

River Oak Charter School

Tardy Policy and Protocol

At River Oak Charter School the school day starts at 8:20am. The rhythm of the day necessitates that all students are in attendance from the very first minute of class. Therefore, the School defines *tardiness* as arriving at the school site after 8:20am. Parents should realize that this means that being even one minute late is considered a tardy. The school gates are open at 7:45am and schoolyard supervision begins 35 minutes before the official beginning of the school day. We strongly encourage all families to arrive early and build in a grace time in their morning routine. All children need at least a few moments to arrive, settle in, and get to the door, and most benefit from 10-15 minutes of time at school before the school day begins. **In short, we urge you to arrive well before the bell to allow plenty of time!**

It is our goal at River Oak Charter School to communicate clearly with parents regarding our policy and the importance of getting to school on time. We do this in a number of ways:

- Parent meetings and verbal or written communications with families
- Teachers educate new families at intake meetings when they first join the School
- Annual Back to School Information Packet
- Back to School Night
- Personal administrative meetings with families to discuss the importance of being on time

In order to show understanding of and commitment to being a member of the school community, the School and the families each sign a *School-Family Partnership Agreement* stating, in part, that families will ensure regular attendance by their children and that they will bring their children to school on time each and every day.

Remember, tardiness is defined as arriving at the classroom after 8:20am, even if only one minute late. Copies of attendance records and all correspondence and written communication about attendance-related problems will be placed in a student's academic records.

If tardiness occurs, the following set of progressive steps may be taken by the School:

- Verbal reminders to the family from teacher or other School staff, as appropriate.
- First letter home from Administrator as a warning after the 3rd overall tardy for the year
- Second letter home after 5th total tardy, requiring parent(s) and students, if appropriate, to meet with Administrator
- Families make an appointment and meet with the Administrator about the attendance problem within two weeks of notice. If the appointment is not met, the case is referred to the Charter Council.
- Other steps may be recommended at the time of the meeting with the Administrator. An agreement will be signed by the family that acknowledges its commitment to solving its unique tardiness problem
- Third letter home after 8th tardy; at this time the process becomes more formal and the case is referred to the Charter Council. The Charter Council will meet to determine appropriate next steps.