- Maintain consistent communication with parents concerning scholars' progress through the use of phone calls, emails, parent-teacher conferences, scholar progress reports, report cards, and other forms of communication.
- Establish a welcoming environment for all visitors.
- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment to help scholars meet scholar and academic achievement standards.
- Strive to meet the different developmental, social, emotional, academic, and physical needs of each scholar.
- Communicate with parents and the community and encourage family/community involvement.
- Follow the policies set forth by our state and school authorizers
- Support community and school based initiatives.
- Honor all commitments for teaming, planning, and special events.
- Provide a time for parent-teacher conferences at least annually during which the compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.
- Provide resources for parents to work with their child on areas of curriculum concern.
- Provide community partnerships and support programs for scholars, to help ensure their personal success.
- Provide parents opportunities to volunteer, participate, and observe in their child's classes and school activities.
- Be reasonably accessible to parents to discuss scholar progress and other concerns.

### The Home and School Partnership

At RePublic Schools, we do everything we can to ensure that your scholar succeeds academically and socially. We know that success is not possible without the dedication and support of our scholars' parents, guardians, family members, and friends. We know that home is a child's first classroom and a parent is a child's first teacher. When our scholars see how dedicated you are to our school and its values, they will be inspired to model that same level of dedication and commitment to our shared values. We also know that parents, guardians, and family members know their children best, and we are committed to developing strong partnerships with our families in service of ensuring that our scholars receive the best educational experience possible. All of us must work together to provide the very best education for RePublic scholars.



# SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## The RePublic School Day

Across all grades, the RePublic school day is designed to maximize instructional time and academic support. Through eighth grade, scholars receive math, literacy, and extra academic support every day. Additionally, multiple times per week, scholars take computer science, science, history, and elective classes. Please see the elementary, middle, or high school handbook for start and end times for each level of school and more detail about the academic program at each school level.

## School, Parent, and Family Engagement Policy

A relationship with you is one of the most valuable tools we have in supporting our scholars' success. We will communicate with you frequently and in detail about your scholar's academic progress and their engagement in the school day and school community. We'll also communicate to listen and learn from you about your scholar's experience in our school(s) and how we can best support and engage them. It is critical that we all contribute to open and consistent communication in order to best support your scholar. It is expected that family members call their scholar's school if:

- your scholar will be absent for all or part of the day;
- you or your scholar are concerned about his or her academic performance, school engagement, or well being; or
- something happens outside of school that would be helpful for a member of the RePublic team to know about in order to best support your scholar.

Schools will distribute contact information for teachers and school leaders at the beginning of each year. If you are ever unsure about whom to speak with, please contact the main office or your scholar's advisor and they will be happy to connect you to the appropriate person. If you would like a call back and someone does not answer, please leave a message. Our commitment to families is that all non-emergency calls and emails are responded to within 48 hours of receipt.

## Weekly Communication

- Weekly, families will receive communication from the school. Schools may use several methods to communicate: paper handouts, social media posts, emails through our communication platform, or as a link in a text message. Communication will include announcements and updates. If you do not receive weekly communication, please reach out to your scholar's teachers. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the school immediately.

## Access to Scholar Grades and Behavior Information

- Our schools track grades for scholars on a student learning platform called PowerSchool. At the beginning of the year, we will send login information home so you know how to access this platform. PowerSchool will allow you to view scholar grades in real time as teachers enter assignments and assessment grades.
- Our schools track interactions between staff and scholars through an electronic, school-specific platform. At the beginning of the year, your school will provide directions on how to access the platform. You will be able to regularly review your scholar's daily experience.
- If you lose your login information, please contact your school's main office so we can provide you with this information or reset your scholar's account.

## Teacher Communication

- Approximately every three weeks, teacher teams meet to review scholar work, grades, participation, and engagement in order to identify celebration-worthy scholar actions/achievements and challenges students are facing. Following this process, teams prioritize certain families to receive phone contact from one or more teachers and call these family members to provide updates on scholars' academic progress, school engagement, and well-being.
- Our goal is for all parents to be contacted with a frequency that is both sustainable and relevant. Families should receive personal contact, on average, once per month. If you would like to receive communication on a more frequent basis, please reach out to your scholar's teacher to identify your preferred communication frequency.

### Quarterly Report Cards and Conferences

- Quarterly, your school will produce a report card which outlines your scholar's performance over the past six to eight weeks in grades, attendance, homework, behavior, and major assessments.
- In person family-teacher conferences will be hosted twice a year as outlined on the school calendar. During conferences, the following will happen:
  - Your scholar's teachers will meet individually with you and your scholar to discuss progress toward academic, attendance, and engagement goals.
  - You'll be invited to your scholar's school for an in-person conference with at least one of their teachers.
  - You will receive a copy of the Report Card and other relevant materials
- Report cards will be mailed home when conferences are not scheduled to take place. Individual conferences will be available upon request.
- Please note that, due to the importance of the event, attendance at Family-School Conferences are **mandatory** for all families. If you anticipate that there is any reason that you will not be able to attend conferences, please reach out to your scholar's school immediately so that an alternative conference time can be scheduled.

### Family Nights

- All RePublic Schools hold quarterly family events where scholars and their families are welcomed but not required to attend. These events are a great opportunity to have fun with the whole family and to get to know teachers and fellow RePublic families a bit better.
- Former family night themes include: Math Night, International Night, Movie Night, Winter Cookie Decorating Party, Gratitude Potluck, Black History Month Showcase, and more.

### Inclement Weather Closings

In the event of inclement weather conditions such as heavy snow, ice, or rain, please check your school's social media accounts, our [website](#), and listen to local TV or radio stations for relevant information regarding school cancellations or delays. We will also send automated phone calls and/or text messages to alert families about school closures/delayed starts/early dismissals, so please make sure that your contact information is accurate and up-to-date in your school records.

If the local district (Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools for our Nashville schools and Jackson Public Schools for our Jackson schools) is closed or delayed, this **does not** mean that RePublic Schools will definitely be closed or delayed. While our schools generally follow the delay and cancellation policies of the local school districts of MNPS and JPS, on rare occasions will make an independent call. In the event that RePublic Schools is open and the district is closed, **all** scholars are expected to attend school. Failure to do so will invoke the school's attendance policies.

If one of our schools must close due to inclement weather, we are subject to the state policy around the required number of days that scholars must attend school. We will utilize our predetermined makeup days to ensure that we meet this requirement. This may result in extra days being added on at the end of the school year or converting holidays to school days.

## School Attendance

Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and on the job.

Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other difficulty. Chronic absenteeism (missing 10% or more of the days they have been enrolled) is strongly related to academic challenges and likelihood of dropping out of high school. For these and many other reasons, our goal is for scholars at RePublic Schools to be in school, ready to learn, every day. We take absences from school seriously, and ask you to do so as well.

We count on parents to work with us to **make consistent school attendance a priority**. Contact your school and let them know how to reach you. Ask for help from the school if you're having trouble getting your scholar to school or need help with food, housing or some other challenge. Check on your scholar's attendance on PowerSchool and make sure they are attending all classes. Avoid scheduling non-urgent dental and medical appointments when school is in session.

### Excused and Unexcused Absences

Scholars must be present for at least 67 percent of the school day to be considered present. Therefore, scholars who miss 100 or more minutes of instructional time in one school day will be considered absent. Families should communicate with the school about any absences in advance, including sickness. This enables the school to plan and prepare for the scholar's absence.

Your Principal has ultimate discretion over whether an absence is considered excused. To request an excuse for your scholar's absence, you must submit a message in writing (via note or email) explaining the cause of the absence to the front office. All absences will be counted as unexcused until such documentation is received and approved by the principal. Documentation must be received within three school days for the request to excuse the absence to be considered.

A student is considered chronically absent from school when they miss 10% or more of the days they have been enrolled throughout the school year, regardless of absence type (excused, unexcused, suspension). For most students, this means if they miss 4-5 days in each quarter, they would be chronically absent. We expect the families of students struggling with absenteeism to partner with us to find solutions to improving their child's attendance, no matter the age of the child.

Scholars who are absent or have an incomplete day from school cannot attend school events, dances, or other school-sponsored activities on the day of the absence, unless the school has given advance permission. For weekend events, scholars must be present at the school on Friday to be eligible to attend.

### Makeup Work Following an Excused Absence

If a student is absent for any excused purpose (including illness), a student will be allowed the same number of days as

the count of their consecutive excused absences to make up key assignments from the time they missed. The student's teacher will decide on exact homework and classwork that the student is required to make up. Regardless of homework and classwork decisions by a teacher, the student is required to make up any quizzes, unit assessments, interim assessments, or standardized assessments during the same time period after their return from an absence.

### **Consecutive Absences and Enrollment**

If a scholar is absent for the first five days of school, or ten consecutive days during the school year, and there has been no successful contact between the family and the school to explain his or her absences, that scholar may lose his or her seat and be considered un-enrolled from the school. A scholar will be considered a dropout after 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences and after all requirements for truancy intervention have been followed.

### **Chronic Absenteeism**

Chronic absenteeism, defined as missing 10% or more of the days they have been enrolled for any reason—including both excused and unexcused absences as well as suspensions—represents missed opportunities for learning. This equates to roughly two days per month and can significantly impact a scholar's academic progress and likelihood of graduating. It's important to note that each absence, regardless of reason, detracts from a scholar's education.

For instance, a scholar who misses two (2) days within the first twenty (20) days of school, or totals 18 missed days across the school year, meets the criteria for being chronically absent. Such patterns of absence highlight the need for early detection and intervention.

As a committed school community, our approach involves:

- **Close Monitoring:** Vigilantly tracking attendance to identify early signs of chronic absenteeism.
- **Partnership with Families:** Engaging in open, ongoing communication with parents/guardians to understand and address barriers to attendance.
- **Supportive Interventions:** Offering a range of supportive measures, including academic help, counseling, and connections to community resources, to assist scholars and families in overcoming challenges to regular attendance.

While the school plays a critical role in supporting scholar attendance, parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for ensuring their children attend school consistently, as outlined by state laws. Recognizing the various challenges that can impede regular attendance, we are dedicated to working collaboratively with families to find solutions. Should absences persist without valid reasons, it may necessitate more significant interventions. Before considering legal actions, the school will exhaust all support measures, aiming to resolve attendance issues through partnership and support.

*Chronic absenteeism rates are also monitored by the state education agencies in both Mississippi and Tennessee and can impact our schools' accountability ratings.*

### **Tardiness**

Scholars are expected to be inside the doors of the school, in full uniform or dress code, at or before the start of school. Scholars arriving after the start of the school day (times listed below) are considered tardy:

- Elementary Schools: 7:30 am
- Middle Schools: 8:15 am
- High School: 7:20 am

Tardies due to traffic, medical appointments, family emergencies, etc. are not excused. Families will receive a notification or call from the school each day their scholar is not present in school as of the start time listed above.

If scholars arrive tardy, they will not be marked present unless signed in by a parent or guardian.

### **Partnership to Address Attendance Challenges**

Families can expect to receive regular communication regarding attendance on all report cards. Real-time attendance data is also available in PowerSchool.

When students are absent frequently, we will ask you to join school staff members in an attendance team to support your scholar and family to address the challenges or barriers that are leading to the absence. The attendance team will conduct an attendance assessment and create an attendance plan specific to your scholar with clear interventions and goals in place. When attendance plans are successful, scholar attendance improves. If the plan is not successful, the team will meet, adjust, and try again. Disrupting patterns of poor attendance can be challenging, but the rewards for improving attendance are so important for your scholar's long-term success in school.

### **Truancy**

Scholars may be considered truant after accruing five (5) unexcused absences (consecutive or otherwise). Scholars will be reported to an attendance officer in compliance with state law.

According to T.C.A § 49-6-3001 and M. C. A §37-13-91, all scholars under 18 are expected to be in school. All scholars under the age of 18 will be expected to comply with these laws and the school will follow procedures set out in TCA § 49-6-3007 and M.C. A §37-13-91 if the scholar does not comply with the law. In cases of truancy, the principal (or her/his designee) will investigate the situation. All RePublic Schools operate in compliance with TCA § 49-6-3007 and M.C. A §37-13-91 requirements, which include mandated reporting of truancy to appropriate state agencies. For scholars with student support plans (i.e., IEPs or 504 plans), manifestation determinations meetings are held, in addition to reports to appropriate state agencies.

Per Tennessee law, in our TN schools no scholar shall be reported as truant until an attendance team has been convened, an intervention has been attempted and found to be unsuccessful.

### **Arriving Late, Early Dismissal and Emergency Contacts**

When a student arrives late or leaves early, a parent/guardian or other designated adult must sign the scholar in/out with your school's main office before removing the scholar from school grounds. A photo ID will be required to sign a student out, and the ID holder must be the listed parent, guardian, or emergency contact on the scholar's student record. Whenever possible, notification regarding early dismissals should be made in advance. Early dismissal requests for pickup will not be accepted if they are made within one hour of the start of dismissal time. A note or phone call requesting that a scholar be dismissed on their own is insufficient and will not be honored. This policy applies to all early dismissals, including those for appointments and illness.

Likewise, if a scholar needs to be sent home due to a behavioral infraction or illness, a parent/guardian or designated adult must come to the school, meet with the principal and/or school administrator if necessary, and remove the scholar from school grounds. Scholars being sent home for behavioral infractions or illness will not be dismissed unless the parent or guardian has physically come to the school.

If you need to update your scholar's emergency contacts, please contact the main office at any time.

## **Leaving Campus**

In order to ensure the safety of all our scholars, scholars are not permitted to leave campus once they are inside the building unless signed out through the main office by a parent/guardian or other adult appointed for pickup. This includes students who are eighteen (18) years of age or older who are dependents of their parent/guardian. Eighteen (18) year-old students may not sign themselves out of school. Leaving the school or school grounds without authorization is considered skipping or cutting class and will result in a consequence, up to and including suspension from school...

## **Late Pick-Ups and Early Arrival**

RePublic Schools does not have the staffing capacity to safely supervise scholars outside of designated arrival and dismissal windows.

Scholars should not arrive on campus more than thirty (30) minutes before the school's designated doors-open time unless participating in a school-sponsored activity, program, or service approved by the school. Families are responsible for ensuring scholars arrive during the designated arrival window and are picked up promptly at dismissal.

When scholars have not been picked up on time at dismissal, or when scholars arrive on campus excessively early without authorization, RePublic Schools will follow the processes described below.

### **For Late Pick-Ups**

- School staff will attempt to contact a scholar's parent or guardian if a scholar remains on campus after dismissal and the parent/guardian has not notified the school. Staff may also contact the scholar's emergency contacts.
- A parent/guardian (or authorized individual listed on the scholar's authorized pick-up list) who arrives after dismissal must speak with a school staff member before leaving campus with the scholar.
- If a parent/guardian declines to confirm the late pick-up, the staff member supervising the scholar may document the late pick-up on the parent/guardian's behalf. This information will be maintained by the school as a record of the incident.
- If a scholar remains on campus more than one (1) hour after dismissal and school staff members have been unable to reach the scholar's parent/guardian, family members, or emergency contacts, RePublic Schools will assume the family may be experiencing an emergency. The Principal or designee may contact MDCPS (MS) / TNDACS (TN), local law enforcement, or other appropriate authorities to ensure the scholar's safety. The scholar may be released to an authorized individual, MDCPS (MS) / TNDACS (TN), or law enforcement, as appropriate.

### **For Early Arrival**

- Scholars who arrive on campus more than thirty (30) minutes before the designated doors-open time without prior authorization may not be permitted to remain unsupervised on campus.
- School staff may contact the scholar's parent/guardian regarding unauthorized early arrival.
- Repeated unauthorized early arrival may result in a required parent/guardian meeting and the creation of an arrival plan.

RePublic Schools will follow a tiered structure of interventions and consequences for families who persistently arrive excessively early or pick up scholars late, as described below. Any situations not explicitly described in this structure may be addressed at the discretion of the Principal. RePublic Schools reserves the right to take action

if a family repeatedly fails to follow arrival or dismissal expectations, including requiring a parent/guardian conference, implementing an arrival/dismissal plan, charging a late pick-up fee where permitted by law, and/or involving outside agencies in extreme circumstances.

- **Tier 1: Early Arrival or Late Pick-Up (Each Occurrence)**
  - a. Parent/guardian must acknowledge the occurrence with a school staff member before leaving campus with the scholar or after being contacted by the school.
- **Tier 2: Recurring Early Arrival or Late Pick-Up (Three (3) Occurrences)**
  - a. Parent/guardian must attend a meeting with one or more school administrators to review attendance and dismissal concerns and develop a verbal agreement and plan to prevent future occurrences. The school administrator may refer the family to local counseling, transportation, or truancy resources.
- **Tier 3: Habitual Early Arrival or Late Pick-Up (Five (5) Occurrences)**
  - a. A written notice will be sent to the scholar's parent/guardian specifying the date, time, and location of a required meeting with one or more school administrators. The parent/guardian must attend the meeting and sign an agreement outlining expectations for timely arrival and pick-up.
- **Tier 4: Chronic Early Arrival or Late Pick-Up (More than Five (5) Occurrences)**
  - a. Parent/guardian may become subject to additional interventions with members of the school leadership team to establish a consistent arrival and dismissal plan.

In extreme circumstances, including but not limited to repeated situations in which a scholar is left unsupervised for extended periods of time, school staff are unable to contact any responsible adult, a scholar's safety or wellbeing may be at risk, or a family repeatedly refuses to comply with school procedures, RePublic Schools may contact MDCPS (MS) / TNDCS (TN), local law enforcement, or other appropriate agencies, at the discretion of the Principal.

## Homework Policy

Homework is an essential component of RePublic's academic program. It is critical that scholars practice the skills they learn during the school day independently so that they continue to build stamina and mastery. Homework is one way we ensure that happens. Our goal is to teach scholars how to be successful in organizing homework, asking for help in advance, and turning in their work on time.

Please ensure that your child is completing his or her homework each night. We recommend setting aside a quiet, distraction-free (no television, no video games) area in your house for your scholar to work in. Once a scholar has completed his or her homework, you should look through it to ensure that the scholar followed directions, did their best work, and completed all required exercises.

Please do not complete your scholar's homework for him or her. Homework is an opportunity for your scholar to practice what they have learned in class or to prepare for an upcoming class. If well-meaning parents or guardians complete a scholar's work for them, the scholar loses the opportunity to practice and learn.

## Promotion and Retention

Promotion to the next grade is earned at RePublic Schools. We promote scholars to the next grade when data tells us that they are prepared to master the next grade's standards. We retain scholars in the same grade only when we believe that repeating the grade will allow mastery of that grade's content. Retention is never a punishment. Our goal



is to ensure that all scholars are set up for success in their academic journey.

An elementary or middle school scholar is a candidate for retention in their current grade if he or she:

- Earns a failing grade in at least one (1) core subject area - math, literacy, science, history, or credit-bearing course;
- Reads two or more years below grade level; OR
- Is chronically absent from school (missing 10% or more of days enrolled).

A high school scholar is a candidate for retention in their current grade if he or she:

- Earns a failing grade in four or more credit-bearing courses;
- Is significantly off-track to graduate on time; OR,
- Is chronically absent from school (missing 10% or more of days enrolled).

Scholars who meet one or more of the above criteria will be considered for retention by the school team on a case-by-case basis. Meeting the criteria for retention does not guarantee retention or automatically mean a scholar will be retained.

*Note: Scholars receiving special education services who meet the goals of their IEP should not be considered for retention but will be eligible for interventions. English Language Learners making adequate progress in their designated program will not be considered for retention but will be eligible for interventions.*

Schools will have conversations with every scholar and family who meets any of the above criteria at Family/School Conferences. During each meeting, parents will be presented with a Notice of Concern, outlining why their scholar is at risk of retention and what actions the school and family will take in the next quarter to address the risk. A copy of each Notice of Concern will be placed in the student's cumulative file.

Final decisions regarding retention will be made by the school in partnership with the scholar's family at the end of the year. At the end of the school year, the School-Based Leadership team will meet to review any scholar eligible for retention based on the criteria above. Each recommendation for retention will be made on a case by case basis and reviewed by the Principal Manager before being communicated to the family. Families should be aware that if their student transfers to another school district, that school district's policies for promotion and retention apply. For example: if a scholar is promoted to the next grade at RePublic Schools, the receiving district has the right to retain that scholar in accordance with their policies.

## School Breakfast and Lunch

For scholars to maintain physical and mental health and the focus needed to engage in the rigorous academic program at RePublic Schools, it is important that scholars have healthy, balanced meals. All RePublic Schools participate in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, which provides free or reduced-price breakfasts and lunches as well as free milk to eligible scholars. At the beginning of the school year, each family will be mailed a letter describing eligibility and, if appropriate, an application to participate in the program. Families of scholars who have particular dietary restrictions should alert the Assistant Principal of Operations as early in the school year as possible. Only allergies verified in writing by a medical provider will be accommodated by the school.

## Eligibility for Free or Reduced Price Meals

In the 25-26 school year, the following schools will qualify for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) which allows all scholars who attend the school to participate in the school lunch and breakfast programs at no cost without any application or approval. These are our CEP Schools: **Liberty Collegiate Academy, Nashville Prep, Reimagine Prep,**



## RePublic High School, Revive Collegiate, Smilow Collegiate, and Smilow Prep.

### School Breakfast

Scholars may receive free or purchase full-or reduced-price breakfast at school every morning, as long as the scholar arrives 15 minutes before the school's start time. Breakfast must be consumed before the school day begins. Please do not send breakfast from home for your scholar to eat at school.

### School Lunch

Scholars may receive free or purchase full-or reduced-price lunch from the school or bring their own lunches from home. All of our schools are served by SLA Management, a school food service company that provides high-quality, nutritious, hot meals prepared on-site.

### Lunches from Home

If you choose to send your scholar to school with lunch from home, we ask that you please do not include: soda (including diet), candy, or fast food.

### Federal Civil Rights Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:

<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **Mail:**  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **Fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:** [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

### Dress Code

RePublic has differentiated dress code/uniform guidelines for each level of school - elementary, middle, and high

school. To find what your scholar should be wearing, please see the specific guidelines for each tier of school dress code in the elementary, middle, or high school addendum at the end of this handbook. Schools may require a school uniform.

At RePublic, we believe:

- Scholars should be able to dress and style their hair for school in a manner that expresses their individuality (within the limits of their dress code) without fear of unnecessary discipline or body shaming while also representing RePublic schools;
- Scholars have the right to be treated equitably. Dress code enforcement will not create disparities, reinforce or increase marginalization of any group, nor will it be more strictly enforced against students because of racial identity, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, gender nonconformity, sexual orientation, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity;
- Scholars and staff are responsible for managing their personal distractions; and
- Scholars should not face unnecessary barriers to school attendance.

### **Enforcement of the Dress Code**

Scholars are held accountable by school staff to maintain the dress code. Teachers and leaders partner with families to ensure every scholar is in full uniform or dress code every day. District or campus personnel will not discriminate against any student who has been exempted from the mandatory use of a dress code because of objections based on bona fide religious, medical or disability needs.

### **Cell Phone and Electronics Policy**

While RePublic believes that technology can support student learning and growth, our middle and elementary schools do not allow personal cell phones, music players, tablets, smartwatches, wired/wireless headphones/earbuds, smart glasses, or other personal electronic devices to be used on campus during the school day, unless explicitly authorized by a teacher or school administrator for educational purposes.

The “school day” is defined as the time between a student’s arrival on campus and dismissal at the end of the day, including transitions, lunch, and non-instructional periods.

We strongly encourage families to instruct scholars to leave personal devices at home, unless they are required for a classroom activity and brought with explicit teacher permission. If a student needs a phone for communication after school, it must remain off (not on vibrate) and stored in the scholar’s backpack for the entire school day.

To contact your scholar during the school day, please call the front office. A member of our staff will help relay any important messages.

### **Violation and Consequences**

If a scholar is seen using or visibly displaying a cell phone or other electronic device during the school day without permission, the following progressive disciplinary actions will apply:

- **First Offense:** The staff member will instruct the scholar to power off the device. It will be collected and stored in the front office. The scholar may retrieve the device at the end of the school day. A parent or guardian will be informed.
- **Second Offense:** The device will be confiscated and turned into the front office. A parent/guardian will

be notified, and the device must be picked up by a parent/guardian or authorized adult listed in the scholar's records.

- **Third Offense:** The device will be confiscated and turned into the front office. A parent/guardian will be required to pick up the device from the school, and the scholar and parent/guardian may be required to attend a meeting with a school administrator and sign a behavior agreement outlining expectations for future compliance with the school's electronics policy.
- **Additional Offenses or Severe Violations:** The device will be confiscated and turned into the front office, and a parent/guardian will be required to pick up the device. Additional disciplinary consequences aligned to the school's Code of Conduct, including behavior contracts, detention, suspension, or other school-based interventions, may also be assigned at the discretion of school leadership.

School leaders have the discretion to:

- Determine a specific storage procedures for withheld devices (e.g., teacher desk, lockbox, Yondr pouch).

### **Medical, Disability, and Emergency Exceptions**

Scholars with documented medical needs (e.g., diabetes), IEPs, or 504 plans that require device use will be accommodated. Devices may also be used in emergency situations or when directed by staff.

For questions or accommodation requests, please contact the Director of School Operations or Principal.

### **Scholar Belongings**

Scholars should only bring items to class that are requested by teachers and/or support learning. Items such as (but not limited to) cell phones, toys and portable gaming devices are not allowed in classrooms and must be kept in backpacks, lockers, or cubbies during the school day. Scholars who violate this rule will have their item(s) confiscated for a period of time. Repeated violations of this policy may result in indefinite confiscation irrespective of any costs or fees scholars and/or their families may incur as a result. Skateboards, roller blades, skates, or scooters are not permitted on school property. If brought to school, they will be confiscated.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property. Any personal property brought to campus is the sole responsibility of the student and their family, and loss of property will not be compensated by the school. Please do not send valuable items to school with your scholar.

## **SCHOLAR CODE OF CONDUCT**

In order to create a loving and belonging environment that fosters achievement, we spend multiple days teaching our values, norms, and expectations for scholars at the beginning of each school year. We reinforce this teaching throughout the year through lessons on culture and character education and coaching of scholars.

Schools are responsible for teaching and holding scholars accountable to these rigorous standards for character development. Specific rules and procedures for character are outlined at Back to School Night for parents, and are communicated to families through school-based communication throughout the school year. Parents are critical partners in creating a school culture where scholars feel a deep sense of belongingness. We invite families to participate in our positive and corrective consequences.

## Positive Reinforcement and Celebration

We believe that scholars should be recognized and celebrated for the great choices, consistent effort, and growth and mastery they achieve each day. Our classroom culture is built on the foundation of recognizing those positive efforts, noticing and naming when scholars are meeting expectations, and celebrating the accomplishments of our incredible scholars. We also believe in giving scholars multiple opportunities to understand and meet expectations and start from the assumption that non-compliance is rooted in misunderstanding, rather than disobedience. Scholars are celebrated in many ways. Some examples are:

- Earning positive interactions in our behavior management system
- Receiving “Shout Outs” in their classroom or school wide
- Earning privileges in their classrooms or in the school
- Awards and recognition for academic and attendance excellence
- Earning incentives like parties, field trips, or participation in special events

## In Class Interventions

Sometimes, even after receiving multiple opportunities to understand and meet expectations, scholars require more support to be successful in the classroom or school. Before removing a scholar from the classroom setting, the school will take several steps to re-engage the scholar in class, including:

- Making a seat change
- Calling home for a pep-talk
- A reset conversation with a preferred adult
- A quick break for water
- A chance to journal or reflect
- Other strategies that work for the individual student

## Character Development

We believe in the character development of all scholars so that they can become active and responsible citizens in the world. We tailor our character development to our school specific values as well as our network core values. Students receive character development each day through direct instruction from their teachers and school wide assemblies. Scholars are consistently reminded of these values to ensure they are making good choices.

## Tier 1 Behavior Management System

Teachers use our 4 step model for classroom management.

- Clear directions and vision
- Narrations and affirmations
- Incentives/Consequences
  - Positive reinforcements for desired scholar behavior. Scholars can use positive reinforcement earnings for school-wide incentives.
  - Consequences are earned for low level breaches of school expectations.
  - Consequences result in low-lift in-class interventions from the teacher.
- Positive and Transformational Relationships

## PBIS Tier 2 and 3 Supports

Functional Behavioral Assessments are given and Behavioral Improvement Plans are outlined for scholars who are not successful with Tier 1 supports alone. Tier Support Teams meet regularly to discuss the progress of scholars in the tier 2 and 3 programs, adjusting plans as necessary.

## Corrective Discipline

When clear expectations and supportive interventions are not enough to keep the student engaged, or behaviors are egregious enough to disrupt the learning environment, scholars will earn corrective consequences. The following list of behavioral infractions is not comprehensive; it offers examples of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviors. RePublic Schools has discretion to determine the consequence of behavioral infractions.

A school-related behavioral infraction refers to a violation of this code:

- While the scholar is engaged in school activities whether at home, on school grounds, or school-related transportation,
- During school-sponsored activities and trips,
- During all other school-related events, or
- Off of school grounds that results in substantial disruption to the learning environment.

At RePublic Schools we seek to prepare scholars to navigate and change the world. To that end, we expect scholars to treat everyone in their community with respect and we support our scholars in developing the skills necessary to engage in respectful disagreement, productive conflict, and express their needs. Scholars who choose to exhibit disrespect or choose not to exercise the skills they have developed may receive consequences.

Enforcement of RePublic Schools' Code of Conduct is based upon a framework of positive reinforcement, intervention and progressive discipline. Specifically, minor infractions result in tiered interventions and less severe consequences while larger infractions result in more severe consequences. Some examples of minor consequences include in class interventions, serving detention, serving in-class separation, and/or loss of privileges. Furthermore, first-time infractions result in less severe consequences while repeated infractions result in more severe consequences.

## Saturday or After School Detention

Infractions may result in in-school or out-of-school detention. The school will specify the details of the time and location of the event. Failure to serve a detention at the appointed time and location may result in further disciplinary action.

## Mediation

Infractions may result in participation in peer- or adult-led mediation. The school will specify the details of the time and location of the mediation. Failure to participate in the mediation at the appointed time and location may result in disciplinary action. Parents are often invited to participate in the mediation, and details will be provided by a school administrator.

## In-Class Separation

Specific infractions warrant consequences that are more severe than detention, but less severe than out-of-school suspension. Therefore, RePublic Schools has an in-class separation model ensuring that scholars have access to the curriculum while at the same time ensuring that scholars face appropriately progressive consequences for more severe infractions.

Specific infractions which warrant in-class separation from the community include, but are not limited to:

- Disrespect to team or faculty
- Low-level dishonesty
- Repeated disruptions of a similar nature

Furthermore, in order to promote and uphold our school community's values and Code of Conduct, scholars who communicate with a scholar who is currently in-class separation will also earn a detention.

Requirements: In the morning, scholars will need to check in with the principal and/or assistant principal who will reiterate the expectations of in-class separation. Scholars on in-class separation will:

- Attend classes, receive instruction and complete class work.
- Not be permitted to communicate with any scholars throughout the day, including during breaks and lunch, except as specifically instructed by a teacher during an academic discussion.
- Not participate in selected class activities, as determined by each teacher.
- Not attend reward events including field trips, dances etc. (exceptions may be made in extraordinary circumstances at the sole discretion of the school administration).

Violation of the requirements of in-class separation may result in additional days of in-class separation or an out-of-school suspension. Scholars will not be allowed to participate in field trips and other class rewards while on in-class separation.

Scholars who are assigned in-class separation must show, through behavior and reflection, for an entire class day, that they are ready to rejoin the school community.

Parental Notification: Parents of those scholars who have been assigned in-class separation receive notification. Parents will receive a notice that their scholar is on in-class separation and the reason for in-class separation. The parent must confirm that they received the notice of in-class separation.

### In-School Suspension

In-School Suspension (ISS) is a behavior management program for scholar misbehavior aimed at keeping scholars in school to complete their work while being isolated from the rest of the student body. ISS is used as a school punishment for infractions that are not severe enough for out of school suspension but require behavior remediation. Scholars who are in violation of school rules and regulations can expect to be temporarily assigned to the ISS classroom where they will be supervised by school personnel or a teacher.

The main goal of ISS is behavioral remediation while giving scholars the opportunity to stay caught up on schoolwork. By removing scholars from the traditional classroom, scholars are afforded time to reflect, reconcile, and in some instances, receive counseling to help with behavioral issues. Providing a supervised learning environment removed from the student body is intended to serve as a form of punishment and remediation to prevent repeat misbehaviors.

### Parental Resets

As an alternative to suspension, and in partnership with the parent, the school may invite the parent to engage with their scholar to support them to reset and remain in the school community. This could look like:

- A phone call or video call between parent and scholar
- A visit from the parent during the school day
- The parent sitting in class with the scholar for all or part of the school day
- Other interventions that work for the individual scholar

## Out of School Suspension (OSS)

Infractions that may warrant an out-of-school suspension include, but are not limited to:

- Gross disrespect of a fellow scholar
- Gross disrespect of faculty, staff, visitor, or school transportation provider
- Bullying of any kind which includes making verbal or physical threats, empty or otherwise
- Damaging, destroying, or stealing personal or school property or attempting to do so (including graffiti)
- Using or possessing tobacco products
- Possession or use of vaping products include electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vaporizers, vape pens, and any other electronic inhalation devices used for vaping substances, with or without nicotine.
- Disrupting in-school suspension through misbehavior
- Committing sexual, racial, or any form of harassment or intimidation
- Using abusive, vulgar or profane language
- Setting off false alarms
- Gambling
- Forgery, plagiarism, or cheating (including forging a parent's signature on school documents or assisting scholars to cheat)
- Extreme or repeated dishonesty
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- The school reserves the right to administer a suspension for any other egregious offense at the principal's discretion.

For an out-of-school suspension between one and ten days, the following procedures will apply: When an infraction occurs, the scholar will be removed from class and sent to the Main Office or another designated school location. The scholar's parent or guardian will be notified of the incident by the principal or another representative of the school.

Unless a scholar presents a danger or risk of substantial disruption to the educational process, the scholar shall receive notice and an opportunity to present her/his version of the relevant facts prior to a suspension of one to ten days.

In the case of danger or a risk of substantial disruption, the scholar will be removed from the school building and provided notice and the opportunity to present their version of the relevant facts as soon as possible. In the case that a scholar is assigned an out-of-school suspension, the scholar's parent/guardian must immediately come to the school, meet with the principal and/or school administrator, and remove the scholar from the school building. If the parent/guardian cannot immediately come to the school building, the scholar will wait in a designated area until the parent/guardian arrives. Written notice will be sent home designating the length of suspension.

In order for a scholar to re-enter the RePublic Schools community following an out-of-school suspension:

- An administrator will contact the parent/guardian to schedule a required re-entry meeting.
- The scholar may have to meet additional conditions as required by RePublic Schools.
- If the parent/guardian fails to attend the required re-entry meeting or does not respond to reasonable attempts to schedule the meeting, the scholar may not be permitted to return to classes until the meeting occurs or an alternative re-entry plan is approved by school leadership.
- Failure to participate in the re-entry process may also result in additional interventions, support planning, or referrals deemed appropriate by the school.

Once the above conditions are met, the scholar will be welcomed back into the community. Scholars are responsible

for completing academic work missed during the suspension. The completed work will receive full credit if submitted by deadlines in accordance with the school make-up policy.

## Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the exclusion from all RePublic Schools Campuses for more than 10 and up to 180 consecutive school days.

### Grounds for Expulsion

Local law provides the principal with the authority to expel students for a variety of behaviors, to include Zero Tolerance offenses, severe behavioral infractions, or for repeated disregard of school policies and procedures. In addition to these offenses, RePublic Schools upholds the expulsion decisions of all Metro Nashville Public Schools, Jackson Public Schools and charter schools. RePublic Schools recognizes the expulsion decisions of all public, private, and charter schools. If a student has been expelled from another school, they are not able to enroll at a RePublic Schools campus during the time of their expulsion.

Whenever the principal recommends expulsion, an expulsion hearing shall occur. The hearing shall occur as soon as practicable after the beginning of the suspension, and RePublic Schools shall endeavor to hold the hearing within ten days of the beginning of the suspension. In addition, as soon as practicable after the beginning of the suspension, the principal shall provide the student written notice of the following, which shall be translated into the student's/parent's primary language if necessary:

- Date, time and place of the hearing.
- Charges and a summary of the evidence against the student which shall include the substance of the allegations.
- Agenda for the hearing.
- That the hearing is a closed meeting unless the student submits a request to the school in writing, at least five days prior to the date of the hearing, for an open, public meeting.
- That the student and/or parent, upon request, may review the student's records from the school in accordance with applicable law.
- Notice that the student has the right at the hearing to:
  - Be represented by parents, legal representative, or other representative at the student's expense; and,
  - Present witnesses and arguments in the student's defense and ask questions of school administrators who present information at the hearing, within the process and time constraints set forth in the agenda.

The decision maker at the hearing shall be the Expulsion Authority, which shall consist of an odd number of and no fewer than three persons chosen from among the following: the Principals of any RePublic school and the school leaders of any RePublic school; provided, however that the principal of the school that the student attended at the time of the incident shall not be a member of the Expulsion Authority for that student's expulsion hearing.

At the expulsion hearing, the following procedural safeguards shall be in effect:

- The scholar may be represented by parents, a legal representative, or other representative at the scholar's expense.
- Due to the potential sensitivity of issues addressed, the expulsion hearing is a closed hearing; only the scholar, the scholar's family/representatives, the school administration, witnesses, legal counsel, and the Expulsion Authority may attend; provided, however, that the scholar may request an open, public meeting by informing the school of the request in writing, at least five days prior to the date of the hearing.



- The scholar has the right to present witnesses and arguments in the scholar's defense and to ask questions of school administrators who present information at the hearing, within the process and time constraints set forth in the agenda.
- The school may present information collected from scholar witnesses through school administrators, in lieu of calling the scholar witnesses themselves, to the extent permitted by applicable law and due process.
- The school will record (by tape or other appropriate means) the hearing and a copy of such will be made available to the scholar upon request.
- Proceedings will be translated into the scholar's/parent's primary language if necessary for their understanding.

After the hearing, the Expulsion Authority shall deliberate and issue a decision. The following procedures apply to the deliberation and decision:

- The Expulsion Authority may order removal of the suspension or expulsion unconditionally or upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable or may suspend the scholar for a specified period of time.
- In its fact-finding, the Expulsion Authority shall decide based upon the information presented at the hearing whether it is "more likely than not" that certain alleged incidents occurred.
- The vote of a majority of the members of the Expulsion Authority shall constitute the decision of the Expulsion Authority.

During its deliberations, the Expulsion Authority may consult the principal who recommended expulsion solely for discussing appropriate sanctions that are less severe than expulsion; provided, however, that the scholar's representative may be present while the Expulsion Authority is consulting lesser sanctions with the principal, and in no event shall the principal during these discussions provide new evidence for expulsion that was not presented at the expulsion hearing.

The Expulsion Authority's decision shall be issued in writing to the scholar within five days of the hearing.

- The written decision shall be translated into the scholar's/parent's primary language if necessary for their understanding.
- The written decision shall inform the scholar and principal of the right to appeal the decision by delivering a written notice of appeal to the Expulsion Authority within five days of receipt of the written decision, that the notice of appeal must summarize the basis for the appeal, and that in the absence of a timely appeal the Expulsion Authority's decision is final.

### **Appeals to the Board**

The scholar or principal may appeal the Expulsion Authority's decision. An appeal is timely only if a notice of appeal is delivered to the Expulsion Authority within 5 days of receipt of its written decision. A notice of appeal must be in writing and summarize the basis for appeal. Absent a timely appeal, the Expulsion Authority's decision is final.

In the event of a timely appeal, the following process shall occur:

- The appeal shall be taken to the board of directors of RePublic Schools, which shall be the decision-maker for the appeal.
- The Board, based upon a review of the record, may grant or deny a request for another hearing and may affirm or overturn the Expulsion Authority's decision with or without a new hearing; provided, however, that the board may not impose a more severe penalty on the scholar without giving the scholar the opportunity for a new hearing before the board. For the purpose of this paragraph the

“record” shall include (i) the audio recording of the hearing before the Expulsion Authority or any written transcript of that hearing and (ii) anything provided by the school or the scholar in the notice of appeal.

- In the event that the board decides not to conduct a new hearing, the board shall issue a written decision within fifteen days of its receipt of the notice of appeal. The written decision should include the following:
  - Date of initial decision;
  - Date of notice of appeal;
  - Statement that board based its determination upon review of the record; and
  - Statement that the board’s decision is final.
- If the board conducts a new hearing, the same processes and protections shall be provided as for the initial hearing before the Expulsion Authority. The board shall endeavor to conduct the new hearing as soon as practicable.
- The action of the board in response to any appeal shall be final.

In addition to the above stated policies, any breaches of federal, applicable state or local city laws may be handled in cooperation with the local police department.

### Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities

Federal and state law provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to discipline of scholars who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability. A copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards can be found in each school’s main office.

RePublic Schools is required to evaluate a scholar with a disability to determine if his/her behavior is based on disability before imposing any of the following disciplinary actions for the scholar’s behavior: (a) an expulsion; (b) a suspension over 10 school days in a row; or (c) a suspension for less than 10 school days if there is a pattern of disciplinary removals for the scholar totaling more than 10 school days in the school year.

Detentions and in-school suspensions do not count toward the ten day limit if (1) the scholar is afforded the opportunity to continue to appropriately progress in the general education curriculum; (2) the scholar continues to receive the services specified on the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan and (3) the scholar continues to participate with nondisabled peers to the he or she would have in the current education setting (i.e., continuum services such as general education, inclusion/co-teaching, resource/pull-out, etc.) The principal has discretion to be flexible in the amount of days of suspensions given to each special education scholar with disabilities.

Scholars with disabilities can be suspended in excess of ten school days in certain circumstances. When campus officials anticipate a referral for expulsion, the following rules apply:

- Campus officials must hold a manifestation determination review (MDR) within 24-48 hours of the decision to discipline the scholar.
- The IEP or 504 team must:
  - Provide prior written notice to the parent/guardian or surrogate parent of the intervention or consequence being considered and schedule a meeting within 24 - 48 hours of the date of the decision to discipline the scholar.
  - Determine whether the misconduct is related to the scholar’s disability by reviewing historical evaluation reports and diagnostic results, information from the parent/guardian, observations

of the scholar, and the scholar's IEP or 504 and the least restrictive environment for the most appropriate education setting based on the continuum of services.

- Review and revise, if necessary, the behavior intervention plan (BIP) or safety plan or, as necessary, develop a functional behavior assessment and intervention plan to address the behavior.
- Determine the least restrictive environment for the most appropriate education setting based on the continuum of services.
- Include in the IEP or 504 Plan services, accommodations or modifications that will enable the scholar to continue to participate in the general curriculum and address mal-adaptive behaviors (responses, reactions, or adaptations to external or internal stimuli) that impede the learning of the scholars or that of others.

Special education scholars with disabilities may be referred for an expulsion hearing if they are in violation of any zero tolerance offense. All scholars will be ensured a due process expulsion hearing.

### Bullying and Peer Conflict

Navigating peer conflict (mutual disagreement and/or animosity between students) is a normal part of child development. We work with our staff and scholars to understand the difference between peer conflict and bullying and teach the skills to process and navigate conflicts between peers. Peer conflict *may* result in school-based consequences, depending on the severity or context of a particular incident. RePublic Schools reserves the right to determine the level of engagement of the school in facilitating any mediation relating to peer conflict between enrolled students.

Consistent with state requirements, RePublic Schools prohibits acts of harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, intimidation, or any other victimization of students, based on any actual or perceived traits or characteristics.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance; and:

- If the act takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation or at any official school bus stop, the act has the effect of:
  - Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
  - Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
  - Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or
  - Creating a hostile educational environment; or
- If the act takes place off school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity, it is directed specifically at a student or students and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption to the education environment or learning process.

RePublic Schools prohibits all acts of cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is defined as bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices, including, but not limited to, phones or other wireless communication devices, personal digital assistants, email, instant messaging, text messaging, and websites.

Bullying is considered a major infraction at RePublic Schools, punishable by school-based consequences up to expulsion. A scholar may not bully, coerce, harass or attempt to bully, coerce or harass any person for the purposes of hazing, initiation into, or affiliation with any organization. Bullying incidents must be reviewed for civil rights violations. If bullying is repeated over time and persists after documented administrative intervention, expulsion may

result.

## Physical Altercations and Aggression

We define physical altercations and aggression as intentional actions that cause or aim to cause physical harm, intimidation, or fear, whether between scholars or directed at staff members. This includes hitting, kicking, slapping, and other forms of physical violence, as well as threatening behavior.

### Procedures and Consequences for Aggression Towards Staff Members:

- First Incident: Immediate removal of the scholar, parent/guardian notification, and a mandatory meeting with administration. A suspension may be applied, with the length based on the incident's severity.
- Second Incident: Extended suspension and development of a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP). Mandatory participation in conflict resolution or anger management programs.
- Subsequent Incidents: Consideration of long-term suspension or expulsion, with ongoing counseling and possible external agency involvement.

### Procedures and Consequences for Aggression Among Students:

- First Incident: Separation of scholars, parent/guardian notification, and a possible suspension.
- Second Incident: Reinforcement of immediate intervention, extended suspension, implementation of a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP), and potential engagement in an anger management program.
- Subsequent Incidents: More severe disciplinary actions such as long-term suspension, with continuous review of the BIP and potential external support.

## Social Media

Scholar use of social media outlets, including but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, is not permitted on RePublic Schools' internet service or during school hours. Scholars with social media accounts may not "friend" school staff or faculty, including coaches or enrichment leaders. Scholars are, however, permitted to "like" RePublic Schools' pages and/or follow them on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. Gossip, slander, etc. of RePublic Schools' scholars, faculty, and staff on social media outlets is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Cyber bullying is treated in the same manner as in-person bullying, resulting in out-of-school suspension or other consequences depending on the severity of the infraction. RePublic Schools reserves the right to determine the level of engagement of the school in facilitating any mediation relating to the social media behavior of enrolled students.

## Weapons & Illegal Substances

RePublic Schools aims to provide a safe, secure, and drug-free learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. This policy addresses the possession, use, or distribution of weapons and illegal substances on school premises or during school-related activities.

The possession, display, or use of any weapons, including firearms, knives, explosives, or any other dangerous objects, is strictly prohibited on school grounds, school buses, or during any school-sponsored events. This policy applies to all students, staff, visitors, and any individual present on school property. This policy also refers to toy weapons. Toy weapons refer to any objects or playthings that resemble or imitate real weapons, including but not limited to toy guns, knives, swords, bows and arrows, or any other item that could potentially be perceived as a threat.

Anyone who becomes aware of the presence of a weapon on school grounds or during school-related activities must immediately report it to a teacher, staff member, or school administrator. Reports can be made confidentially to ensure the safety of the reporting individual.

Violation of the Weapons Policy will result in immediate and serious disciplinary action, in accordance with state and local laws and school policies. Consequences shall include, but are not limited to, suspension, expulsion, and reporting the incident to law enforcement.

The possession, use, sale, or distribution of illegal substances, including drugs, narcotics, controlled substances, or any other banned substances, is strictly prohibited on school premises or during school-related activities. This includes the possession, use, sale, or distribution of any THC products. Any individual who becomes aware of the presence or use of illegal substances on school grounds or during school-related activities must promptly report it to a teacher, staff member, or school administrator. Reports can be made confidentially to protect the safety of the reporting individual.

Violation of the Illegal Substances Policy will result in immediate and severe disciplinary action, following state and local laws and school policies. Consequences shall include expulsion and reporting the incident to law enforcement.

The school will implement educational programs and awareness campaigns to educate students, staff, and parents/guardians about the dangers of weapons and illegal substances, emphasizing the importance of a drug-free and safe school environment.

To maintain a safe environment, the school reserves the right to conduct searches of lockers, bags, and personal belongings, in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, if there is a reasonable suspicion that a student possesses weapons or illegal substances.

The school will collaborate with law enforcement agencies when appropriate, to address incidents involving weapons or illegal substances, ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals on school property.

This RePublic Weapons and Illegal Substances Policy will be subject to periodic review, and any necessary amendments will be made in consultation with parents/guardians, staff, and school administration.

By implementing this policy, RePublic strives to create a secure and supportive learning environment, free from the threats posed by weapons and illegal substances, and fostering a commitment to safety and well-being for all members of the school community.

## Bus Behavior

Participation in bus transportation is a privilege. At RePublic, we want to ensure your scholar is transported to and from school in the safest of manners. All behavioral expectations outlined in the RePublic Schools Code of Conduct apply on school bus transportation. Scholars who take the school bus are expected to act responsibly and respectfully at all times.

Our buses and bus stops are an extension of our school. We expect our scholars to uphold our values and beliefs when riding our buses. And, the safety of our buses and drivers is of the highest priority. School administrators have the authority to restrict privileges such as talking or use of electronics on the bus if the culture or safety of the bus riders or drivers is at risk.

The student code of conduct will apply on the bus and at the bus stop. The following additional rules may also apply to the bus and the bus stops:

- Scholars may be given assigned seats. If assigned, scholars are expected to sit in and stay in these seats unless given express permission by the driver or school administration to move.
- Scholars may be expected to be silent on the bus as a result of bus culture during the year.
- A school official may meet the bus every day to ensure that no child may exit the bus before the administrator checks with the driver as to behavior.

Scholars who violate these rules may lose bus privileges.

- One minor infraction
- Three minor infractions = one major infraction
- One major infraction = loss of bus privileges for a week.
- Two major infractions = loss of bus privileges for a month.
- Three major infractions = loss of bus privileges for the year.

Infractions, if serious enough, can warrant immediate loss of bus privileges for the year. Other consequences (e.g., low level consequences, detentions, suspensions from school and school clubs/activities) may apply as well.

Examples of behaviors that qualify as minor bus infractions (at the discretion of the school):

- Not following directions on the bus driver
- Eating food on the bus
- Leaving trash on the bus

Examples of behaviors that qualify as major bus infractions:

- Moving seats during the route or sitting in the incorrect seat (if assigned)
- Failure to correct behavior after being redirected
- Disrespect to a driver
- Foul language
- Horseplay on the bus
- Throwing anything inside or outside of the bus
- Anything that compromises the immediate safety of anyone on or around the bus
- Damaging or defacing the bus

Families are strongly encouraged to reinforce the importance of proper bus behavior and the potential consequences for bad behavior. Should a scholar lose bus privileges, that scholar/their family is responsible for arranging alternative bus transportation for the scholar during that period. Unless a scholar is suspended, failure to attend school as a result of lost bus privileges will be considered unexcused absences.

### Cheating, Plagiarism, Use of AI, and Copying Others' Work

At RePublic Schools, scholars do not plagiarize, cheat or otherwise copy one another's work. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Furthermore, the use of AI to complete homework, projects, essays, or any assignments intended to be the scholar's own work is considered cheating. This includes AI-generated content that is not explicitly approved by the instructor. AI tools may be used for educational purposes only when directly permitted by the teacher as part of the learning process. Such use must be clearly cited and acknowledged. Plagiarism is intellectual theft and will not be tolerated at RePublic. We will review specific guidelines regarding cheating, use of AI, and plagiarism with scholars throughout the year. There are significant consequences for breaching these expectations including out-of-school suspension. Scholars who

knowingly allow teammates to copy or cheat off their work receive the same consequence. If a scholar is unsure about an assignment or unsure about a test question or testing procedure, they should go to a teacher and ask for direction.

### Scholar Searches

To maintain the security of all its scholars, RePublic Schools staff reserves the right to conduct searches of its scholars and their property when there is reasonable suspicion to do so. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the scholars is respected to the extent possible, and that scholars and their families are informed of the circumstances surrounding and results of the search. School cubbies, lockers, and desks which are assigned to scholars for their use, remain the property of RePublic Schools, and scholars should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas.

### Field Trips/End-of-Year Events

RePublic Schools' curriculum may sometimes provide for the exciting opportunity for outside learning experiences or special school events. During these activities, it is important for all scholars to be responsible for their behavior since the site of the activity or event is a temporary extension of the school grounds.

A permission slip that allows scholars to attend all school-sponsored field trips and events may be sent home at the beginning of the school year and should be signed by a parent or guardian. The school will attempt to notify all parents and guardians before each school-sponsored trip. For trips that are not school-sponsored (e.g., voluntary trips), a permission slip will be sent home prior to the trip/event, and must be signed by a parent or guardian.

A scholar may be considered ineligible for a trip for reasons including but not limited to: not returning the school-sponsored trip permission form, involvement in a disciplinary incident on a prior trip, poor school attendance, misbehavior or severe lack of academic effort in the days prior to the trip, etc.

If parents or other volunteers assist with such trips or events, scholars must afford these chaperones the same respect they would provide to teachers. Appropriate behavior must be maintained when attending school-sponsored events and riding on school-provided transportation.

## GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

### Visitors

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit RePublic Schools at any time during the school day. All visitors are required to report to the main office upon entering the building. Visitors are expected to dress appropriately for a school environment. RePublic Schools reserves the right to deny entry or require a visitor to leave campus if their attire is determined to be disruptive, unsafe, inappropriate for a school setting, or inconsistent with maintaining a positive learning environment for scholars. Any visitor who does not report to the office or is found in the building without authorization will be asked to leave immediately.

All RePublic schools use the Raptor Visitor Management System to ensure scholar, family, and faculty safety. Using



Raptor allows us to know who is in our building at all times, and it allows us to screen visitors, contractors, and volunteers to provide a safer environment for our school community. Upon entering our buildings, visitors are asked to present an ID such as a Driver's License, which can be scanned into the system. If a parent or guardian for any reason does not have a US government-issued ID, a school staff member can use any form of identification and manually enter the person's name into the Raptor system. The Raptor system will check to ensure that registered sexual offenders are not entering our school campus without our knowledge. **The Raptor system checks the visitor's name and date of birth for comparison with a national database of registered sex offenders. The registered sex offender database is the only official database checked by the Raptor system. No other data from the ID is gathered or recorded, and the information is not shared with any outside agency.** Once entry is approved, Raptor will issue a badge that identifies the visitor, the date, and the purpose of his/her visit. A visitor's badge will not be necessary for those who visit our schools simply to drop off an item in the office or pick up paperwork.

While visitors are always welcome, they are encouraged to take great care not to disturb the teaching and learning process. Guests should not talk to or interact with scholars or staff members during class unless they receive permission from the teacher in the classroom.

In the case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact their school's main office either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians contact scholars in their classrooms or attempt to withdraw scholars from the building on personal cell phones without notifying and receiving permission from staff members in the main office.

## Medical and Health Policies

### Medical Records and Medication at School

Before a scholar can enroll in the school, the school must have on file the following forms:

- Up-to-Date Immunizations Record
  - Including tDap vaccination for scholars in 7th grade or higher
  - Must be in compliance with state school immunization requirements ([Mississippi](#) | [Tennessee](#))
- Health Information Form
  - This form provides important information about a scholar's emergency contacts, health care providers, and insurance.
  - Most importantly, it gives the school permission to initiate emergency medical treatment in the event that a parent or guardian cannot be reached.
- Request For Assisted Self-Administration of Medications, Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication Form
  - If a scholar requires medication while in school, the school must have on file a Request For Assisted Self-Administration of Medications, Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication form, filled out by the scholar's parent or guardian.
  - If the medication is prescription, the form must be signed by the scholar's physician. No scholar is allowed to bring medication to the school without the school's full knowledge.
  - All medication must be delivered to the front office and picked up by a parent – medication should **never** be sent with the scholar.
  - All medication must be presented in its original container from the pharmacy, with dosage amount of medication listed.
  - Scholars who have provided the school with assisted self-administration authorization forms should bring the medication to the school on the first day or contact the school to make other arrangements.



- The Authorization to Self-Administer Medication form must be updated annually.
- When there are any changes to the medication (including to the dosage of the medication), a new form must be completed and submitted, including an updated physician signature (if the medication is prescription).
- The Request For Assisted Self-Administration of Medications form requirement applies to all medication, including over the counter medication. If a scholar needs to take over the counter medication during the school day, the scholar must have on file the authorization signed by his or her parent or guardian, giving the school permission to administer the medication during the school year. This requirement also applies to asthma inhalers.

Scholars should never carry or take medications outside of these procedures. Scholars found in possession of over the counter or prescription drugs could face significant consequences.

### **Individualized Health Plans**

Scholars who have chronic health condition requiring medical attention during the school day, or which interferes with their ability to learn, may work with the school nurse or a school administrator to develop an individualized health plan that outlines the care and accommodations the scholar may require. All plans must be informed by medical orders and recommendations from the child's primary medical provider.

### **Health and Illness**

The school requests that children do not come to school if they are ill. If school staff believes that a child needs to see a doctor, is contagious, increases the risk of illness to other children, or requires prolonged individual staff attention that interferes with the safety and regular functioning of the classroom, the school will contact families and ask them to pick up and take their child home.

Parents will be contacted if a child has a moderate-to-high-fever; is experiencing vomiting or diarrhea; shows signs of any contagious disease; and/or has an illness that prevents the child from participating in activities. If a scholar is sent home or kept home with the symptoms listed above, they may not return to school until they are symptom free for twenty four (24) hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

RePublic Schools reserve the right to update health and safety policies based on circumstances that may arise, including community spread illnesses. This may require the school to put regulatory measures, including face masks wearing, in place to ensure community health and safety.

### **Health and Sexual Education Policy**

Parents have the right to opt their students out of health and sexual education content provided by the school, in accordance with state law.

### **Campus Safety and Supervision of Scholars**

Scholars are not to be in the building or on the school grounds before or after the regular school day unless under the direct supervision of a RePublic Schools staff member or contracted coach/community partner. Anytime a scholar is on school grounds, the entirety of our Scholar Code of Conduct is expected to be honored. RePublic Schools is not responsible for supervising scholars for more than twenty (20) minutes after the end of the school day. Families who repeatedly violate the expectation to pick up their scholar on time at the end of the school day may be subject to consequences such as loss of participation in after-school programs, or involvement of the police department or child protective services.

## Personal Safety Outside of the Building

To maximize personal safety outside the building, it is recommended that scholars stay in groups if possible and do not wear music players/talk on cell phones/or count money while walking down the street. Also, do not engage in conversation, tough talk, or taunting with individuals. If you are threatened, go to a business or a public area as quickly as possible.

## Emergency Drills and Protocol

Posted in every room is a map detailing the relevant evacuation and emergency protocol. Scholars are to follow their teacher according to that map and to stay with their class. In the event of a fire drill or fire, scholars must not stop at bathrooms or lockers. They must go directly to their designated outside location until given further instruction. Any scholar violating this procedure is jeopardizing the safety of the school and will face consequences including possible suspension. There is no talking during a drill or emergency procedure. Talking during a drill or emergency procedure may result in a scholar receiving a detention or other consequence.

## FERPA and Scholar Records

### Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
  - a. Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
  - a. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend their child's or their education record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing. After the hearing, if the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
3. The right to provide written consent before School discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
  - a. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by School or the school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school's governing board; a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by School, performs an institutional service or function for which School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance

committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. (Note: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student).

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:
  - a. Family Policy Compliance Office
  - b. U.S. Department of Education
  - c. 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
  - d. Washington, DC 20202

### **Directory Information**

FERPA allows schools to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" from a student's education record without written consent. "Directory Information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. School has designated the following as "Directory Information:" the student's name, address, email address, grade level, date and place of birth, telephone number, and his/her parents' or guardians' names, mailing addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, awards and honors received, photographs and videos of students participating in school or school-sponsored activities that have appeared in school publications, and dates of attendance. Student social security number or student identification or unique student identifier will not be designated as Directory Information.

Schools may disclose Directory Information from time to time to the general public, including to military recruiters, the media, colleges and universities, prospective employers, and other outside organizations, such as companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, the School may reach out to parents to inform them of, and/or connect them with, opportunities to engage civically, including to advocate for educational issues that impact their student and school. Schools may release Directory Information, namely parent names and contact information (mailing addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers), to contractors and partners involved in those efforts. Our schools do not engage directly in any electoral activities, including to support or oppose any political party or candidate for public office.

Parents can object to the release of Directory Information regarding their student, which includes parent contact information. Please contact your school within 14 days of receiving this parent handbook if you wish to opt out of sharing directory information if you do not wish for your student's Directory Information to be released.

### **Right to Know Policies**

#### **Right to Inspect Credentials of Teacher**

Parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including, the following:

1. Whether the student's teacher—
  - a. has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which

- the teacher provides instruction;
  - b. is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
  - c. is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
2. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

The school will provide the requested information within 5 days of receiving the request.

### **Right to Notification of Uncertified Teacher**

If your student has been assigned, or has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned, you will receive written notification and information about the school's plan to ensure the student will be taught by a teacher that does meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements.

### **Right to Information Regarding Student Performance on State Academic Assessments**

Parents and guardians will be provided with information on the level of achievement and academic growth of the student, if applicable and available, on each of the State academic assessments when that information becomes available.

## **Grievance Procedure**

Any scholar, parent/guardian, or employee who believes that RePublic Schools has acted in violation of the law, school policies, or its charter may file a grievance. This may include allegations of harassment or discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or any other protected classification under applicable law. RePublic Schools believes concerns are best addressed first at the school level whenever possible. Grievances should generally follow the escalation structure outlined below before being elevated to the next level:

1. School Principal
2. Principal's Manager
3. Chief Operating Officer
4. Board of Directors

If the grievance directly involves the Principal, the grievance may be submitted to the Principal's manager. If the grievance directly involves another individual in the escalation structure, the grievance may be submitted to the next appropriate level of leadership. The individual responsible for investigating or responding to the complaint at any level of the process will be referred to as the "Grievance Administrator." RePublic Schools reserves the right to involve additional members of leadership, legal counsel, law enforcement, child protection agencies, or other appropriate parties as necessary based on the nature of the complaint. All contact information for RePublic Schools administrators can be found on the RePublic Schools website at <https://republiccharterschools.org>.

## **Filing a Grievance**

### **Contents of the Complaint**

Complaints under this Grievance Procedure must be filed within thirty (30) school days of the alleged incident or concern. The complaint must be submitted in writing. The Principal, or any person of the grievant's choosing, may assist the grievant with preparing or submitting the complaint. The written complaint must include:

- The name of the grievant and the name of the school;
- The name of the grievant's representative, if any;
- The name of the person(s) alleged to have caused the violation or concern;

- A description, with as much detail as possible, of the alleged incident or concern;
- The date(s) of the alleged incident or concern; and
- The names of any persons who may have knowledge regarding the alleged incident or concern.

### **Investigation and Resolution of Complaint**

Respondents will be informed of the allegations as the Grievance Administrator deems appropriate based upon the nature of the allegations, the investigation required, and the action contemplated.

The Grievance Administrator may interview witnesses and gather any information deemed necessary and appropriate to determine the facts relevant to the complaint. Such interviews and information gathering will generally be completed within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the complaint.

Within twenty (20) school days of receiving the complaint, the Grievance Administrator will provide a written response outlining the findings and proposed resolution, where appropriate. In the event that a resolution involves disciplinary action against an employee or scholar, the grievant will not be informed of specific disciplinary actions unless the action directly involves the grievant.

All timelines specified above will be implemented as described unless the nature of the investigation, school breaks, availability of witnesses, or exigent circumstances prevent such implementation. In those circumstances, the matter will be completed as promptly as reasonably possible. If timelines are extended, the reason(s) for the delay should be documented.

Confidentiality of grievants, respondents, and witnesses will be maintained to the extent consistent with RePublic Schools' obligations related to investigating complaints and protecting the due process rights of all individuals involved.

### **Appeals**

If the grievant is not satisfied with the outcome at a given level of the process, the grievant may appeal the matter to the next level within the escalation structure outlined above.

If the grievant remains dissatisfied after review by the Chief Operating Officer, the grievant may submit a final appeal to the Board of Directors by contacting the Chair of the Board.

The Board of Directors will issue a written response to the appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the appeal, unless additional time is reasonably necessary due to the complexity of the matter or other circumstances requiring additional review.

## **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

### **Acceptable Use**

The Internet is a global network linking computers around the world. Internet use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, and career development. RePublic Schools offers Internet access to its scholars and staff. The primary purpose of providing access to the Internet is to support the educational mission of RePublic Schools. RePublic Schools expects that scholars and staff will use this access in a manner consistent with this purpose.

While the Internet is a tremendous resource for electronic information, it has the potential for abuse. RePublic Schools makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data available over the Internet. Users of the RePublic Schools Internet service assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities, or damages arising

from the way they choose to use their access to the Internet. RePublic Schools has installed special filtering software in an effort to block access to material that is not appropriate for children.

### **Unacceptable Use**

The following is a list of prohibited behaviors. The list is not exhaustive, but illustrates unacceptable uses of the RePublic Schools' Internet service:

- Disclosing, using, or disseminating personal identification information about self or others;
- Accessing, sending, or forwarding materials or communications that are defamatory, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, threatening, harassing, or illegal;
- Using the Internet service for any illegal activities such as gaining unauthorized access to other systems, arranging for the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol, participating in criminal gang activity, threatening others, transferring obscene material, or attempting to do any of the above;
- Using the Internet service to receive or send information relating to dangerous instruments such as bombs or other explosive devices, automatic weapons or other firearms, or other weaponry;
- Vandalizing school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, attempting to disrupt the computer system, or destroying data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means;
- Copying or downloading of copyrighted material without authorization from the copyright holder, unless the copies are used for teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. Users shall not copy and forward or copy and upload any copyrighted material without prior approval of the principal;
- Plagiarizing material obtained from the Internet (any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through E-mail or news sources must also be credited to sources);
- Using the Internet service for commercial purposes;
- Downloading or installing any commercial software, shareware, freeware, or similar types of material onto network drives or disks without prior permission of the principal; and
- Overriding the Internet filtering software.

### **Safety Issues**

Use of the Internet has potential dangers. The following are basic safety rules pertaining to all types of Internet applications. We ask families to support us in instilling safe internet use habits with their scholar, including:

- Never reveal any identifying information such as last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parents' names, parents' employers or work addresses, or photographs.
- Use the "back" key whenever they encounter a site that they believe is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Immediately tell a school staff member if they receive a message that they believe is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Never share their password or use another person's password. Internet passwords are provided for each user's personal use only. If they suspect that someone has discovered their password, they should notify school staff immediately so their password can be updated.

### **Privacy**

Users should not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in the user's directory or on a disk drive. RePublic Schools reserves the right to examine all data stored on diskettes involved in the user's use of RePublic

Schools' Internet service. Internet messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. Network administrators may review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

### Violations

Access to RePublic Schools' Internet service is a privilege, not a right. RePublic Schools reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion (scholars), or dismissal (staff) for violations of this policy. Each school will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of any illegal activities conducted through RePublic Schools' Internet service. Each school will also cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the service.

### School Technology Agreement

Scholars may be assigned a personal device including a Chromebook or iPad to use for academic purposes. Scholars and families are subject to the below policy and will confirm their acceptance of the policy at the beginning of the school year.

Use of a RePublic Schools Chromebook or iPad is a privilege. Therefore I agree that I will:

- Use the Chromebook or iPad only for activities my teacher has allowed as part of the learning process.
- Secure Chromebooks or iPads appropriately to ensure their safety and care.
- Report any loss of or damage to any Chromebook or iPad immediately.
- Protect the Chromebook or iPad from damage during transport.
- Protect the Chromebook or iPad by unplugging the charger and headphones when transporting.
- Protect the display by carefully closing the lid.
- Pay for the cost of repairing any damage made to the Chromebook or iPad.

I agree that I will not:

- Send defamatory or harassing email or social media messages.
- "Hack" into any computer system.
- Use copyrighted materials that exceed fair use guidelines without written permission of the author.
- Loan, give, or sell my Chromebook or iPad to another person.
- Share passwords.
- Share personal information with anyone on the Internet or via email.
- Engage in unauthorized use of the network when on campus.
- Maliciously damage or steal school computer equipment or electronic data.
- Change the settings of school supplied software.
- Access any inappropriate website, including sites that contain graphic or lewd images or information.

I understand that my parent/guardian will be responsible for covering the cost of any damages to the Chromebook or iPad with which I have been entrusted.

### Mandated Reporter Policy

According to TN. Code Ann. 37-1-403(i)(1) and Miss. Code Ann. § 43-21-353, all school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child maltreatment immediately when they have reason to believe that harm has come to a child that "reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse or neglect." Under these laws, failure to report such abuse is a Class A



Misdemeanor.

Once any staff member becomes aware that a scholar may be the victim of abuse or neglect, they must:

- Call the DCS central intake hotline at (877) 54-ABUSE (552-2873),
- Notify the principal, and
- Complete an incident report.

When calling the hotline, the staff member must have the following information (or as much as is known): the name, birth date, and address of the alleged victim; the name, address, age or birth date, and relationship of the alleged perpetrator; what type of injury or harm was allegedly done to the victim; and a description of the incident (time/date, place in which it occurred, and indication of intention to harm). The staff member should also have the names and ages of other children in the household, information as to whether or not English is fluently spoken by the parents, and the work phone number of the alleged perpetrator.

While these steps are taking place, the principal will assist both the faculty member and scholar in understanding the ramifications of the call. An assistant principal or principal will debrief the scholar and, when appropriate, will contact the scholar's parent or guardian.

No one in the workplace, even a supervisor, is permitted to suppress, change, or edit a report of abuse. A mandated reporter who willfully fails to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is subject to license suspension or revocation, and this action constitutes a misdemeanor. Falsely reporting information to the hotline also constitutes a misdemeanor.

### Non-Discrimination Policy

RePublic Schools as a matter of policy provides educational opportunities without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, disability, or age.

In addition, RePublic Schools does not permit or condone discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical disability, or age in employment matters or assignment in programs or services provided.

If you wish to discuss the regulations governing these policies, or wish to discuss a concern or file a grievance, please contact the Regional Director of Operations.



# **RePublic Schools Elementary School Family Handbook**

2026-2027

# THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

## The Elementary School Resource

While all of our schools operate with the same RePublic mission, beliefs, and values, not every level of school is the same. Students change developmentally as they progress from elementary to middle to high school, and the policies and procedures in place at each level of school should reflect that. Therefore, the following policies and procedures in this Elementary School Handbook are specific to the elementary schools in the RePublic network. The policies and procedures in the RePublic Core Family and Student Handbook apply to all schools and all students. Please use this resource to better understand the processes that occur at the elementary school level.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Elementary School Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday, the regular school day is from 7:15 am – 2:40 pm.

On 70% Days, the school day is from 7:15 am – 12:55 pm.

Elementary school buildings are open to scholars at 7:15 am Monday through Friday\*. We serve breakfast to scholars between 7:15 - 7:30 am. Scholars are tardy if they are not inside the doors of the school at 7:30 am. The school building closes to all scholars who are not in a RePublic after-school activity 20 minutes after the end of the school day.

We know that emergencies may arise that may cause a scholar to be picked up late from school, but families who consistently fail to pick-up scholars on-time may be subject to interventions and consequences. The school will attempt to contact a scholar's parent/guardian if a scholar is left on campus after dismissal ends and the parent has not notified the school. The school will also attempt to contact the student's emergency contacts. Additional information about late pick-up procedures are found in the School Policies and Procedures section section.

*\*Prior to school buildings opening, there are no staff on duty outside due to morning staff meetings. If parents/guardians choose to drop scholars off early, please note that there will be no proper supervision provided by the school.*

### Transportation Plans

During enrollment, families will be asked to complete a transportation plan form to indicate how scholars will get to and from school each day. It is critically important that if there are changes to this plan, families communicate with the school as soon as possible.

If a permanent change is being made to a scholar's transportation plan, **families must call the main office and speak with the Operations Team.**

If families are making a modification to a single day's transportation, they can communicate that in one of two ways. First, they can send a written note with the scholar at the beginning of the day. The scholar should give that notice to their advisory teacher during homework submission. Second, the family can call

the front office. If the family is making a call, that call should be placed before noon to ensure that ample time is provided to communicate changes to transportation. The school cannot ensure that calls received after these timeframes will be communicated to the scholar, in which case, they will proceed with their normal transportation plan.

### Elementary School Grading Policy

Grades are an important tool in communicating a scholar's current levels of performance, and in determining readiness for promotion to the next grade level.

#### Grading Scale

| Kindergarten |                         |               | 1st - 4th Grade |         |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------|
| Color        | Mastery                 | Score         | Letter Grade    | Range   |
| Blue         | Advanced                | 90% or higher | A               | 90-100% |
| Green        | Proficient              | 75% - 89%     | B               | 80-89%  |
| Yellow       | Approaching Grade Level | 60% - 74%     | C               | 70-79%  |
| Red          | Below Grade Level       | 60% or below  | D               | 60-69%  |
|              |                         |               | F               | 59-50%  |

### Summer and Holiday Homework

During school breaks, scholars can lose the gains they made during the school year. To combat this, we assign homework over holidays and summer break so that every scholar is prepared to move to the next lesson when school resumes.

### Reading Logs

We count on you to help foster your scholar's love of reading by reading to him or her daily in the early elementary grades and ensuring that your child reads independently in the later elementary grades.

Reading aloud will help your child develop listening comprehension skills, critical-thinking abilities, and vocabulary, while independent reading at home will improve your scholar's concentration and stamina.

Your scholar will come home with book baggies full of fiction and nonfiction books to read at home, so make sure you set aside reading time and use your scholar's book baggie as an exciting resource.

You and your scholar are responsible for tracking the number of books or number of minutes that you and

your child read nightly on a reading log, which you can find in your child's homework packet.

We expect 100% completion of reading logs every week. To reach this weekly goal, families of scholars in **grades K-2 must read aloud six books per week**, and scholars in **grades 3 and 4 must read independently for 30 minutes a day, six days a week**.

### **Why Reading Logs Are Important**

In addition to reviewing a scholar's homework, we expect parents to ensure that scholars read every night and record their reading in their reading log. Completing the reading log should be a pleasant experience for you and your scholar, because reading is fun and enjoyable. We track how many books our scholars read and encourage scholars and families to go above and beyond – reading as many books as possible.

We expect no less than 100% completion of reading logs. An incomplete reading log is just as serious and disruptive to your scholar's education as a missed day of school or an incomplete homework assignment.

### **Recess**

Just like math and science, recess is a critical part of a scholar's day — and it is not optional. Our scholars want (and need) a break from the rigors of the academic day and the opportunity to exercise outside and socialize with their peers. We go outside for recess just about every day. Even in the winter months, we do not stop outdoor play. Unless it is raining heavily, snowing, or there is ice on the playground, low temperatures should not be a barrier to outside play. Please make sure your child comes to school dressed appropriately for the weather so that he or she can fully enjoy recess.

### **Snacks**

At the elementary school level, all scholars are also served snacks in the mid-afternoon, free of charge. If your scholar signs up to receive meals at school, he or she will receive free breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Each family will receive notification describing the school breakfast, lunch, and snack program and how to opt into the school meal program at the beginning of the year.

### **Elementary School Dress Code**

At the elementary school level, all scholars must wear a school uniform. The dress code has been adopted to improve the educational environment for all scholars. Specifically, we have instituted a dress code to prepare scholars to act and dress as scholars, to foster a sense of school identity and community, to eliminate unnecessary energy spent on brand name clothing and image, to increase security and safety in the building, and reduce the cost of clothing families need to purchase each school year.

### **Enforcement of the Dress Code**

It is the goal of the school to have a dress code that makes things easier for parents and scholars. We have made every effort to be clear about this policy and to be consistent in its enforcement. Families who have questions or concerns should contact the school immediately for clarification.

When a scholar arrives out of dress code, school staff will work to address the concern in a consistent and supportive manner. School uniforms are a required part of the RePublic experience and are non-negotiable.

The following consequences may apply for dress code violations:

At the start of the school year, there is a two-week grace period to ensure all scholars have the appropriate uniform. After this period:

- **1st Offense:** Parent/guardian is contacted regarding the dress code concern, and the scholar may be required to change into appropriate clothing or temporary replacement uniform items, if available.
- **2nd Offense:** Parent/guardian is contacted again regarding continued dress code concerns, and the scholar may be required to change into appropriate clothing or temporary replacement uniform items, if available.
- **3rd Offense:** Scholar may be removed from the classroom and assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) for the day for continued noncompliance with the dress code.
- **Repeated Offenses:** Repeated dress code violations may result in additional disciplinary consequences aligned to the school's Code of Conduct.

Clothing or accessories determined to be unsafe, substantially disruptive, inappropriate for a school setting, or inconsistent with maintaining a positive learning environment may not be permitted on campus.

RePublic Schools reserves the right to make final determinations regarding dress code compliance and appropriate corrective actions.

### **Purchase of Clothing**

School logo sweatshirts and school logo cardigans will be sold through our vendor's website, featured on your RePublic school's website. Polo shirts and other uniform items may be purchased from any vendor or store of your choice as long as they meet dress code requirements.

## **School Dress Code Information**

### **Polo Shirts**

- Scholars must wear appropriately colored, unaltered, school shirts each day unless previously designated.
  - Smilow Collegiate- red, gray, navy, or white polo shirts
  - Revive Collegiate- gold, light blue, or white polo shirts
- Schools may designate days for scholars to wear spirit shirts, college shirts, or to dress-down fully.

### **Bottoms**

- Bottom wear must consist of traditional uniform-style pants, capris, shorts, skorts, skirts, or jumpers and must follow the color guidance below. Sweatpants, athletic pants, leggings worn as pants, pajama-style pants, joggers, denim, cargo pants, or other non-uniform styles are not permitted unless explicitly approved by school leadership.
  - Bottom wear must be black, navy, or khaki in color.
- Shorts/skirts/dresses - professional knee length, anything shorter requires a long layer under garment (i.e. tights, compression shorts/pants); and shorts must be fingertip length

### **Outerwear**

- While scholars are not required to wear these items during the school day, we do recommend that each scholar own a crewneck, fleece, or cardigan to ensure they are comfortable in class, as temperatures can fluctuate slightly.
- Outerwear must be black, navy, red, white, or other approved RePublic colors and may not contain words, pictures, large logos, or large graphics. Hooded clothing and outerwear of any kind are not permitted on campus or inside the building unless explicitly approved by school leadership. Hoods may not be worn at any time. During colder months, scholars may wear solid-colored beanies or winter hats in approved school colors that do not contain words, pictures, large logos, or large graphics.

### **Shoes and Socks**

- Closed Footwear
  - Can be a scholars choice in color and must be safe for moving quickly in cases of emergency
  - Must not contain any wording outside of the logo name (no profane logos)
  - No crocs or other open-toed/heel shoes

### **Belts**

- Belts are required and can be any color
- Studded belts are not permitted.

### **Head Coverings**

- Headcoverings - head wraps are permissible as long as they are professional and meet criteria below. Hats, durags, and bonnets are not permitted.

Students may not wear clothing, jewelry, or personal items that:

- Are not sized appropriately, too baggy, too tight.
- Are altered (drawing, cutting, fraying)
- Are pornographic, contain threats, or that promote illegal or violent conduct such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia;
- Demonstrate hate group association/affiliation and/or use hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or other protected groups;
- Intentionally show private parts (nipples, genitals, buttocks). Clothing must cover private parts in opaque (not able to be seen-through) material;
- Cover the student's face to the extent that the student is not identifiable including ski masks (except clothing/headgear worn for a religious or medical purpose); or
- Demonstrate gang association/affiliation (bandanas meet this criteria and are not allowed).

### **Toilet Training Policy**

The purpose of this Toilet Training Policy is to ensure a safe, hygienic, and efficient learning environment for all students attending a RePublic elementary school. This policy mandates that all students must be fully toilet trained before they are eligible to attend school.

"Toilet trained" refers to a state in which a child has developed the ability to use the toilet independently for urination and bowel movements. A child who is toilet trained is capable of recognizing the need to go to the bathroom, using the toilet appropriately, and managing personal hygiene, such as wiping, flushing, and washing hands after using the restroom.

All students seeking enrollment must be fully toilet trained. This means that they should be capable of using the toilet independently, including managing personal hygiene and washing hands appropriately. Students must wear underwear daily.

Toilet training is expected to be completed by the time a child reaches the age appropriate for admission to Kindergarten. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child is toilet trained before enrollment.

RePublic acknowledges that each child's development is unique, but due to limitations in staff resources and potential disruptions to the learning environment, no exceptions will be made to the toilet training requirement, other than for those eligibility through the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

We recognize that even toilet trained students may occasionally experience accidents. It is important to note that "accidents" are considered unusual incidents and are expected to happen infrequently. In such instances, our teachers will provide assistance to students in changing their clothes while promoting independence as much as possible.

If a child is not yet toilet trained by the time they are eligible for Kindergarten, parents/guardians may choose to delay the child's enrollment until toilet training is successfully completed. The school may provide information and resources to support parents/guardians during this period.

Throughout the school year, the privacy and dignity of all students will be respected. Students will be encouraged to use the restroom independently and privately. School staff will be available to assist students as needed, while respecting their privacy.

This Toilet Training Policy will be subject to periodic review, and any necessary amendments will be made in consultation with parents/guardians, staff, and school administration.

By implementing this Toilet Training Policy, RePublic aims to provide a comfortable and conducive learning environment for all students. Parents/guardians are requested to cooperate with the school to ensure their child's successful toilet training before the start of their enrollment with us.

# **RePublic Schools Middle School Family Handbook**

2026-2027



# THE MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

## The Middle School Resource

While all of our schools operate with the same RePublic mission, beliefs, and values, not every level of school is the same. Students change developmentally as they progress from elementary to middle to high school, and the policies and procedures in place at each level of school reflect that. Therefore, the following policies and procedures in this Middle School Handbook are specific to the middle schools in the RePublic Schools network. The policies and procedures in the RePublic Core Family and Student Handbook apply to all schools and all students. Please use this resource to better understand the processes that occur at the middle school level.

At the middle school level, providing an optimal educational experience means engaging students in introductory college preparatory material and building strong literacy skills that will unlock success in their secondary and post-secondary careers. Socially, this means instilling young adults with a sense of resiliency, responsibility, and curiosity.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Middle School Hours of Operation

| Mississippi                                                                                                                            | Tennessee                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday - Friday,<br>the regular school day is from 8:15 am – 3:25 pm.<br><br>On 70% Days,<br>the school day is from 8:15 am – 1:40 pm. | Monday - Friday,<br>the regular school day is from 8:15 am – 3:30 pm.<br><br>On abbreviated days,<br>the regular school day is a half day,<br>from 8:15 am - 1:30 pm. |

Middle school buildings are open to scholars at 8:00 am Monday through Friday\*. We serve breakfast to scholars between 8:00 - 8:15 am. Scholars are tardy if they are not inside the doors of the school at 8:15 am. The school building closes to all scholars who are not in a RePublic after-school activity 20 minutes after the end of the school day.

We know that emergencies may arise that may cause a scholar to be picked up late from school, but families who consistently fail to pick-up scholars on-time may be subject to interventions and consequences. The school will attempt to contact a scholar’s parent/guardian if a scholar is left on campus after dismissal ends and the parent has not notified the school. The school will also attempt to contact the student’s emergency contacts. Additional information about late pick-up procedures are found in the School Policies and Procedures section section.

*\*Prior to school buildings opening, there are no staff on duty outside due to morning staff meetings. If parents/guardians choose to drop scholars off early, please note that there will be no proper supervision provided by the school.*

## Transportation Plans

Once each year, families will be asked to complete a transportation plan form to indicate how scholars will get to and from school each day. It is critically important that if there are changes to this plan, families communicate with the school as soon as possible. If a permanent change is being made to a scholar's transportation plan, **families must call the main office and speak with the Director of Operations.**

If families are making a temporary modification to their scholar's transportation, they can communicate that in one of two ways. First, they can send a written note with the scholar at the beginning of the day. The scholar should give that notice to their advisory teacher during homework submission. Second, the family can call the front office. If the family is making a call, that call should be placed at least one hour before the end of the school day to ensure that ample time is provided to communicate changes to transportation. The school cannot ensure that calls received after this time will be communicated to the scholar, in which case, they will proceed with their normal transportation plan.

## Middle School Grading Policy

Grades are an important tool in communicating a scholar's current levels of performance, and in determining readiness for promotion to the next grade level.

### Grading Scale

In middle school, grades that fall at or above 60% are considered passing. Grades that fall below 60% are considered failing.

The grading scale is as follows:

| Letter Grade | Range   |
|--------------|---------|
| A            | 90-100% |
| B            | 80-89%  |
| C            | 70-79%  |
| D            | 60-69%  |
| F            | <60%    |

### Final Grades

The school year is broken into four quarters. At the end of each quarter, scholars receive a grade in each class. Each quarter, those grades will be comprised of four components, weighted as follows:

- **Unit Test Component: 30% of overall grade**
  - The Assessment component measures ongoing scholar mastery of a subject's skill and content standards, as determined by performance on end of unit assessments.
- **Unit Quiz Component: 30% of overall grade**

- The Quiz component measures ongoing scholar mastery of a subject's skill and content standards, as determined by performance on by-weekly quizzes.
- **Homework Component: 20% of overall grade**
  - The Homework component measures only a scholar's completion of daily homework assignments – homework is collected and entered for a grade daily.
- **Classwork Component: 20% of overall grade**
  - The Classwork component measures the daily performance of scholars in their classrooms. These grades can be made up of assigned work in class, as well as participation.

Scholars' end-of-year grades are derived by calculating the average of each quarter's grades.

### Progress Reports

Along with your weekly newsletter, you will have access to your scholar's grades, behavior, and attendance regularly. The progress report is generated from our online learning and behavior management platforms. Please keep in mind that this is not an official MNPS or JPS progress report, so it will look different than those reports.

If you have questions or concerns about your scholar's grades, behavior, or attendance, please contact the school immediately.

### Independent Reading

#### Why Independent Reading is Important

Research shows that independent and choice reading has significant benefits for students of all ages. Scholars who read independently, and love to read, show more academic success across all contents, have stronger vocabularies, and can explore a variety of interests. Therefore, scholars read independent reading books for fun in addition to the texts they read in class.

In addition to reviewing a scholar's homework, we expect parents to ensure that scholars read every night at home. Approximately 30 minutes of reading each night and on weekends is recommended; this can be reading silently and independently, or reading aloud with a family member. All scholars have the opportunity to check out a book of choice from the school library or read a book of choice on the MyOn/ Accelerated reader platform. Reading at home should be a pleasant experience for you and your scholar, because reading is fun and enjoyable. We track how many books our scholars read and encourage scholars and families to go above and beyond – reading as many books as possible.

#### Our Expectations

Your school will provide a system for tracking the number of books read. We expect all scholars to meet their goal. Failing to read a choice book is just as serious and disruptive to your scholar's education as a missed day of school or an incomplete homework assignment.

### Middle School Dress Code

At the middle school level, all scholars must wear a school uniform. The dress code has been adopted to improve the educational environment for all scholars. Specifically, we have instituted a dress code to prepare

scholars to act and dress as scholars, to foster a sense of school identity and community, to eliminate unnecessary energy spent on brand name clothing and image, to increase security and safety in the building, and reduce the cost of clothing families need to purchase each school year.

### **Enforcement of the Dress Code**

It is the goal of the school to have a dress code that makes things easier for parents and scholars. We have made every effort to be clear about this policy and to be consistent in its enforcement. Families who have questions or concerns should contact the school immediately for clarification.

When a scholar arrives out of dress code, school staff will work to address the concern in a consistent and supportive manner. School uniforms are a required part of the RePublic experience and are non-negotiable. The following consequences may apply for dress code violations:

At the start of the school year, there is a two-week grace period to ensure all scholars have the appropriate uniform. After this period:

- **1st Offense:** Parent/guardian is contacted regarding the dress code concern, and the scholar may be required to change into appropriate clothing or temporary replacement uniform items, if available.
- **2nd Offense:** Parent/guardian is contacted again regarding continued dress code concerns, and the scholar may be required to change into appropriate clothing or temporary replacement uniform items, if available.
- **3rd Offense:** Scholar may be removed from the classroom and assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) for the day for continued noncompliance with the dress code.
- **Repeated Offenses:** Repeated dress code violations may result in additional disciplinary consequences aligned to the school's Code of Conduct.

Clothing or accessories determined to be unsafe, substantially disruptive, inappropriate for a school setting, or inconsistent with maintaining a positive learning environment may not be permitted on campus.

RePublic Schools reserves the right to make final determinations regarding dress code compliance and appropriate corrective actions.

### **Purchase of Clothing**

School logo sweatshirts and school logo cardigans will be sold through our vendor's website, featured on your RePublic school's website. Polo shirts and other uniform items may be purchased from any vendor or store of your choice as long as they meet dress code requirements.

## **Dress Code Information**

### **Polo Shirts**

- Scholars must wear appropriately colored, unaltered, school shirts each day unless previously designated.
  - ReImagine Prep- red, gray, or white polo shirts (solid color or with RePublic logo)
  - Smilow Prep- navy, light blue, red, or white polo shirts (solid color or with RePublic logo)

- Nashville Prep - navy or red polo shirts (solid color or with RePublic logo)
  - Liberty Collegiate Academy - light blue, navy, or gray polo shirts (solid color or with RePublic logo)
- Schools may designate days for scholars to wear spirit shirts, college shirts, or to dress-down fully.

### **Bottoms**

- Bottom wear must consist of traditional uniform-style pants, capris, shorts, skorts, skirts, or jumpers and must follow the color guidance below. Sweatpants, athletic pants, leggings worn as pants, pajama-style pants, joggers, denim, cargo pants, or other non-uniform styles are not permitted unless explicitly approved by school leadership.
  - Reimagine Prep: All uniform bottoms should be black, navy, or khaki in color.
  - Smilow Prep: All uniform bottoms should be black, navy, or khaki in color.
  - Liberty Collegiate Academy: All uniform bottoms should be black, navy, or khaki in color.
  - Nashville Prep: All uniform bottoms should be black, navy, or khaki in color.
- Shorts/skirts/dresses - professional knee length, anything shorter requires a long layer under garment (i.e. tights, compression shorts/pants); and shorts must be fingertip length

### **Outerwear**

- While scholars are not required to wear these items during the school day, we do recommend that each scholar own a crewneck, fleece, or cardigan to ensure they are comfortable in class, as temperatures can fluctuate slightly.
- Outerwear must be black, navy, red, white, or other approved RePublic colors and may not contain words, pictures, large logos, or large graphics. Hooded clothing and outerwear of any kind are not permitted on campus or inside the building unless explicitly approved by school leadership. Hoods may not be worn at any time. During colder months, scholars may wear solid-colored beanies or winter hats in approved school colors that do not contain words, pictures, large logos, or large graphics.

### **Shoes and Socks**

- Closed Footwear
  - Can be a scholars choice in color and must be safe for moving quickly in cases of emergency
  - Must not contain any wording outside of the logo name (no profane logos)
  - No crocs or other open-toed/heel shoes

### **Belts**

- Belts are required and can be any color
- Studded belts are not permitted.

### **Head Coverings**

- Headcoverings - head wraps are permissible as long as they are professional and meet criteria below. Hats, durags, and bonnets are not permitted.

Students may not wear clothing, jewelry, or personal items that:

- Are not sized appropriately, too baggy, too tight.
- Are altered (drawing, cutting, fraying)
- Are pornographic, contain threats, or that promote illegal or violent conduct such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia;
- Demonstrate hate group association/affiliation and/or use hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or other protected groups;
- Intentionally show private parts (nipples, genitals, buttocks). Clothing must cover private parts in opaque (not able to be seen-through) material;
- Cover the student's face to the extent that the student is not identifiable including ski masks (except clothing/headgear worn for a religious or medical purpose); or
- Demonstrate gang association/affiliation (bandanas meet this criteria and are not allowed).

# **RePublic Schools High School Family Handbook**

2025-2026

# THE HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK

## The High School Resource

While all of our schools operate with the same RePublic mission, beliefs, and values, not every level of school is the same. Students change developmentally as they progress from elementary to middle to high school, and the policies and procedures in place at each level of school should reflect that. Therefore, the following policies and procedures in this High School Handbook are specific to the high schools in the RePublic network. The policies and procedures in the RePublic Core Family and Student Handbook apply to all schools and all students. Please use this resource to better understand the processes that occur at the high school level.

## HIGH SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### High School Hours of Operation

Each day of the week the school day is from 7:10-2:40. Scholars are required to be in their RTI class by 7:20.

The school building is open to scholars at 7:10am Monday through Friday. We serve breakfast to scholars between 7:10-7:20 am. Scholars are tardy if they are not inside the doors of the school at 7:20 am. The school building closes to all scholars who are not in a RePublic after-school activity after 2:40 pm each day of the week.

### Transportation Plans

Once each year, families will be asked to complete a transportation plan form to indicate how scholars will get to and from school each day. It is critically important that if there are changes to this plan, families communicate with the school as soon as possible. If a permanent change is being made to a scholar's transportation plan, ***families must call the main office and speak with the front desk receptionist or the dean of operations.***

If families are making a temporary modification to their scholar's a single day's transportation, they can communicate that in one of two ways. First, they can send a written note with the scholar at the beginning of the day. The scholar should give that notice to their advisory teacher during homework submission. Second, the family can call the front office.

### Key Beliefs on Grading

The grading policy outlined in the pages below reflects both the purpose of this document and the beliefs that we hold true as an institution:

1. **Excellence in Outcomes - Results Matter.** We commit to transforming the educational trajectories of each of our scholars. ***We define our success by results -- not how hard we work, but how well our scholars perform.*** We believe that education is freedom, and it is our responsibility to expand that freedom.
2. **Our grades will be reflective of deep learning.** ***We are shifting the focus to quality.*** In this quarter, we are looking to increase the quality of our preparation, the quality of our assignments, the



quality of questioning, and the quality of our feedback to students relative to their independent practice.

3. **Our grades will be assigned with teacher awareness.** We recognize that all individuals bring assumptions and perspectives to their work. In education, those perspectives can unintentionally influence how students are assessed. At RePublic Schools, we are committed to ensuring that our grading practices are fair, consistent, and focused on what students know and can do. We intentionally examine our grading systems to identify and address patterns that may lead to unequal outcomes, ensuring that every student is evaluated with accuracy and integrity.
4. **Our grades will be bellwethers for, rather than gatekeepers to our students' success.** Our grades and grading system must not be punitive if we are to lead with love, achievement, and belongingness. We must believe in our students' ability to achieve and then give them as many opportunities as needed to demonstrate their mastery; **we will do this with increased class independent practice coupled with actionable feedback and the option of resubmission for mastery exit tickets.**

### Grading For Students With IEPs/ILPs/504s

Teachers have students in their classes who have varying levels of abilities and needs. It is our responsibility to reach them all, including students with disabilities/impairments and English language learners. These students, also known as diverse learners, have *documented* barriers to learning in which we must address. Our diverse learners deserve equitable access and may require more support and help from teachers than their peers. In addition, not all diverse learners are the same. Teachers need to consider student by student when grading our diverse learners.

1. **Federal/State/District Policies state:**
  - a. English learners cannot fail a course based on English language usage and proficiency.
  - b. Students with disabilities cannot fail a course if the IEP was not implemented 100%.
  - c. Students with impairments cannot fail a course if the 504 was not implemented 100%.
2. **COVID Effects and Accessibility to Learning:** During the challenging school year of being virtual, some diverse learners faced academic obstacles they had never encountered before. Teachers were challenged on how to address these obstacles and to think outside the box. One solution is to ensure students have access to learning that is clear, organized, and differentiated. This is a good teacher practice for all students, not just diverse learners. Some examples to improve accessibility include but are not limited to:
  - a. Students have access to materials that are clear, consistent, and organized
  - b. Teachers provide any supporting materials to students (i.e. teacher notes, PPT slides)
  - c. Teachers consider different ways to assess student mastery for certain students (i.e. oral responses, group presentation, projects, portfolios, etc)
  - d. Teachers consider best practices around addressing the impact of COVID by providing additional time on assignments,, 1:1 or small group tutoring, etc
3. **Teacher Documentation:** As both IEP, ILP, and 504 are legal documents, it is important for teachers to maintain and store documentation to show implementation of these documents. These are some examples of documentation include but not limited to:

- Student facing materials that included students' accommodations (i.e. providing a Spanish translated copies, highlighted important parts, sentence starters, etc)
- Tracker that shows how accommodations were given on classwork, exit tickets, and quizzes/tests
- Recorded lessons that show a teacher implementing accommodations (i.e checking for understanding, providing a break, launching online translator, giving extra time, etc)
- Email exchange with students, families, and/or staff members

*If a teacher cannot provide sufficient documentation that an IEP, ILP, and/or 504 was implemented with fidelity, the teacher is required to assign a grade of 70 at the end of each quarter. Further, we will work with the teachers to clarify or create a support plan to ensure IEP, ILP, and/or 504s are implemented with fidelity and with appropriate support for the diverse learners moving forward. Reach out to the Student Supports team for any support or questions.*

## Grading Scale

At RePublic Schools, we strive to provide consistency in our expectations and practices while holding all students and staff to a high bar of excellence. This is especially true with our grading policy. Your scholar's GPA is one of two numbers that will influence their college acceptance. Their grades matter. You understanding their grades matters. Our grading scale is aligned with Metro Nashville Public Schools because we are a part of the school district and intend to grade consistently with MNPS.

Your scholar will receive a percent score for each one of their classes every quarter. That percent score will translate to a letter grade and a number of GPA points, dependent on whether the course is an AP course or not.

| Letter Grade | Cutoff | GPA Points - College Prep | GPA Point - AP |
|--------------|--------|---------------------------|----------------|
| A            | 90-100 | 4.00                      | 5.00           |
| B            | 80-89  | 3.00                      | 4.00           |
| C            | 70-79  | 2.00                      | 3.00           |
| D            | 60-69  | 1.00                      | 2.00           |
| F            | 50-59  | 0                         | 0              |

*Note: Students on alternative graduation/certification tracks will adhere to the grade scale indicated by their Individualized Education Plan.*

## Grading Categories & Weights

Categories are groupings of assignments that make up the final grade, and the corresponding category weights are the importance or value (%) of each grading category. All High School teachers will use the

following assignment categories for all courses in the Gradebook. For classes that do not have cumulative assessments or interim exams, the grading categories may change.

| Category                       | Examples                                                            | Mastery/<br>Completion | Abrv. | %   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------|-----|
| Homework                       | Attendance, Participation, Engagement, Class Preparedness           | Completion or Mastery  | HWK   | 10% |
| Classwork                      | Mastery Exit Tickets and Classwork                                  | Mastery                | CWK   | 20% |
| Quizzes                        | Weekly or frequent assessments, shorter writing assignments         | Mastery                | QZ    | 20% |
| Tests                          | Unit Exams, Book-Based Essays, Culminating Projects, Multi-Day Labs | Mastery                | TS    | 30% |
| Major Assessments/<br>Projects | End-of-Quarter Cumulative Assessments, Significant Projects         | Mastery                | IA    | 20% |

## Grading Policies

- **Checking Grades:** Teachers should encourage students to review their grades weekly through PowerSchool.
- **Assignment Submission:** Teachers must assign a due date for each assignment that is shared with students. As a standard practice, beyond the initially assigned deadline, students will be given a “grace period” of one week. Teachers may assign a grade of 0.
  - Gradebooks officially close at the end of the final day of instruction for the quarter, at which point all students must submit all missing and/or late assignments.
  - The final grade to be entered into the gradebook for the quarter will be the Interim Assessment.
- **Late/Makeup Work:** All assignments submitted after the initial deadline are considered late, unless that student has been formally excused from the deadline for legitimate reasons; see the *Excused Assignments* section above.
  - If a student is absent on the day of an assignment, they should be given one additional day for each day absent to complete that work for full credit. *For instance, if a student is absent for two days, an additional two days should be added to the initial assignment deadline for them.*
- **Work Resubmission:** Because students may request to resubmit assignments to pursue greater mastery, teachers may offer resubmission for Exit Tickets and Tests only. Some students with disabilities have work resubmission as part of their classroom accommodations.

## Student Transportation

The school bus will depart campus at 2:50 pm each day and 1:45 pm on early release days. Scholars must comply with the Scholar Code of Conduct while traveling on a school bus to and from their homes or school-sponsored activities. If a scholar commits an infraction covered in the Scholar Code of Conduct on a school bus or at the

school bus stop, the school bus driver/monitor will notify the principal or designee who will require the completion of the "The School Bus Behavior Report". Based on the severity of the consequence, the school's discretion for consequences include regular school-based consequences, as well as bus suspension or bus expulsion and/or assigned seating. If a child is suspended from the bus, it is then the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the child gets to school on time.

Any scholars who take the MTA or walk from school to home are expected to follow all school expectations during this transition, as they would be on a school bus and may be held accountable to the consequences outlined in the Scholar Code of Conduct or referred to law enforcement. Respect for fellow riders, abiding by traffic rules, respecting pedestrians, and treating neighborhood homes and businesses with respect en route to and from home is an important expectation of all scholars.

RePublic High School supervises dismissal from classes at the end of the school day and encourages all scholars to go directly home. The school is not responsible for scholars that choose not to board the afternoon school bus and leave campus for an unknown destination or for scholars that ride the bus but do not report straight home once they are dropped off.

Any scholars that drive their own vehicles to school may park in the student parking lot. Scholars may not access their cars during school hours. Scholars are expected to follow all state traffic laws and to drive with caution on campus. If required, scholar vehicles are subject to search once on campus (see procedures for scholar searches).

Families are responsible for their child's transportation if and when that child is required for academic or behavioral reasons to stay late at school and/or not ride the bus. This includes afternoon restitution.

## Dress Code Policy

We do NOT require families to purchase uniforms or wear specific colors. Scholars may choose appropriate clothing while following these guidelines.

- We want RHS to be a safe and positive learning environment where students are focused on high academic achievement. In order to assure our school is safe and focused on learning outcomes students should choose to wear clothing to school that is **safe, clean**, and allows them and those around them to **focus** on learning.
- Together we have much to do to assure that all of our students have the opportunity and ability to attend a college of their choice and we plan to focus our time and energy on this. We believe our role as educators is to quickly inform and correct students whose outfit does not meet our dress code so that they may make the adjustment and return to learning.

### Student Guidelines for Dress Code

Before getting dressed for the day we ask each of our students to ask themselves the following questions:

- Is what I am wearing **SAFE**?
  - Could anything on my clothes reasonably be used as a weapon to injury someone else?
  - Would someone feel threatened by my clothes or accessories?
  - Is there a message on my shirt that might be considered demeaning to people from a specific race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation?
- Is what I am wearing **CLEAN** looking?
  - Are there large hole/rips or undersized clothes revealing parts of my body to others?
  - Am I wearing something that I would more likely wear to the beach than a job?
  - Would an important member of my family be embarrassed by clothing choice?

- Am I wearing a hat or head covering for an accessory that would not be regularly worn at most professional jobs and is not part of my religion or culture?
- **Is what I am wearing allowing me and others to FOCUS on learning?**
  - Am I covered enough to keep warm in our often cold classrooms?
  - Will I be self-conscious today about people looking at me for reasons not related to my character or the content of my speech?
  - Is there a symbol on my shirt that promotes violence, drug/alcohol use?
- **Am I wearing any of the non-negotiable items in the school building?**
  - Skirt/shorts shorter than length of fingertips, exposed midriff, pants worn below waist
  - Exposed undergarments
  - Durags, bonnet, hair-net, hats
  - Pajamas

If after asking these 4 questions you are unsure of the appropriateness of your dress then you should not waste your time overthinking it. Do one the following:

1. Don't wear the clothing in question to school
2. Bring a back up clothing to change into

### **School Attire Compliance & Exemption**

School leadership and teachers will use positive reinforcement to obtain compliance with the school dress code guidelines. Deans will immediately contact parents of students who regularly struggle to meeting dress expectations.

District or campus personnel will not discriminate against any student who has been exempted from the mandatory use of Standard School Attire because of objections based on bona fide religious, medical or disability needs.

### **Scholar Searches**

School officials (members of the school leadership team) may perform searches of scholars when they enter campus. RePublic High School follows Metro Nashville Public Schools policy on search and seizures, which states:

"The following procedures apply to the search of lockers, other areas of school property assigned or accessible to students for the holding or storage of property, packages and containers brought onto school property by students and visitors. Lockers and other storage areas are the property of the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools and are subject to search. The search will be conducted by the principal or his/her designee in the presence of an adult witness.

- There should be reasonable suspicion\* for school authorities to investigate that the student(s) or visitor(s) possess(es) an item, the possession of which constitutes a crime or school rule violation.
- If circumstances in a particular school dictate, either a general or random search of lockers or other school property accessible to students may be conducted.
- A notice will be posted at all schools that lockers and other storage areas, containers, and packages brought into the school by students or visitors are subject to search for drugs, drug paraphernalia, and weapons.

The following procedures apply to the search of students' or visitors' vehicles located or parked on school property. The search will be conducted by the school principal or his/her designee in the presence of an adult witness.

- There should be reasonable suspicion\* for school authorities to investigate that the vehicle contains weapons, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or other illicit items.
- If circumstances dictate, either a general or random search of vehicles may be conducted.
- A notice will be posted at all school properties indicating that vehicles located or parked on school property are subject to search.

The following procedures apply to the search of a student for items in the student's immediate possession. The search will be conducted by the principal or his/her designee in the presence of an adult witness.

- The search will be conducted in private and in the presence of an adult witness. Situations where there is an immediate threat to the safety and welfare of students and staff, and in the school official's judgment the immediate control of the student and item(s) which are subject of the search is necessary, a search may be conducted in a non-private setting and without an adult witness, provided all of the requirements of reasonableness above are met.

The following procedures apply to item(s) discovered and/or seized in the course of searches conducted on school facilities. Any item reasonably felt to necessitate criminal prosecution will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

- School authorities may seize any item reasonably felt to be a threat to the safety of others or is used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.

NOTE: State law permits school officials to make use of metal detectors or other devices, as well as dogs trained to detect drugs or weapons, to assist in the discovery of weapons and drugs on school properties. Any contraband (such as knives, night sticks, gang-related paraphernalia, etc.) confiscated during searches or turned in to school staff will be stored at Metro School's Security Office for 60 days. After 60 days, unclaimed items will be discarded or destroyed."

<sup>2</sup>"Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Student-Family Handbook." June 2014. Web. 29 May 2015.

## Special Education and Support Services

RePublic High School provides a full range of special education programs and support services, as required by state and federal law. This includes programs and services for scholars with learning, emotional, cognitive, physical, hearing, vision, and speech/language disabilities, as well as, scholars with autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, and other disabling conditions.

To assure that all scholars receive the services necessary to be successful, every effort will be made to identify scholars with special and/or support needs through our response to instruction and intervention process (RTI<sup>2</sup>).

Should a parent think that their scholar may be a candidate for special education and/or support services, they should contact the school immediately. Parents have the right to make a referral at any time during the school year. Once a referral is made, the district is required to evaluate the student to determine if there is a special education or support need and if so, how the student can be helped. This process may take up to 60 days to complete. If you have questions regarding the special education program or other support services, please contact the assistant principal of student supports.

## Department of College Access and Persistence

The RePublic Department of College Access and Persistence (DCAP) exists to serve scholars and families through

developing the social-emotional skills scholars need to succeed in college and career, to guide scholars through the process of gaining acceptance into colleges where they are most likely to graduate and to educate RePublic families to make sound financial decisions that limit the amount of debt they incur. The DCAP team will begin supporting scholars as early as fifth grade and will continue to work with RePublic alumni until they walk across the stage with their college degree in hand. We are committing to pursuing an ambitious goal of an 80% college graduation rate for all RePublic students by 2028.

In the 2025-26 school year, RHS seniors will be enrolled in a Senior Capstone class in the fall semester. In this course, students will receive support in applying for college and financial aid. All students will be expected to actively engage in this process to ensure that college is a viable and exciting option for every graduating senior.

For more information on college access and persistence, please reach out to the front office.

## FAMILY-SCHOOL COMPACT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please sign and date below to acknowledge that you have read, received, and agree to Family-School Compact (see pg. 6) and School, Parent, and Family Engagement Policy (see pg. 9). Once signed, please return the form to your school. We look forward to our partnership!

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_