



# **RIVERCREST ACADEMY**

## **Parent and Student Handbook**

**DRAFT**

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## Purpose of the Parent/Student Handbook

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The purpose of this handbook is to provide information regarding the operation of our school. It is intended to serve as a helpful resource to students, parents, school staff and the Board of Directors. Included you will find information regarding the school's policies, practices, and procedures.

Throughout the handbook we will make reference to "parents." This includes anyone who serves in a parental type role for a student (parents, custodial family members, host family, case workers, etc.). It is very important that you review this information as a family unit. We hope you will take the time to read the following pages and understand the inner workings of our school. The goal of this document is to clearly state the school's expectations and to support students in being successful at Rivercrest Academy.

Please contact Rivercrest Academy at 503-255-1841 if you have questions or need further explanation.

## Who is Rivercrest?

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**Mission:** Rivercrest Academy empowers youth to build upon their strengths and grow to their full potential in a supportive academic community.

**Vision:** Rivercrest Academy, a school of choice, provides a path that fosters personal agency and community connection to guide youth in meeting their academic and personal goals toward post secondary careers and learning.

### **Guiding Principles:**

- Centering equity
- Developing agency
- Building networks and community
- Strengthening restorative conversations

## Rivercrest Academy Non-Discriminatory Clause

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All students, faculty, staff, and community deserve to have an educational environment that is free from discrimination, threats, fear, harassment, and retaliation.

Rivercrest Academy, as part of MESD recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals and groups and prohibits the discrimination and/or harassment on any basis protected by law, including but not limited to, individual's perceived or actual race, color, religion, sex, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability or perceived disability, pregnancy, familial status, economic status, veterans status, parental or marital status or age of students or any other persons with whom the student resides.

For prompt and equitable review and resolution of student or employee complaints alleging discrimination based on sex or disability please contact Don Hicks, MESD Title IX Coordinator, at (503) 257-1518 or refer to the [Discrimination Complaint Procedure](#) or submit a [Discrimination Complaint Form](#).

### Policy references:

[JB](#) – *Equal Educational Opportunity*

[AC](#) – *Non-Discrimination*

[AC-AR \(1\)](#) – *Discrimination Complaint Procedure*

[AC-AR \(2\)](#) – *Discrimination Complaint Form*

## About Multnomah Education Service District

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Rivercrest is part of Multnomah Education Service District. MESD is an educational cooperative that provides a wide variety of programs and services on a regional basis to school districts in Multnomah County and beyond. MESD is one of 19 Education Services Districts in Oregon. MESD's major areas of services include:

- School Health Services
- Special Education
- Alternative Education
- Technology
- Outdoor School
- School Improvement

## MESD Governance

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MESD is governed by a seven member, elected [Board of Directors](#) who serve four-year terms. Five members are elected from zones and two are elected to at-large positions. Directors are not compensated for their services.

**Superintendent and Cabinet:**

Dr. Paul Coakley - Superintendent

Doana Anderson - Director of Business & Operations

Todd Greaves - Director of Student Services

Angela Hubbs - Director of Instruction

Sascha Perrins - Assistant Superintendent

Reiko Williams - Director of Regional Equity Initiatives and Partnerships

Deon Logan - Director of Human Resources

**District Contact Information:**

Title 1 Coordinator	<a href="#">Christine Otto</a>	503-257-1759	cotto@mesd.k12.or.us
ELL Coordinator	<a href="#">Christine Otto</a>	503-257-1759	cotto@mesd.k12.or.us
TAG Coordinator	<a href="#">Christine Otto</a>	503-257-1759	cotto@mesd.k12.or.us
Title IX Coordinator	<a href="#">Don Hicks</a>	503-257-1518	dhicks@mesd.k12.or.us
Section 504 Coordinator	<a href="#">Christine Otto</a>	503-257-1759	cotto@mesd.k12.or.us
Special Education Coordinator	<a href="#">Joni Tolon</a>	503-257-1795	jtolon@mesd.k12.or.us
Health Services Coordinator	<a href="#">Jamie Smith</a>	503-257-1732	jsmith2@mesd.k12.or.us

## Rivercrest Academy Staff

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3016 NE Ainsworth Street • Portland Oregon 97211 • 503-255-1841

Todd Nicholson(tnicholson@mesd.k12.or.us).....Principal  
Jeremy Ralls (jralls@mesd.k12.or.us) .....Lead Recovery Counselor  
Tiffany Cummings (tcummings@mesd.k12.or.us).....Registrar/Administrative Assistant  
Erin Dvorak(edvorak@mesd.k12.or.us).....School Psychologist/Counselor  
Jonathan Neumann (jneumann@mesd.k12.or.us)..... Teacher  
Sarah Shaw (sshaw@mesd.k12.or.us)..... Teacher  
Stacey Carleton (scarleton@mesd.k12.or.us).....Educational Assistant/Recovery Coach  
Sammy Ems (vems@mesd.k12.or.us).....Educational Assistant/Recovery Coach  
Courtney Szper (cszper@mesd.k12.or.us).....School Nurse

## Commitments

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### **Rivercrest Academy's commitments to the students:**

- We create a supportive and enthusiastic environment for your recovery and education.
- We work collaboratively with your outside support team to help your emotional, social, mental, physical and spiritual development.
- We offer opportunities for daily “check-in” so you can work through issues that may stand in the way of your education each day.
- We offer brief counseling interventions, if necessary, to address any behavioral/emotional/recovery issues that surface while at school.
- We offer random and frequent drug testing for accountability and compliance with our Mission.
- We will listen to you and hold you accountable with an empathetic, understanding, and culturally responsive approach.

### **Rivercrest Academy's commitment to parents/guardians:**

- We will treat your teen with love, acceptance and respect.
- We will do our best to answer phones and emails during school hours.
- We will return your calls within one business day if you leave a message.
- We will work with your family to ensure the safety and well-being of your teen.
- We will collaborate with APGs, mentors, psychiatrists, educational consultants, probation officers and other professionals, as needed.
- We will be clear and consistent with disciplinary consequences and create therapeutic agreements for your teen, as needed.
- We will be open to any feedback you have regarding your teen's education and development.
- We will provide services and activities to prepare your teen for life beyond high school (e.g., college guidance counseling, study preparation, resume building, vocational counseling, and one-year goals) through a culturally responsive and inclusive lens to reassure each and every student is treated with respect, dignity, and provide services specific to their individually unique needs.

## Parent and Student Rights

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- Inspect and review their students' records;
- Request an amendment of the student's education records to ensure they are not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or any other rights;
- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that these rules authorize disclosure without consent;
- File with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the agency to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA);
- Description of [Directory Information](#) and conditions for disclosure;
- Procedure for forwarding educational records within ten (10) days of receiving the request;
- [Location of Board Policies](#) for review;
- Effectively notify parents or guardians of students who have a primary or home language other than English;
- Effectively notify parents or guardians or eligible students who have a disability;
- Obtain full information on any rights referred to but not explained in this handbook.
- Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, parents are entitled to information concerning the qualifications of their child's professional classroom teacher and, if appropriate, any paraprofessional that is providing services. As parents, you are entitled to the following information:
  - If your child's teacher has completed the licensing standards which meet state requirements for the grades taught
  - If your child's teacher teaches under an emergency or provisional license.
  - The academic degree(s) or other professional certification of your child's teacher.
  - If your child receives services from paraprofessionals and information about their training.

Policy Reference:

[JF/JFA](#) – *Student Rights and Responsibilities*

[KAB](#) – *Parental Rights*

## Parent / Student Responsibilities

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**Students will demonstrate responsibility by:**

- Coming to school each day.
- Knowing and following school rules.
- Working hard to do their best in class and in schoolwork.
- Helping to keep their school safe.
- Asking for help when they need it.



- Showing respect for and cooperating with other students and adults.
- Reporting infractions of school rules to staff.
- Respecting race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, veteran's status, genetic information of disability in any educational programs, activities or employment.

**Parents, Families & Youth Support Network will help children learn to take responsibility by:**

- Having high expectations for their children as individuals.
- Ensuring their children attend school and be on time.
- Finding a place at home for schoolwork and making sure schoolwork is completed.
- Helping their children learn and resolve conflicts in positive ways.
- Communicating and working with teachers and other school staff to support and challenge their children.
- Respecting school staff.
- Respecting race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, veteran's status, and genetic information of disability in any educational programs, activities or employment.

**Teachers and Other School Personnel will help parents and students by:**

- Respecting, encouraging, and supporting students.
- Believing that all students can achieve and take action to create access for learning.
- Showing that they care about all students.
- Defining and communicating clear academic and behavioral expectations for students.
- Providing a safe, positive, and inclusive learning environment.
- Creating an atmosphere of open communication for students seeking help.
- Communicating and working with families to support and challenge their children.
- Respecting race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, veteran's status, and genetic information of disability in any educational programs, activities or employment.

**Community Members and Volunteers will help parents, students and educators by:**

- Respecting, encouraging and supporting them.
- Being active, contributing partners with the schools.
- Making MESD Schools and Programs a safe and exciting place to learn.
- Respecting race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, veteran's status, and genetic information of disability in any educational programs, activities or employment.

**Policy Reference:**

[JF/JFA – Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[KAB – Parental Rights](#)

# MESD EQUITY

## MESD Board Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lens

**Adopted definition for Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Diversity** - The full range of differences and similarities, visible and non-visible, that make each individual unique.

**Inclusion** - An environment that engages multiple perspectives, differing ideas, and individuals from different backgrounds to help define organizational policy and practice, and help shape organizational culture.

**Equity** - Values "equal outputs" (of performance, achievement, opportunity, resources, etc.) Assumes everyone starts from different places (in terms of history, experiences, opportunities, resources, etc.)

**An Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lens is a set of questions we ask ourselves to ensure equitable outcomes when you are planning, developing and evaluating a policy, program or service. These questions will help diagnose barriers and identify, measure, and evaluate best practices within access, equity and diversity.**

### PEOPLE

How are people affected positively or negatively in terms of barriers they experience?

Who are the racial/ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice or decision? And what are the potential impacts on these groups?

### PLACE

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?

What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

### POWER

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected by this policy, program, practice or decision?

### PROCESS

Does the policy, program or decision improve, worsen or make no change to existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?

**PLAN**

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

**Policy References:**

[ACA](#) – *Americans with Disabilities Act*

[IB](#) – *Equal Educational Opportunity*

[IB-AR \(2\)](#) – *Equal Opportunity Complaint Form*

We base our mission and vision on the premise that children are our most important natural resource and are committed to equity and the success of every student. This commitment means that student success will not be predicted on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, genetic information of disability in any educational programs, activities or employment. Educational equity fosters a barrier-free environment in which all students have the opportunity to benefit equally. MESD will apply the principle of equity to all policies, programs, operations, and practices to ensure all students have access and opportunity to high quality education.

# THE BLUEPRINT '28

## Multnomah ESD's roadmap for student success

### MISSION

Educating, Engaging, Inspiring and Empowering through systems of support.

### VISION

MESD is taking a systemic approach toward equity through creative, responsive, educational, health and technology services for all students regardless of race, ZIP code, ability, identity or country of origin.



#### GOAL 1

Creating A High-Quality Learning Experience for All



#### GOAL 2

Operationalizing Systems That Engage & Empower Communities



#### GOAL 3

Building A Culturally Responsive Workforce



## **Program Goals**

- To foster healthy choices and to assist the student in maintaining sobriety
- To minimize individual and/or group involvement in identified “harmful” behaviors
- To support the student in an individual recovery plan
- To increase school success

## **Attendance Policy and Procedures**

Regular attendance will enable your child to enjoy school and take advantage of opportunities for learning and developing skills. Absences and tardiness disrupt the learning process. Regular attendance will enhance your son's / daughter's opportunity for success.

Parent/guardian are responsible for notifying the school in advance or at the time of absence from school. Parent/guardian must report absences to the Rivercrest office, and the Home District's Transportation Department.

- Good attendance at school is vitally important for continuity in programming and skill development. Parent/guardian should use sound judgment in making decisions regarding school attendance vs. physical health. Parent/guardian must consider their student's physical health and their classmate's potential exposure to an illness.
- The best place for a sick child is at home with an adult caregiver. Depending upon the type of illness, students should not return to school until they are completely well. Students should be without a fever for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Communicable diseases, undiagnosed rashes, and scalp conditions require exclusion from school. Follow the MESD Health Services guidelines for questions at <http://www.mesd.k12.or.us/shs/hss/index.shtml>
- Refer to the Parent/Guardian Information drop down menu for “When Should I Keep My Child Home?” website at <http://www.mesd.k12.or.us/shs/hss/index.shtml>

## **School-Approved Extenuating Circumstances for Excused Absences**

Rivercrest may accept the following as extenuating circumstances for excused absences:

- Illness or death in the family
- Quarantine
- Weather or road conditions making travel dangerous
- Days of suspension\*
- Participation in legal/agency proceedings (official documentation is required)
- Teen parent/guardian absences to care for child



- Participation in substance abuse or rehabilitation program
- College/university visitation for seniors traveling to a location further than 100 miles  
 \*A student is not exempt from compulsory attendance laws due to vacations, trips, babysitting, working and/or other such reasons. Excessive absences are a serious violation of the School Code of Conduct and state law.  
 \*Days of suspension are considered as excused absences not requiring a parent/guardian note provided all class work which was missed during the suspension is satisfactorily completed and turned in. The amount of time given to complete missed work will be determined on an individual basis.

## **Tardiness**

Students at Rivercrest Academy must be at school by 9:00 a.m. every morning. Any student who arrives after 9:00 a.m. will be considered tardy. It is VERY important that students arrive on time because “morning huddle” is the first activity of the day and provides the school with the foundation needed to be successful. Only three tardies per semester will be allowed before consequences are enforced. Consequences may be more severe and may require a contract if a student misses the entire first period class.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

MESD schools follow state and local health authority rules and regulations pertaining to communicable diseases through immunization requirements, exclusion of students with communicable diseases, or other measures provided for by Oregon Revised Statutes, Oregon Administrative Rules, the State Health Division or the County Health Department.

Students with any of the following symptoms must be excluded from school until the condition is no longer present or until the student is cleared to return to school by a licensed physician or by the nurse: temperature of 100.5 F or higher; diarrhea; vomiting; skin rash with or without a fever; stiff neck or headache with fever; jaundice (yellow color of skin or eyes); skin lesions that are “weepy” (fluid or pus-filled); colored drainage from eyes; brown/green drainage from nose with a fever greater than 100.5 F; difficulty breathing or shortness of breath; symptoms or complaints such as serious persistent cough that prevent the student from participating in usual school activities; or if the student requires more care than the school staff can safely provide.

For more information, please refer to the [MESD Communicable Disease Plan](https://bit.ly/3rMYrrT) (https://bit.ly/3rMYrrT).

## COVID-19 MEASURES

MESD follows local and state health guidance and Oregon Department of Education recommendations in an effort to stem the spread of COVID-19. Detailed information regarding plans can be found in the [MESD Communicable Disease Plan](#). Current policies may also be found on the district website.

## IMMUNIZATION AND OREGON LAW

Oregon law requires that all students have a current school immunization record or a medical or non-medical exemption on file at the school of attendance. The required immunization schedule can be found at: [Immunization Requirements 2017-2018](#). Students who are not in compliance with the immunization requirements may not attend school and will be excluded.

### Registered Nurses

The nurse is a key person for keeping students safe and well at school. The hours of the nurse may vary. If the nurse is not available, staff is trained in first aid and can help students who become sick or injured at school. You may call the school if you would like to meet with the nurse.

### Health Screenings

Oregon law requires that vision and hearing screenings be done to help identify vision and hearing concerns. The nurse oversees these screenings. If you do not want your student to be included in these screenings, you must submit a written request to the school each year. Additionally, Oregon law (**HB 3000, HB 2972**) directs that the parent or guardian provide the school with both vision and dental screening results before entering school if the student is seven years of age or younger and this is their first school enrollment.

## TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

### Policy References:

[EEA](#) – *Student Transportation Services*

[IFCC](#) – *Student Conduct on Buses/Vehicles*

[IFCC-AR](#) – *Student Conduct on Buses/Vehicles*

Transportation of students to MESD programs is, as a general rule, the responsibility of the student's resident district. MESD may provide transportation for students enrolled in MESD programs when requested by the resident district.

All students using school transportation will abide by the Code of Conduct that is posted in each school or activity vehicle. Any violations of the Code of Conduct, as well as any other

conduct that is improper or which jeopardizes the safety of the student or others, will be reported by the driver to the component district Transportation Supervisor and the student's school principal. Violations may result in the student being denied the use of school transportation for a period of time as determined by the transportation supervisor and principal.

When considering student disciplinary procedures that may result in the removal of the student, the MESD will follow all special education procedures and ensure that the parent and the student are afforded the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with disabilities Act (IDEA) if:

- The student is receiving IEP services;
- The student is not yet identified as a student with a disability, the MESD had knowledge that the student had a disability and needed special education.

### **Student Transportation in Private Vehicles**

#### **Policy Reference:**

[EEAE-AR](#) – *Student Transportation in Private Vehicles Procedures and Guidelines*

Students may be transported in private vehicles for emergency purposes if the following conditions have been met:

- The MESD Administrator has approved the activity;
- The employee is properly licensed to drive and has provided proof of insurance that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements as established by the state of Oregon and as set by the MESD;
- The vehicle contains the required number of seat restraints that properly fit the individual including child safety systems and booster seats and meets the minimum standards and specifications under law (**ORS 815.055**);
- The driver has been trained in the proper installation and use of child safety systems and is responsible for not placing children under the age of 13 in the front seat of a vehicle equipped with passenger-side air bags.

### **School Transportation and Other Vehicle Behavior Expectations**

The following expectations are in effect for any student on school busses or MESD vehicles:

1. Students being transported are under the authority of the vehicle driver;
2. Fighting, wrestling or boisterous activity is prohibited on any MESD vehicle;
3. Students will use the emergency door only in the event of an emergency;
4. Students will be on time for the transportation vehicle, both morning and afternoon;
5. Students will not bring firearms, weapons or other potentially hazardous materials on any MESD vehicle;
6. Students will not bring animals, except approved assistance guide dogs or animals, on the any MESD vehicle;
7. Students will remain seated when the vehicle is in motion;
8. Students may be assigned seats by the vehicle driver;
9. When necessary to cross the road, students will cross in front of the vehicle or as assisted by the bus driver;



10. Students will not extend their hands, arms or heads through vehicle windows;
  11. Students will have written permission to leave the vehicle other than for home or school;
  12. Students will converse in normal tones; loud or vulgar language is prohibited;
  13. Students will not open or close windows without the permission of the driver;
  14. Students will keep the vehicle clean and will not damage it;
  15. Students will be courteous to the driver, fellow students and passers-by;
- Students who refuse to promptly follow the directions of the driver or refuse to comply with regulations may forfeit their privilege to ride on any MESD vehicle.

**Dress Code:**

[JECA](#) – *Student Dress and Grooming*

[IFCEA](#) – *Secret Societies – Gangs*

Responsibility for reasonable dress and grooming rests primarily with students and their parents or guardians. MESD expects student dress and grooming to meet standards, which ensure that there is no disruption or interference with the school learning environment and that there is no threat to the health and/or safety of the student concerned or of other students.

Clothing, bags, hats or other personal items used to display, promote or advertise tobacco products, inhalant delivery systems, alcohol or unlawful drugs are prohibited on all MESD grounds, including parking lots, at MESD sponsored activities and in ESD vehicles.

**Your student is required to follow the dress and grooming code at the school, program or agency in which the student is enrolled. Please review the school or program-specific dress code in your student's School Handbook.**

## **Agreement on Cell Phones/Electronic Devices**

Cell phones and/or electronic devices must be relinquished once students enter the building. You can check your device out at lunch time, and then must check your device back in when it is over. You can get your device back when you are leaving school for the day.

### **Q & A**

**1. Why can't we carry our own phone and device?**

*Because most students, even though they try, break the rules and use their phone/devices during class time. Teachers have become frustrated dealing with this AND we lose valuable instructional time. We have tried and tried to stop phone use during class but we have failed. So, if you don't have it, you won't use it!*

**2. Will my phone/device be kept safe?**

*Yes, your phone/device will be labeled as yours and kept in a locked safe. NO ONE except the "phone monitor" will touch your phone!*

**3. Why are we only allowed to use electronic devices during lunch?**

*The use of cell phones and electronic devices causes many distractions (ie: staff need to repeat directions; other students are sidetracked; classes are interrupted by phones ringing, talking in the hall, knocking on the door to be let back in, etc.) Please tell family, friends, PO's, etc. that you cannot answer/text during class time.*

**4. What is an electronic device?**

*Cell phone, music player, MP3 player, IPod, iPhone, etc.*

**5. What if I'm expecting an emergency call?**

*Please give your family and friends the Rivercrest office number: 503-255-1841. The office staff will contact you immediately if an emergency call comes in.*

**6. Can I listen to my music while I'm working in the classroom?**

*No.*

**7. What if I don't give up my phone/device at the door or after lunch?**

*Then you cannot come into school and/or will have to leave for the day.*

## **Bullying**

Rivercrest Academy believes that each student deserves to learn in an environment that is supportive, flexible and nurturing. Students, teachers and staff are all held to the same standards of conduct and accountability. Our goal is to lead by example, showing each student through our actions that they are valued

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression or physical conduct against another student and the behavior (*ORS339.347*):

- Results in harm to the other student or his/her property;
- Places a student in fear of physical harm or of damage to his/her property; or
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

Bullying is strictly prohibited and could include hazing, threats, taunts, teasing, assault, demands for money, confinement, destruction of property, theft of or intentional damage to valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and ostracism. Bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyber bullying" (*ORS.339.341*). Any student who believes he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student must notify a teacher, counselor, or principal as soon as possible. Any reported act of suspected harassment / bullying will be investigated. Any student who believes that they have been subjected to any form of harassment or bullying should immediately report the incident to a staff member. The staff member shall report the alleged incident to the Supervisor. In the absence of a supervisor, staff will report incidents to a back-up supervisor or another administrator at Rivercrest Academy. Acts of harassment / bullying will be subject to disciplinary action. The action may range from instruction and discussion to and including the filing of criminal charges with local law enforcement officials.

Any form of harassment or bullying is strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated. Harassment includes sexual harassment as well as harassment on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, disability or sexual orientation. Students must follow the MESD Harassment and Bullying policy – Board Policy JFCF.

## **Learning Difficulties and Special Education**

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent/guardian may contact the Special Education instructor to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referrals for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RTI). The implementation of RTI has the potential of a positive impact on the ability of local education agencies to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent/guardian is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If there

is an educational need and an evaluation is needed, the parent/guardian will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within sixty calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent/guardian. If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent/guardian with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent/guardian of their rights if they disagree with the district.

DRAFT - JUNE 2023

# Rivercrest Academy and Recovery

## What is recovery?

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (*SAMHSA*) defines recovery as:

***“A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential”***

*SAMHSA*’s definition incorporates different areas of life, and is welcoming to a variety of individuals showing progress towards change is multi-faceted, and is not one size fits all. Rivercrest embraces this definition as the foundation to help students define their recovery.

Hope, the belief that a student’s challenges and conditions can be overcome, is the foundation of recovery. A person’s recovery is built on their strengths, talents, coping abilities, resources, inherent values, and positive peer supports. It is holistic, addresses the whole student and their community, and is supported by peers, friends, and family (any identifiable nurturing relationship for social connectedness). The process of recovery is highly personal and occurs via many pathways, and at Rivercrest Academy we recognize that. Recovery is characterized by continual growth and improvement in one’s health and wellness, managing setbacks, and strengthening healthy bonds in one’s life.

## The Rivercrest approach to recovery

Maintaining a safe, sober, and supportive community where students can thrive in life and in education is the foundation at Rivercrest Academy. Our team has several different approaches for creating this environment. The recovery element of the school comes through our trained and credentialed staff, but also, students are required to participate in recovery-based interactions that are embedded into the regular school day.

- Morning Huddle
  - Upon arrival, the students will gather as a community to discuss various topics, and start the day fresh. Having time to come together collectively as a group further solidifies social connection within the student milieu, and assists in socioemotional development for each student. This is a time where staff and students can connect to discuss any pressing concerns, share information, and further support open communication between everyone here at Rivercrest Academy.
- Recovery Groups
  - Students will participate in recovery groups facilitated by credentialed staff members that cover a broad array of tools to help unpack thoughts, provide tools, help generate language to support positive communication in the student’s life, process hardships, and students see that there are others with similar shared lived experiences.

- Peer Supports
  - Our certified and credentialed recovery staff are available to the students throughout the school day. Students will have an individually catered recovery plan that is created in collaboration with the peer support staff. Individual one on one discussions will also help support each student along their journey of recovery by having honest and confidential conversations with a trustworthy person.
- Recovery Planning
  - Students will work with recovery support staff to develop a plan to identify positive supports, healthy habits, pro-social activities, communication barriers, and other areas of focus. These focus areas will form an person-centered recovery plan to help the students identify areas for growth and the best potential for success.

## **Therapeutic Support**

Student Support staff members are available to students throughout the school day for emotional/therapeutic support. Teachers may request a student receive support OR the student may request it. Regardless of the reason for getting support, students who are out of class will be required to make up any missed work for homework and return it to the teacher within two school days. If the teacher does not receive the work within that time frame, a zero will be issued. Staff members will communicate important information regarding student support to parents and teachers via email. We work closely with each identified member in the students support system to ensure that major counseling issues are being addressed by the student's primary counselor. A student's appropriateness for enrollment at Rivercrest Academy may be reassessed if their therapeutic needs are consistently interfering with their academics or ability to be at school.

## **Statement about Confidentiality**

In order for the Insight group to be a safe place for students to open up about their personal feelings, issues, and experiences, it is critical that confidentiality is strictly followed. What is said in the group stays in the group. Students and staff are not to share information that was discussed in group or individual discussions with recovery staff with anyone outside of the group or meeting including friends, family members, and significant others. If a student is absent from school and misses what was talked about in group, students who were present are not to disclose information that other students shared. Information will be shared on a need to know basis or under *ORS 419B.005* and *MHACBO code of ethics 8.6* mandatory reporting laws.

## **Confidentiality of Student Records**

Rivercrest Academy complies with federal and state regulations related to the rights of students, parents, or adult students. Those students who are 18 years of age or older have the right to access, inspect, and review their own confidential school record. MESD complies with the

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (34 CFR part 99), and other related statutes, 34 CFR 300.560-300.575; TEC 26.004; 19 TAC 89.1050, which protect the confidentiality of students' records at their collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. Highlights of these safeguards are:

- Rivercrest Academy permits parents/guardians or adult students to inspect and review any educational records relating to the students without unnecessary delay, in no case more than 45 days after the request is made.
- The right to inspect and review educational records includes the right to a response to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records, the right to request copies of the records if inspection and review are not feasible, and the right to have a representative of the parent or adult student review the records.
- The educational records eligible for inspection and review include:
  - Attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary records, counseling records, psychological records, admission applications, health and immunization information, teacher and counselor evaluations, and report of behavioral patterns.
  - A parent or an adult student who believes information in educational records collected, maintained or used is inaccurate or misleading or violates the privacy or rights of the student may request the records be amended. Rivercrest will decide whether to amend the information in accordance with the request within a reasonable period of time.
  - If Rivercrest Academy decides not to amend the information, it will inform the parent or adult student of the refusal and advise them of the right to a hearing under Section 300.568. If, as a result of the hearing, Rivercrest decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights, it shall amend the information accordingly and so inform the parent/adult student of the right to place a statement commenting on the information or setting forth any reason for disagreeing with the decision of Rivercrest Academy. This explanation is then maintained and disclosed as part of the student's records.
- Rivercrest Academy does not disclose information from educational records to officials/other participating agencies without parent/adult student consent unless authorized by 34 CFR Part 99. (One example of disclosure under this statute is the exchange of information between schools at enrollment when a student transfers). Rivercrest keeps a record of parties obtaining access to educational records, collection, maintained or used, except by parents, adult students, or authorized school employees, including the name, date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records. Upon request, Rivercrest provides parents/guardian/adult students a list of the types and locations of educational records collected, stored, or used by Rivercrest Academy staff.

## **Elopement plan**

Rivercrest will search for students on and around campus, and attempt to contact student's phone if he/she/they have it on them (i.e lunchtime). If students cannot be located within 15 mins we will notify the parent/guardian. If parent/guardian cannot be contacted, we will then defer to emergency contacts in Synergy.

## **Show of force**

Rivercrest will use Conflict Intervention Strategy (CIS) tools to diffuse the situation. The MESD official(s) receiving the report or witness to the show of force shall promptly investigate. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The MESD official(s) will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five working days after receipt of the information or report. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the report will be reduced to writing. The MESD official(s) conducting the investigation shall notify the person making the report within 10 working days of receipt of the information or report, in writing, when the investigation is concluded and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined.

The student(s) may return to school pending a family meeting, and a collaborative Behavioral Agreement.

## **Release of information (ROI)**

A signed Release of Information (ROI) must be on file for Rivercrest Academy staff to share or receive information with a student's systems of support.



## **Student Drug Testing\*\***

### **Definition(s) of a “drug”:**

1. “Illegal drug” is any drug which an individual may not sell, possess, use, distribute or purchase under state law, or as defined in schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. § 812) including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines and phencyclidine (PCP). As used in this policy, “illegal drug” also means possession, use, sale or supply of prescription and nonprescription medication - in violation of Board policy JHCD/JHCDA - Medications\*\* and accompanying administrative regulation. “Illegal drug” shall also include alcohol.
2. “Performance-enhancing drug” includes anabolic steroids and any other natural or synthetic substance used to increase muscle mass, strength, endurance, speed or other athletic ability. The term “performance-enhancing drug” does not include dietary or nutritional supplements such as vitamins, minerals and proteins which can be lawfully purchased in over-the-counter transactions.
3. “Prescription medication” means any non-injectable drug, chemical compound, suspension or preparation in suitable form for use as a curative or remedial substance taken either internally or externally by a student under the written direction of a physician. Prescription medication does not include dietary food supplements.
4. “Nonprescription medication” means only commercially prepared, non-alcohol-based medication to be taken at school that is necessary for the student to remain in school. This shall be limited to eyes, nose and cough drops, cough suppressants, analgesics, decongestants, antihistamines, topical antibiotics, anti-inflammatories and antacids that do not require written or oral instructions from a physician. Nonprescription medication does not include dietary food supplements.

### **Tobacco and Vaping**

Rivercrest does not support the use of tobacco products for any students (regardless of age). All tobacco products (cigarettes, dip, lighters, vaping/e-cigs/juice, etc.) will be confiscated if seen by our staff on campus property. All products will be destroyed and thrown away. This NO TOBACCO/VAPING policy is in place and consistent with Oregon State law, to support health on our campus, and to discourage the use of tobacco for students in recovery.

### **Consent**

Each student wishing to attend a district sponsored recovery school, and the student’s parent/guardian/supportive person(s) shall consent in writing to drug testing. Written consent shall be in the form attached to the Rivercrest Academy Enrollment Packet. No student shall be allowed to attend a district sponsored recovery school without such consent.

## **When and why we screen for substances**

Rivercrest Academy will facilitate random urine analysis screenings on all students that attend. These will take place on random days twice a month, with the ability for students to earn less frequent testing the longer that they are able to maintain sobriety. Rivercrest Academy requires frequent and ongoing substance testing of all students as part of our Mission and accountability for the school. Drug and alcohol testing will be performed at the school site by trained staff and/or the professionals at the lab that Rivercrest Academy contracts with. Students must comply with all procedures and protocols established by the school. A student's failure to submit to a substance test or to comply with all procedures and protocols is a violation of this Policy and may result in discipline, up to and including expulsion. It is important to remember that a positive test result does NOT automatically identify a student as a user. The staff will determine whether any legitimate alternative medical explanation could account for the non-negative result. When a student is notified by Rivercrest Academy staff to consent to a specimen collection and/or alcohol test, they will be allotted thirty minutes to provide the sample. If the student cannot provide the sample in the allotted time, reasonable disciplinary action may be taken if there is suspicion of "avoiding" or "withholding." Any and all substance screening results will be communicated to parents/guardians.

In addition to the random UA's, Rivercrest Academy also has available supplies on-hand in the form of instant testing kits. These will be conducted under potential situations that include:

- Parent/Guardian/Supportive Person(s) request
- Student Request
- District Requirement/Request
- Suspicion of intoxication
- Substantiated report from a fellow peer concerning a student's use
- A stipulation in a Behavioral Agreement or Forward Progress Plan (FPP)
- Response to student conduct

## **Recurrence Policy**

Random and frequent drug testing is administered on campus for accountability purposes and program integrity. We acknowledge the difference between "getting honest" and "getting caught." Efforts will be made to continue a student's enrollment if they are honest about a recurrence and effectively move forward with the coordinated response with the parent/guardian, and any additional supportive person(s).

***Rivercrest Academy is an "abstinence-based" school of choice. This means that while students are participants of the school, they are expected to refrain from any and all mind or mood altering substances. Urine analysis screenings are not meant to be punitive, but are a tool for both accountability and support used to help students and protect the overall community from threats of substance use.***

## Approach to discipline

Discipline at Rivercrest Academy is meant to be a learning experience. Students will be treated with respect and, in turn, are expected to respect the rights and property of others. In the classroom, disciplinary matters are generally handled by the individual classroom teacher, administrators and/or peer support staff. More serious matters and/or repeat infractions are reported to the Principal of Rivercrest Academy, and parent/guardian will be notified of any occurrences, and our response to the situation.

Potential discipline approaches:

- Verbal correction
- Cooling off time
- Seating changes in classroom
- Redirection techniques
- Conflict resolution
- Peer mediation
- Restricting privileges
- Confiscation of items

Violations of behavioral expectations will result in one or more of the following actions:

- Disciplinary action appropriate for the offense (logical consequence)
- Contract for specific behaviors
- Conference with parent/guardian (and requested student supports)
- Out of school suspension
- Refer to a higher level of care
- Major offenses will be addressed using MESD protocol

Potential discipline approaches for continued substance use:

- Meeting with parent/guardian
- Behavioral Agreement\*
- Forward Progress Plan (FPP)\*
- Increasing recovery support engagement (*see Additional community youth recovery supports section below*)
- Suspension
- Referral to a higher level of care
- Removal from Rivercrest Academy

\* Behavioral Agreement – A collaborative document between Rivercrest staff/students and parent/guardian to address any concerning behavior to help the student identify ways to address and hopefully correct the behavior(s)

\* Forward Progress Plan (FPP) – This is a collaborative way to help students that have produced non-negative results on urinalysis screening in conjunction with the student's

recovery plans to allocate additional support through a mutually agreed upon approach to prevent further substance use.

## **DUE PROCESS**

No student may be expelled without a hearing unless the student's parents, guardian or person in a parental relationship, or if the student is 18 years of age or older, waive the right to a hearing either in writing or by failure to appear at a scheduled hearing. By waiving the right to a hearing, the student and parent or guardian, agree to abide by the findings of the hearing officer. The student will be suspended pending the decision by the hearing officer.

If the student, or parent or guardian believes there has been a violation of due process, they may appeal the decision to the MESD School Board.

In the case where a student brings a firearm or dangerous weapon to school or is in possession of a firearm or dangerous weapon at school, the expulsion period will be no less than one calendar year in length unless a modification is warranted.

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Policy References:

[KL - Public Complaints](#)

[KL-AR \(1\) Public Complaint Procedure](#)

[KL-AR \(2\) Suggestion or Complaint Regarding an Employee, Program or Practice Form](#)

MESD has a procedure for the prompt resolution of a complaint by any parent or guardian of students attending a MESD school or program. Unless specifically provided by state or federal law or administrative rule, the decision of the MESD will be final.

## **Searches**

Our staff may conduct unannounced searches for alcohol, drugs, paraphernalia or missing/stolen items. Entering the Rivercrest Academy campus constitutes consent to searches. Students are expected to cooperate in such searches. Searches of students and their personal property which includes, but is not limited to, lunch containers, backpacks, cell phones, desks, work areas, purses, wallets, and vehicles may be conducted when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in violation of this Policy and/or when circumstances and school conditions justify them. Consent to a search is required as a condition of continued enrollment and the student's refusal to consent may result in expulsion. Students being searched may be asked to empty pockets and remove hats and outer clothing, such as jackets and sweaters. The staff member conducting the search will be accompanied by another staff member of the students agreed upon

gender identification. Any illegal or non-prescribed drugs discovered will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Any action taken by law enforcement agencies will be completely independent of this Policy.

### **Medication and First Aid**

Students should not bring prescription or over-the-counter medication to school. Rivercrest Academy is not responsible for administering or storing any over-the-counter medication. However, we will store and administer medication if requested by a parent/guardian and of vital therapeutic or medical need. Requests must be made in writing and detail the dosage and time to be given. **If bringing medication is of medical or psychiatric necessity, students must turn in medication to the Support Staff when arriving on campus.** In the event that medication is found, it will be confiscated. We may ask a parent/guardian to pick up the medication or it may be handed back to the student at the end of the day. First-aid kits are located in all classrooms for care of small medical issues.

It is important that all emergency care information be up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency contact phone numbers, etc.). Please contact Rivercrest Administration to update any information. Having current information will be of critical importance should an accident or injury occur that requires medical attention.

# Rivercrest Academy Admission Agreements

## Chemical Health and Mental Health Agreements:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the following Chemical Health and Mental Health Agreements.

- I agree that honesty is an important part of recovery. With that, I agree that I will be honest with peers and staff about my recovery as well as others' recovery.
- If I relapse, I know that a meeting will be called as soon as possible with my parent/guardian. I understand that I may not be permitted to return to school until this meeting has been scheduled with my parent/guardian. I will be able to stay in school the day I admit the relapse as long as my behaviors are appropriate, and I am not under the influence of any substances.
- I agree to provide a urine sample for drug testing at any time when requested by Rivercrest staff. The urine sample must be provided by the end of the school day on the day it is requested at the latest.
- I agree to take prescription medication only as prescribed by a doctor or medical professional and not stop taking them on my own.
- I agree that if I am in therapy, I will continue until either my parents/guardian or therapist approves that I am done.
- Remembering that recovery is the goal, I will work on making healthy choices that support my recovery and those around me. Intimate relationships between Rivercrest students can be strongly disruptive to the milieu and therefore are discouraged.
- I agree to follow the terms of my treatment discharge plan (if I have one). I agree to complete a list of goals to work on during my enrollment in Rivercrest with the help of my supports and Rivercrest staff.

### *Sobriety Pledge*

I understand that Rivercrest Academy is a school for students who are in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction or abuse. Therefore, as a Rivercrest student, I pledge to not use alcohol or drugs (other than as prescribed by a medical professional) and to follow my recovery plan to the best of my ability.

Signed,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

## **Rivercrest Academy Admission Agreements ACADEMICS AND SCHOOL CONDUCT:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the following Academic and School Conduct Agreements.

- I agree to attend school every day unless I have a valid excuse from a parent/guardian. I will also attend and be on time for all scheduled classes.
- I agree to give my best effort in each class and if I am struggling, I will ask for help rather than give up. I will not sleep in class and will remain upright in my seat.
- I agree to not use my cell phone during the school day except for during breaks and at lunch. If listening to music helps me concentrate during work time, I can use my Chromebook with earbuds. I understand that watching videos or playing computer games during instructional time is not allowed until the teacher has given permission. Teachers must be able to obtain my attention at any time during class.
- I agree to not leave Rivercrest Academy's campus area for any reason during the school day without permission.
- I understand that all OR public schools prohibit use and/or possession of e-cigarettes, tobacco products, controlled substances, and alcohol. If I violate this, I will face school and/or community consequences.
- I agree to avoid unhealthy discussion of drug/alcohol use or conversations involving subject matter that might be offensive to others while on campus.
- I agree to be respectful in my language and actions toward myself, my peers, and staff at all times, and will follow the agreements of the community.

*If I do not follow these guidelines, I understand a meeting will be called to discuss options for continued involvement at Rivercrest Academy. I understand that if I choose to leave or am asked to leave Rivercrest Academy, staff can assist with finding another school program.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## FORMAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK REVIEW

We, the undersigned, understand that the MESD Student & Family Handbook (SFH) contains information for parents, guardians and students. We acknowledge that we have reviewed the SFH located online at \_\_\_\_\_. A copy of the SFH is available upon request at my student's school office.

We are aware that the SFH contains information and policies for our review. We understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and that failure to abide by the guidelines for student behavior can result in the discipline outlined in the SFH. We further understand that failure to return this acknowledgement form does not excuse any individual from complying with the SFH, Multnomah Education Service District policies, regulations and guidelines.

We are aware that Multnomah Education Service District reserves the right at any time to add to the Policies, regulations and behavioral standards contained in the SFH.

Please sign below and return this form to the school to ensure that all parents, guardians and students have read the policies and agree to abide by them. Please return this form to the school by **the first day of school or within two weeks of enrollment for new students.**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT ID NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT:

\_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME OF STUDENT:

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN:

\_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN:

\_\_\_\_\_

The Multnomah Education Service District recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals and groups. It is the policy of Multnomah Education Service District that there will be no discrimination or harassment of individuals or groups based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, age, veteran's status, genetic information or disability in any educational programs, activities or employment.



## Resources

### Community Youth Recovery Organizations

This is a partial list of organizations and community based support. The MESD does not discourage or encourage the use of these organizations –rather the information is provided for reference and continually updated.

#### ☐ LifeWorks NW

- ☐ For over 60 years, LifeWorks NW has been providing compassionate, effective, and culturally responsive mental health services throughout Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties. Their mental health programs include inpatient and outpatient services, along with therapy and counseling for youth and their families. LifeWorks NW provides evidence-based practices and a team-based approach to clients of all ages.

- ☐ Phone Number: 503-645-9010

- ☐ Website: <https://www.lifeworksnw.org>

#### ☐ Collective Roots APG

- ☐ Collective Roots APG utilizes the Alternative Peer Group (APG) Model of Recovery to give teens a new and positive peer group with which to learn and grow in their recovery together. They believe the most effective way for teens to achieve sobriety and become strongly rooted in their recovery is through connecting with peers who are going through the same thing. APGs help hold space for teens to support each other through common challenges in a safe, substance-free, and fun environment. Caregiver groups are an additional component of Collective Roots APG to promote healing from within.

- ☐ Phone Number: 360-910-2870

- ☐ Website: <https://www.collectiverootsapg.org>

#### ☐ 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension Recovery

- ☐ 4D Recovery provides the support and guidance needed to navigate addiction recovery. They help youth find and maintain a recovery identity through peer mentorship, an all new teen drop-in recovery center, and recovery-based events.

- ☐ Phone Number: 971-323-5977

- ☐ Website: <https://4drecovery.org>

#### ☐ Alano Club of Portland

- ☐ Alano Club offers cost-free, trauma-informed programming and mutual aid support to anyone in or seeking recovery from substance use and mental health

disorders, serving more than 10,000 people monthly. The Alano Club of Portland offers youth mentors to help young people navigate the path of recovery.

☐ Phone Number: 503-222-5756

☐ Website: <https://www.portlandalano.org>

☐ **Youth Era**

☐ Youth Era works to provide accessible support services to all young people. We focus on direct service, training, and advocacy—the building blocks for creating lasting change for young people in communities across the country. Youth Era offers youth mentorship and recovery support with a fun drop-in center for youth to connect.

☐ Phone Number: 971-334-9295

☐ Website: <https://www.youthera.org>

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