

The Renaissance Charter School 2

FAMILY HANDBOOK for Elementary School Families

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

• ***Please Note: This is an important document regarding the education of your child. Please have someone translate this document for you promptly.***

• ***Spanish: Esto es un aviso importante con respecto a la educación de su niño. Haga por favor que alguien traduzca este documento para usted puntualmente.***

• ***French: C'est une notification importante concernant l'éducation de votre enfant. Veuillez faire traduire à quelqu'un ce document pour toi promptement.***

• ***Urdu: ye aik important ittelaah taak education ka tumhari child please someone translate ye kaghazaat liye tum promptly have hai.***

• ***Chinese (traditional): 这是一个重要的通知，关于您的孩子的教育。请有有人为你翻译这份文件及时。***

• ***Russian: Это будет важным извещением относительно образования вашего ребенка. Пожалуйста имейте кто-то перевести этот документ для вас проворно.***

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ABOUT US

Our History

The Renaissance School 2 (TRCS2) is a replication of *The Renaissance School* (TRCS), New York City's first K-12 public school. TRCS 2 was granted its Charter in June 2017, under the authority of the New York State Education Department and The Board of Regents of The University of The New York State. TRCS 2 is authorized as a K-6 school.

Our Mission

"Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York" is the school's motto. Underlying that motto is a belief in the power of the single individual and in the positive potential that exists within every human being. When that inherent potential is developed, or expressed, the world around the individual begins changing to reflect what is more positive and more value creative. In this way, as we change ourselves, we change our environment. The school was founded on the belief that such a change, or renaissance, in just one person can lead to the rebirth of a community, a nation and ultimately humankind. Convinced that the most powerful force for positive change were aware, educated, humanistic young people, the founders named the school "The Renaissance School" and determined to help all of its students realize their potential for positive change. The mission of the school continues to be to develop leaders who through their own personal growth and commitment will help spark a "renaissance" in the larger shared community of New York City and beyond. Toward that goal the school fights aggressively for the happiness and success of each student helping prepare them to become humanistic leaders and global citizens who respect human rights, protect the environment, and advocate for peace and sustainability.

Our Core Values

Students develop best when they feel safe and known

Renaissance has created a supportive, stimulating environment where youth can flourish and achieve the highest academic standards in a small, family-like atmosphere. Its program enables students and families alike to enjoy a sense of continuity and stability as they progress through the school years. With an excellent faculty to student ratio, each student's sense of belonging is strengthened. In this supportive environment where individual effort and hard work is encouraged every student can succeed.

A diverse learning community that values respect and kindness, opens hearts and minds

The Renaissance community reflects the cultural mosaic of New York with its staff and student body mirroring the spectrum of ethnic backgrounds, talents, and abilities that make the City so unique. In this multi-cultural setting students, working together in heterogeneous classes and small groups, learn to value diversity while developing interpersonal skills that will benefit them throughout their lives. Here, students build open and trusting friendships with each other. Staff members move beyond cooperation to collaboration and become mentors to students. Parents are valued and the various levels of the school communicate and interact with one another. This environment fosters the development of deep human bonds and nurtures the hearts as well as the minds of its children.

The spirit of leadership is best transmitted through example

Renaissance values the spirit of self-motivated and collaborative action. The school was started by a group of individuals who wrote and submitted a proposal for a new theme-based school without the backing of any prominent organization. The group's determination to make the impossible possible has continued to be a bedrock principle of the school. *Renaissance* honors dreams and gives full support to any member of the community—whether student, staff, or parent—who generates an idea they want to carry to fruition. *Renaissance* is committed to not only develop students as leaders, but also to develop parents, teachers, and support staff as educators who will help revitalize and reinvigorate our educational system.

The forums within the school must be valued and protected

Renaissance strives to be a dynamic village where all citizens participate with a collaborative spirit that is characterized by compassion and responsible dialogue. Teachers work together, classes are arranged in clusters, student voices are heard, parents volunteer, and decisions are made after thorough dialogue among many people. There are various forums where these important discussions take place: Board of Trustees meetings, Collaborative School

Governance sessions, Cluster and staff meetings, PA, Student Council, town hall meetings, the classroom and at informal gatherings. It is only through participation in these forums that powerful and wise decisions can be made. By becoming full citizens of this village and participating in its forums students gain immeasurable benefit and prepare for life in the “real world.”

All school constituents must work together utilizing each others’ strengths and talents

To foster communication, cooperation and collaboration among all its stakeholders, Renaissance adopted a multi-level Collaborative Leadership governance structure. It was designed to give voice to staff, parents and students; to develop new tiers of leadership; and to provide strong, independent oversight. The Board of Trustees, with staff/parent/community representatives makes sure the school fulfills its Charter mandates, monitors fiscal integrity, and evaluates the performance of the school’s management team. The Collaborative School Governance Committee (CSG), with staff/parent/student representatives focuses on the quality of life in the school and reviews broad instructional policies. The School Management Team (SMT) composed of the principal and directors, serve as the Renaissance “vision keepers,” implementing these policies, handling day-to-day operations in Teaching and Learning, Instructional Support, Data and Accountability, Development, Finance and Operations, School Culture, Parent Engagement and Student Support. Staff members, equally involved in all aspects of school governance and administration, serve on various committees including Instructional Support, RTI, Academic Intervention, Admissions, Staff Recruitment, and Student Support. Staff leadership is further developed through Cluster Meetings, Learning Rounds and Data Teams led by Teacher Leaders to support initiatives proposed by these groups. Through these mechanisms the school’s governance structure helps foster a sense of ownership and a spirit that “I am Renaissance.”

Our School and Student Body

TRCS 2 is a unique school that provides a very clear alternative for families. Its current student body is a rich mixture of diversity and talent reflecting the mosaic of New York and creating perfect soil for the development of leadership. TRCS2 serves students in grades K and 1 in SY 2020-21, and grades K-2 in SY 2021-22. Incoming kindergarten students must attain the age of five by December 31 of the year they enter school.

Renaissance addresses the individual needs of its students in a variety of ways:

- Curriculum with clear outcomes and differentiated instruction
- High quality Instructional Support Services program for students with IEPs, at-risk students, and English Language Learners
- Inclusion model of instruction for special needs students
- Assistive technology with ongoing support of trained professionals
- Student Support Team that focuses on students’ social-emotional well-being, and students in crisis or exhibiting behaviors that impede learning
- A culture of developing teacher-empowered, teacher-led initiatives directly attuned to the needs of our students.
- A professional development program which employs reflective and collaborative practices to fine tune instruction so that it is aligned to assessments and standards
- Grade-level Intervention Teams to provide targeted assistance for students who need academic support
- Reading Specialists in each cluster for targeted reading intervention
- A K-2 learning experience that includes academic rigor, college preparatory courses, arts appreciation and mastery, leadership skills and humanistic values.

Our Parents, Families and PA

Renaissance values the important roles that parents and family members play in the school's successful functioning and is strongly committed to parental involvement in all aspects of school life. Appointed and elected parent representatives are members of the Board of Trustees and also comprise fifty percent of the CSG.

Renaissance has an active Parent Association that is an integral, respected part of the school. The PA affords parents and families many opportunities to be involved. The primary goal of the PA is "to foster communication and collaboration between the parents and families of our children and the teachers and staff of TRCS and to broaden parent's understanding of our school structure and curriculum." The Parent Association has several committees such as Fundraising and Parent Engagement. In addition, parents are included in various school-wide committees including Hiring Committees, Budget and Safety.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees at The Renaissance Charter School 2 is composed of founding trustees, appointed teachers, parents, and community members. The Board of Trustees determines whether the school is fulfilling the mandates of its charter, monitors the fiscal integrity of the school and oversees the evaluation and performance of the principal. The Board's meetings are governed by the NYS Open Meeting Laws and therefore are open to anyone. Parents, guardians, and the community-at-large are encouraged to attend.

SMT (School Management Team)

The SMT consists of the Principal, and The Directors, who implement the policies of The Board. The team handles the day-to-day operation of the school including: teaching and learning, instructional support services (special education), behavioral support, operations, and development. The SMT is responsible for maintaining accountability to all of the charter goals, and for guiding the school through each charter renewal. The team meets frequently to share the joint responsibility for the oversight and development of the school and staff supervision. One of its main responsibilities is to be the vision keepers of the school, and as such is often involved in wider education advocacy to further the interests of our school.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM and POLICIES

Renaissance has a three-tiered curriculum —core academics based on compacted and effective delivery of standard-based instruction, project-based learning, and community involvement. Each tier is valued as a significant pathway for student learning. As a K-2 school, TRCS2 has the unique ability to integrate subject matter from grade to grade and to take full responsibility for student learning. This allows expectations for student learning to remain high and consistent throughout the grades. It also enables better articulation and coordination between grades to take place. At Renaissance all students are expected to maintain a strong work ethic and to strive to realize their full potential. Teachers are expected to provide interesting, relevant and challenging coursework, and to help every student succeed by differentiating instruction and employing varied teaching methods that address multiple learning styles and levels of ability. This wide array of innovative teaching methods makes Renaissance distinctive.

The study of New York City is a central theme of the Renaissance curriculum. Whenever possible teachers integrate its history, culture, geography and economics into the study of traditional academic subjects. New York City, with its diverse population, is a microcosm of the world. By gaining knowledge, understanding and appreciation of their own city, students will be more responsible citizens of New York. When firmly girded in their own community, they will be better equipped to become global citizens.

Social responsibility is another theme embedded in the Renaissance program as part of community involvement and leadership training. Students at all levels perform service within their classroom, the school and beyond; participate in advisories; and take responsibility for clubs, town meetings and other special activities.

The Renaissance Charter School 2 Curriculum

Kindergarten and First Grade

The early childhood program at TRCS2 is designed to educate the whole child through a holistic approach to learning. Children will feel supported to take risks and explore. Children in kindergarten and first grade will challenge themselves with rigorous "hands-on, minds-on" instruction. Through centers-based learning, children interact, play, and learn while keeping engaged and excited.

In these early and formative years of school, children forge friendships that will endure a lifetime. They learn to love school and value the learning process. The various approaches that will be used at TRCS2 incorporate all multiple intelligences such as visual, auditory and kinesthetic in order to reach every learner. We want TRCS2 children to run to school each day with an eagerness to learn knowing they are loved and valued.

Literacy

The literacy program is designed to help children build reading skills through motivating and engaging literature, a thorough phonemic awareness program, while increasing the students' reading comprehension strategies in fiction and non-fiction areas. Teachers carefully plan all lessons so that the instruction is differentiated and there is a strong emphasis on ongoing child/teacher conferences in reading and writing. Small groups are carefully crafted so that each skill is prioritized based on the group with children receiving focus on the right reading skill at the right time.

Our literacy program will include all three components of Lucy Calkins and TCRWP's workshop. This model is rooted in these main areas: reading, writing, and phonics development. Children will have reading and writing workshop each day where they will receive a comprehensive foundation in the reading and writing process.

Writing is taught through the use of the writing workshop model. We believe in using this model to foster the children's work with phonics as well as incorporating the importance of grammar instruction through the organic process of writing. During the writing workshop children become writers just like the authors who wrote their favorite stories. The children are asked to draft, revise, edit, and publish their pieces. Writing topics range from opinion, to narrative to non-fiction research books. Teachers support children through writing mini-lessons where the teacher demonstrates the writing or grammar skills to be used by the children. The children's writing evolves through the use of author studies and one on one writing conferences with the teacher.

Each day the children will participate in a reading workshop. The workshop prepares children to become confident readers. The workshop includes explicit instruction in reading skills and strategies that are tailored to enhance the child's work during guided reading sessions.

For guided reading, your child will be supported with small group lessons that focus on specific targets for each learner using the Fountas and Pinnell Literacy program. The small groups allow the teacher to create lessons that are structured around the goals and needs for each child. During guided reading, the assistant teacher will be working in small groups to build on each child's phonemic awareness using the Units of Study in Phonics. This program introduces phonics concepts and strategies that help children when reading and writing. Each child will be able to understand the process of reading and writing with a solid foundation in phonemic awareness.

The Daily 5 will be used in all classrooms as an extension to the learning process. The Daily 5 is comprised of five areas: Read to Self, Read to Someone (guided reading), Word Work (phonics), Writing, and Listen to Reading. The Daily 5 is an important part of the literacy program because it allows a child choice in the classroom. Children build stamina and work on independence while engaging with their friends and teachers.

Math

Math concepts and skills are taught using three main components: models, conceptual understanding, and differentiated instruction.

Models are used to help children make sense of the problems and become better problem solvers. The use of models supports children so that when a difficult problem is encountered the child is familiar with the correct way to visually represent the problem in order to solve it efficiently and accurately.

Conceptual development is used through daily problem based activities that are supported through the use of step-by-step visual learning within small groups. The visual learning becomes a great asset for the children as they increase their conceptual understanding of the topics being covered in class. The step-by-step process gives children the tools needed to learn how to read a problem and identify the necessary skills needed to solve the problem.

Differentiated instruction is designed for the right amount of support and challenge for each child. Children's needs are met through small groups and one on one math conferences with the teachers. Teachers identify a child's strengths and needs in order to provide appropriate support. The curriculum evolves to allow for the teacher to monitor progress on a daily basis.

The Math Daily 3 will be incorporated into the math block each day. The Math Daily 3 consists of three main components: Math with the Teacher (concept development), Math with the Assistant Teacher (apply concepts) and Math Games/Center Time. Just like The Daily 5 used during the literacy block, The Math Daily 3 allows children to develop a deep understanding of mathematical concepts, become proficient in all key areas, and most importantly have a true love of mathematics.

Social Studies

Through the Responsive Classroom program children will have an opportunity to participate in a morning meeting that focuses on critical academic and social-emotional skills. By incorporating social studies into the morning meeting children will have extra chances to engage with each other, reflect on personal experiences, practice interactions with peers, thereby exploring concrete ways in which to build community. During morning meeting children can practice civic duties such as voting, build map skills by creating a map of the school, learn historical information through games and songs, and raise awareness of cultures other than their own through artifact exploration.

Music

Through active participation in musical activities that focus on enjoyment and learning, Primary students strengthen their understanding that music is a resource for enjoyment and learning. Students deepen their appreciation for the basic elements of music (rhythm, melody, tempo, harmony, form, timbre, etc.) while learning how to read whole, half, quarter, and eighth note rhythm patterns through movement and rhythm exercises in various time signatures (4/4, 3/4, 6/8, etc) and tempos. Additionally, students study the various parts of the orchestra (strings, percussion, woodwinds, etc.) by playing classroom instruments (drums, maracas, glockenspiel, boomwhackers) and through listening activities (Peter and the Wolf, Carnival of the Animals). Students also develop an appreciation of music through the study of composers from various genres (Mozart-Classical, Woody Guthrie-Folk, Irving Berlin-Musical Theatre, Duke Ellington-jazz). Themes include sacred music (Go Make A Difference, The Little Drummer Boy); patriotic music (God Bless America, America the Beautiful); human characters (Oh! Susanna, Billy Boy); storytelling (On Top of Old Smokey, The Animal Fair); musical theatre (Annie, The Sound of Music); and other cultures (Frere Jacques, Felix Navidad).

Assessment

At Renaissance students are assessed at an early age and then repeatedly throughout their education so their specific needs can be quickly identified and met. Student achievement is measured through both standardized tests and course grades. Students take all NYS mandated examinations beginning in grade 3. Students are assessed through the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Reading Intervention System and screenings for speech, hearing, vision, and motor coordination. In all grades we utilize interim testing, such as the Achievement Network series of standards-based assessments, to help us gauge student progress during the school year. Various other comprehensive evaluations, such as Easy CBM and NWEA national standards-based assessment are provided when necessary. Each student at risk has an individualized academic plan to set educational goals and record progress.

Student performance in the classroom is evaluated in a variety of ways across the spectrum and is grade appropriate at each level. Each grading system assesses student strengths and identifies areas for improvement. Designed to give a better understanding of the teacher's objectives and the student's progress, they help highlight additional support or enrichment a student might need. In the younger grades, teachers use a combination of narratives and skill/development checklists. Teachers in the middle and upper grades use different formats. A combination of similar criteria is used throughout to evaluate performance, or determine promotion including, but not limited to class work, homework, attendance, lateness, state, local and subject tests, other school instruments, and social/emotional readiness. In grades K-2 the homeroom/subject teacher confers with other subject teachers to consider the student's overall performance and readiness for advancement.

The school year is divided into four marking periods for most classes and report cards or progress reports are distributed at the end these periods. The specifics of how and when the reports are disseminated vary according to grade level and time of year. They might be sent home with the student, mailed or given out at a scheduled conference. In the younger grades the report card must be signed and returned to the teacher. The dates of the marking periods for each school year and of Parent/Teacher Conferences are included on the school calendar. Timely reminders of these events are also sent home with students.

Important School Events

- **Back to School and Curriculum Night** – Scheduled near the beginning of the school year, “Curriculum Night” provides families with the opportunity to meet with teachers who will be instructing their children. While the manner of presentation may vary across the grades, in every cluster, teachers briefly present a description of their class curriculum, as well as information about any requirements or supplies that students need. While “Curriculum Night” is not a time for parents to meet individually with all teachers, it is an opportunity to learn more and ask questions about our instructional program.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences** – These events are preset times when parents can meet briefly and privately with teachers to discuss their child's progress. Both evening and afternoon hours are provided for these conferences which are generally scheduled in November and April. If parents/guardians are unable to attend one of these events, or feel they need a longer meeting, it is suggested that they contact their child's teacher. The teacher will schedule a meeting at an alternative time.
- **Family Conferences** – These conferences are scheduled individually with parents and families who may need an extended time to discuss their child's progress. Many of the child's teachers attend these meetings which may include student support and guidance personnel. Family conferences and are intended to provide direct strategies for success and often result in specific plans.
- **Arts Exhibition Nights** – All TRCS 2 students study an art discipline (creative movement, visual arts, music, or drama) during the school year and have the opportunity to exhibit or perform their work at Exhibition Night. This activity is scheduled in the spring and families are strongly encouraged to attend.
- **Parent Workshops** – Parent workshops that are planned from parent suggestions, and are held every year on such diverse topics as learning about the Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Reading System, how to talk with your teen, online and social-network safety, your child's social-emotional development, nutrition, arts and subject-based workshops and continuing education workshops for adults. Watch out for the email announcements, and make sure you are receiving our online newsletter to find out more.

Homework

Homework is given on a grade appropriate level and should be expected on most, if not all, evenings. Homework and after school projects are designed to reinforce classroom learning through practice and application; develop study skills and work habits such as time management; and help students connect their classroom learning with leisure activities and career centered interests. Students are expected to complete their assignments on time and parents/guardians will be notified if a student's assignments are habitually late, incomplete or unsatisfactory. When absent, students are expected to find out what assignments were missed. Parents can help their children avoid falling behind by communicating with their teachers and making sure he/she can contact another student for assignments, and by utilizing the various on-line options for posting homework and assignments. We also encourage our parents to help their children develop good study habits by creating a setting conducive to learning, talking to them about their schoolwork and activities, and making sure they have library cards so they can begin to develop reading as a lifelong pastime.

School Supplies

Students need school supplies to use during the school year. Valuable instructional time is lost when a student is not prepared for a lesson; this may affect her/his performance and be reflected in the class grade. The supplies needed vary across the grades but at the beginning of the school year the teachers will provide a list of what is required in specific classes to each student. Often lists are posted on our website at the beginning of the summer to take advantage of summer sales. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing these and making sure that their children come to school prepared every day. (Families who have difficulty obtaining supplies should speak with their child's teacher or one of the administrators.)

Authentic Work Policy

At Renaissance, we want and encourage students to produce their own work. We encourage parents and families to support their child's success in school, however we discourage parents and families from completing assignments and school work for their children. Early childhood education and elementary school is a time for students to develop an independent practice of learning and acquisition of knowledge. A student's ability to produce authentic work enables the student to grow, even if the work is less than excellent. Students learn from their mistakes when teachers are able to see them and correct them. Students also learn to value their own intellect and their ability to excel. These are important steps in developing the whole child and are essential to each child's long-term academic success.

Grading Policy

The grading policy for TRCS 2 applies to both in person and remote classes. There is no indication on report cards whether a child attended school in person or remotely.

All students must meet the same learning standards for each grade. Teachers design and implement meaningful assessments and benchmarks to measure student progress in person and remotely.

All students are expected to complete their own work. Parents cannot complete their child's work. If an assignment's authenticity is questioned by the teacher, the child will be asked to complete the assignment again in person (if applicable) or via Zoom with a teacher or administrator present.

Students will receive numerical grades, level grades, and reading levels.

Numerical Grades	Levels	Standards
95 – 100	4	Meeting standards with distinction
80 -94	3	Meeting standards
65 – 79	2	Approaching standards
0 – 64	1	Not meeting standards

Report Card Distribution

All report cards will be distributed electronically on the last day of each marking period.

Promotion In Doubt Policy

Students who have attendance issues and are not progressing, as well as students who are not progressing with additional instructional support, are eligible to be referred by their teachers for promotion in doubt (PID).

Grade level teams will meet to discuss the students and the reasons why PID may be the right choice for the student. Teachers will show evidence. (Teams are composed of teachers of the student's current grade level and the grade level the student would be promoted to the following September.)

Each team provides feedback regarding the evidence. The team makes suggestions for additional support.

When a student is referred for PID, parents will be sent official letters via USPS and email. The letters are prepared by the Director of Teaching and Learning.

The child's teachers and the Director of Teaching and Learning will meet with parents to discuss PID concerns within two weeks of receiving the PID letter.

During late April/early May the PID grade level team of teachers will meet again to revisit concerns, show additional evidence, and make a final decision regarding PID. Official letters are sent home via USPS and email.

The letters are prepared by the Director of Teaching and Learning. The letters state if the child is being promoted or retained. The child's teachers and the Director of Teaching and Learning will meet with parents to discuss the PID concerns within two weeks of receiving the PID letter.

Parent can accept or appeal the PID decision. If a parent chooses to appeal, they present their case to the Principal. If the Principal upholds the team's decision, the parent can appeal to the board. The board makes the final decision based on the parent's case and the school's evidence.

CITIZENSHIP, HEALTH AND SCHOOL SAFETY

Student Responsibilities

Renaissance is a village. A village prospers when there is community spirit built on trust and respect, and everyone takes responsibility for its safety and well-being. This is why there are school rules and guidelines that govern how members of the Renaissance community work and live together. The rules governing student citizenship are based on several important ideas:

- One of a student's most important rights is the right to learn. Any type of behavior that interrupts a student's right to learn is unacceptable.
- A school must be a safe place, physically and emotionally. As members of the community, Renaissance students are responsible for maintaining and protecting its safety.
- Students share the responsibility for improving the village – its facilities, its reputation, and its relationship with the community.
- Renaissance is a school about leadership. Its students, having common sense and knowing right from wrong, are expected to take initiative and fulfill their responsibilities without being told to do so.
- Every adult at Renaissance is here to support the education of the students. In that capacity, students should respect them equally as their teacher.
- In all disciplinary matters, students will receive notice and be asked to present in writing their version of the facts and circumstances leading to the imposition of disciplinary measures. Depending on the severity of the infraction, disciplinary responses include detention, exclusion from extracurricular activities, suspension, and expulsion. Where appropriate, school officials will also contact law enforcement agencies.

Discipline Policy

Renaissance is committed to being a school where students can learn and staff members can teach in a safe and secure environment. To accomplish this goal, students must assume responsibility for their behavior; realize that standards of behavior exist and that there will be consequences if they violate these standards. The school's discipline policy, outlined in ***The Renaissance Charter School 2 Discipline Policy*** provides comprehensive guidelines to determine unacceptable behaviors and a range of permissible disciplinary measures to ensure consistency and equitable treatment for all students. The policy also enables teachers, student support staff, and administrators to exercise discretion and educational judgment. Because students, parents, and staff all have a role in maintaining a safe school it is imperative that good communication and cooperation exist between the school and the home. Parents, as active and involved partners, should become familiar with the Discipline Policy so that they can instill a sense of responsibility in their children. The Renaissance staff should inform parents about their child's behavior and nurture the skills the students need to succeed in school and society. You can find this policy posted on our website on the Parents page, or you can pick up a copy from the main office upon request.

TRCS 2 will not tolerate harassment, bullying, or cyber-bullying. We adhere to the Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act), passed into state law that became effective on July 1, 2012. First offenses will result in a warning. Second offenses will result in an educational assignment and written parent notification. Third offenses will result in one-day suspension. For additional information about consequences for continued bullying, please contact Student Support. Details concerning The Dignity Act are available in "The Renaissance Student Support and Discipline Policy". All students are required to report any acts of bullying of which they become aware.

The standards set forth in the Discipline Policy apply to behavior exhibited in school during school hours; before and after school while on school property; while traveling to and from school; at all school-sponsored events; and

on property outside the school when the behavior endangers the health, safety, morals, or welfare of the school community. Students are seen as representatives of Renaissance and as such their behavior reflects on the school as a whole. (For detailed information about the rules and regulations governing student behavior, see *The Renaissance Charter School 2 Discipline Policy*, (available on our website at <https://rencharters.org/trcs-maspeth/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/07/TRCS2DisciplinePolicy.pdf>)

Attendance

Students are expected to attend class every day unless they are sick, have been officially excused or for religious observances. Students who miss school are required to bring a note from their parent/guardian or health care provider explaining the absence. Work missed during the absence must be made up. If possible, parents should notify the school on the first day of their child's illness, especially if he/she has a contagious disease that might spread to other students. The school must be advised if the student will be absent over three days. More than five absences per semester is considered excessive. Missing more than 10% of the school year is one factor considered when determining grade retention. Students hospitalized or convalescing at home for an extended period may possibly continue their work through a hospital school or home schooling to avoid missing promotion to higher grade. Student Support can assist in arranging appropriate services

To get early release for a medical appointment, a student must bring a written request in advance from the parent, guardian or doctor's office and must be picked up by a designated parent or guardian. Parents should try to schedule appointments after school hours to limit intrusion into their child's school day.

Lateness to school

School is a preparation for the world of work. It is important that students be on time both for school and for each class during the day. If a student is late to school three or more days in one week, or five or more days in the period of one month, parents or guardians will be notified by the Student Support Team to determine appropriate action. Students who are late to school for a legitimate reason, such as a medical appointment, should bring a note written by their parent, guardian, or physician.

Dress Code

The Renaissance Charter School expects that all students will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or for any school sponsored event. Student dress choices should respect the school's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The school is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size. Dress code enforcement must also be conducted respectfully and mindfully. Any restrictions to the way a student dresses must be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and must be explained within this dress code.

1. Students Must Wear*, (while following the basic principle of Section 1 above):

- A **Shirt** (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), **AND**
- **Pants/jeans** or the equivalent (for example, a **skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress, shorts, etc.**), **AND**
- **Safe and seasonally appropriate footwear**

**Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, and job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress, but should not focus on covering bodies in a particular way or promoting culturally-specific attire. Activity-specific shoes requirements are permitted (for example, athletic shoes for PE).*

2. Students May Wear:

- Hats facing any direction. Hats must allow the face to be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff
- Religious headwear

- Hoodie sweatshirts (wearing the hood overhead is allowed, but the face and ears must be visible to school staff). **However**, if a teacher or staff member asks you to remove your hoodie, you **must** comply, especially if it is pulled tight and covers your ears.
- Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants and “skinny jeans”
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed.
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps; halter tops
- Athletic attire
- Shorts, skirts, or dresses above your fingertips, as long as your buttocks are not exposed.

3. Students Cannot Wear:

- Violent language and/or images.
- Images or language depicting drugs, alcohol, illegal activities and/or gang affiliations.
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized group.
- Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments, with the **exception of bra straps**. Gym or athletic shorts under sagging pants are allowed.
- Swimsuits (except as required in class or athletic practice).
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance).

4. Dress Code Enforcement

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below. School administration and staff shall not have discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement. **Students will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of a dress code violation as outlined in Sections 3.**

Students in violation of **Section 3** will be provided three (3) options to be replaced and dressed more to code during that school day:

1. Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
2. Students will be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
3. If necessary, students’ parents may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.

If an individual violates the dress code three or more times, staff members will request/set a meeting with the student in violation, as well as a Student Government representative, to discuss the violation.

Guidelines for Staff:

- School staff shall enforce the school’s dress code equally and fairly, without regard to the racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity of the student.
- School staff shall enforce the school’s dress code equally and fairly, without regard to a student’s transgender or gender nonconforming identity.
- School staff shall enforce the school’s dress code respectfully and privately. Students should not be shamed or required to display their bodies in front of others (students, parents, or staff) in school. “Shaming” includes, but is not limited to:
 - asking students to account for their attire in the classroom or in hallways in front of others
 - calling out students in spaces, in hallways, or in classrooms about perceived dress code violations in front of others
 - accusing students of “distracting” other students with their clothing

- School Staff will limit the amount of educational time used to address dress code violations; they will attempt to use transition time to deal with any issues
- School staff will ask students to turn clothing inside out if it contains offensive language or content to minimize loss of instruction time.
- School staff will follow this dress code in all classrooms and common spaces, except when clothing choices inhibit safety or learning (such as science labs, or theatre class). Classroom specific dress code rules are not allowed.

These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days and summer school days, as well as any school-related events and activities, such as graduation ceremonies, dances and prom.

Students who feel they have been subject to discriminatory enforcement of the dress code policies should contact a member of the School Management Team.

Cell Phone Usage

Renaissance policy prohibits student use of cell phones or other electronic communication devices in the school. This equipment, if seen or heard, will be confiscated. In case of an emergency, students should get a pass to use the phone in the Main Office. Parents/guardians should not call their child's cell phone while he/she is in school. They should contact the Main Office and leave a message for their child.

Returning Books and other School Materials

Most courses and classes require specific textbooks or reading materials. Students can borrow these books and materials from the school, signing them out from the person who is in charge of the third floor media center for high school students, the second floor media center for middle school students and with the classroom teacher in other grades. Students are required to return all borrowed books by the end of the school year. Students must replace any books that are lost or damaged, so that the school maintains a class set of books. Students must pay for textbooks that are lost or damaged, as well as other books that are not readily available. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that bar codes remain on books that were borrowed. If a student returns a book without a bar code, she/he will not be credited and must replace the book or (in the case of textbooks) pay the cost of the book in full.

Change of Address

A student whose emergency contact information changes after school begins must notify the Main Office immediately so that the change can be noted. It is essential that the school has an accurate home address for mailings and telephone numbers where parents or guardians can be reached. The official school records (computer ATS records) must also accurately reflect each student's current address, home phone number and contact information (daytime phone numbers) for parents or guardians.

Health

Renaissance considers the health and well being of all its students to be of central importance and is committed to creating a safe environment for them. There is a full-time nurse on staff to assist with medical issues. On-site hearing and vision screening is provided to newly admitted students, at-risk students, and students referred by teachers, parents, or themselves. Annual physical, dental and vision examinations for all students are also recommended.

- **School Nurse** –The nurse, whose office is located on the 1st floor of the school, is responsible for providing medical attention but is prohibited by law to diagnose medical problems or to prescribe or dispense medications without a legally filed 504 form. Students who do not feel well should get a pass from their classroom teacher and go to the nurse. Students MUST have a pass to be admitted to see the nurse and are not permitted to stop in between classes. Failure to follow these procedures will be considered an unexcused class absence. Students are not permitted to call their parents from a cellphone to report an illness without first seeing the nurse. After entering the Nurse’s Office, students must sign in and wait quietly. If it is necessary to send a student home, the nurse will contact the student’s parent/guardian or emergency contact. Students under 18 cannot leave school without being accompanied by a parent, guardian, or designated emergency contact who is 18 years or older.
- **Medications** – Some students take medication during the day due to physical or emotional conditions. A 504 form (a written physician’s order and parent permission form) is necessary for the nurse to be permitted to administer medication or for the student to self-administer medication during the school day. These medications must be given to the school nurse who keeps them in a safe place and dispenses them to students at designated times. Students must take the medication in the Nurse’s Office and return the container to the nurse for safekeeping. The 504 form must be updated annually by parents or guardians and submitted to the nurse for ongoing medication needs.
- **Immunizations** – Students entering TRCS2 must have a satisfactory physical examination with certification of immunization on file. The required immunizations change from year to year, so please check with the staff in the Main Office for updated information. Some students may be exempt from immunizations due to conscientious, religious or health considerations. Please contact the Main Office for information on immunization exemption.
- **Emergency Contact Form** – This form which is given to every student each year is extremely important because it gives Renaissance instructions for contacting a student’s family in case of an emergency. Parents should provide full and accurate information, including at least two (2) telephone contacts and an email address. If any information changes after the initial form is submitted, the school should be immediately notified so the record can be updated.

Safety

- **Reporting Safety Concerns** - Students are urged to contact any adult about safety concerns. The student may do so verbally, through an incident report, or in an anonymous note. Renaissance has developed an incident report form that is available for completion by teachers, administrators and authorized staff members. The completed form, which may be anonymously written, can be given to any staff member, or placed in the main office mailbox of any member of the Student Support Team.
- **Fire, Safety, Intruder Drills** - Every student knows the seriousness of fire and safety drills. Students also know why we need speed, quiet, and order during any potential emergency. Students who misbehave during fire and safety drills are endangering the safety of others as well as their own, and will receive disciplinary action. Students are not to talk during fire drills. Due to the large number of students who leave and then reenter the building, there is a need for students to remain silent at all times from the beginning of the drill until they have reentered their classrooms. They must remain quiet and orderly while exiting the building, waiting outside, and reentering the building to return to class. Students who do not follow these guidelines, or disregard the instructions of Renaissance staff will be referred to the Student Support Team. Students must remain with their group for the duration of a fire or safety drill. After a fire drill, if a student returns to the classroom late, this will be recorded as lateness to class.
- **Evacuation Plan** - In the case of a fire drill, or in the event of real emergency, students will adhere to the following evacuation plan. All students must leave the building immediately with speed, order, and silence. They must follow the instructions of school staff and assemble outside the building at one of the designated locations. In the case of a prolonged event, students should proceed to a designated safe haven.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Important School Contact Information

School Address:	60-02 Maspeth Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378
School Telephone Number:	(917) 242-3505
School Fax Number:	(929) 529-0080
School Website:	rencharters.org

School-Wide Communication

Communication starts at the most basic level; between students and teachers. Remember to go to your child's teacher as the first step to getting information or resolving an issue relating to your child's education. Our carefully developed communication protocol ensures that you are getting the timeliest and most accurate information: 1) Talk to your child's teacher; 2) if the issue is not resolved, talk to the cluster leader; 3) if the issue is not resolved, talk to one of the members of the SMT; 4) if the issue is not resolved, talk to the Principal; 5) and finally, an issue can be brought before our Board of Trustees. Contact information can be found on our website at rencharters.org.

- The majority of messages will be sent by email, rather than by paper flier. Please make sure we have an updated email address on file for you. In addition, our website is packed with information for parents and friends of Renaissance. Please take time to explore the site, especially the information on the PA, Parents and Parents/Notices and Events pages, and check back frequently for updates.
- **Monthly and Semi-Monthly Newsletters** are provided in an online format that comes directly to your email, your phone, or can be accessed from our website from the "About Renaissance" page.
- **The APIL** – The Annual Parent Information Letter is sent home to all parents at the end of the summer, before the start of the new school year. You will receive this letter by email, or you can request a printed copy that you can pick up as soon as it is published each year. **Please note** that while this handbook is only updated whenever major policy, staff or structural changes are made, the APIL has the most current information on school policies and guidelines. If you note a discrepancy between what is printed in any of our handbooks and what is published in the current APIL, the APIL will most likely be correct.

Contacting Staff

The faculty and staff at Renaissance believe that clear communication among all community members is key to a successful and supportive educational environment. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school regarding matters that they feel might impact a student's education or well-being. They can contact their child's teacher or a member of the Student Support Team if they have questions or concerns, or need to share pertinent information. Renaissance has an automated phone system that provides voice mail for all staff members, and there is a staff directory on our website that provides staff email addresses. Some teachers may prefer email to voicemail, and will so state on their outgoing voicemail message. To leave a message, follow the automated phone instructions or call the Main Office and request the teacher's voice mail. Teachers will call back at their earliest convenience. It is the policy of the school to protect classroom instructional time by reducing, as much as possible, any unnecessary disruptions. Therefore, neither students nor teachers will be contacted or asked to leave the classroom during instruction except for an emergency.

Parents and Guardians must NOT call or text your child during the school day on his or her cell phone. If you have an emergency situation and need to speak with your child, please contact the main office and a staff member will assist you.

Pick up by Parent/Guardian

Students in grades K-1 are picked up at the student's classroom. In grades 2-6, parents pick students up in the cafeteria. Students may be allowed to leave school on their own at dismissal, starting in 4th grade, with written permission from parents. If the student/s are not picked up by the parent/guardian, they are directed to wait in the Main Office, until a parent or guardian can be contacted. All students must be in a supervised program following their dismissal if staying afterschool. Under no circumstances can younger siblings wait for older siblings in an unsupervised area of the school. Waiting in the main office for an older sibling on a regular basis is also not allowed. You

must make arrangements for your child to be in the after-school program, be picked up by a designated adult, or leave the school on their own.

Visitor Policy

All visitors must present a picture ID and sign in with the Security Safety Agent when they visit the school. They must then report to the Main Office for further assistance. All visitors must have an appointment in order to meet with school staff.

School Calendar and Daily Schedule

At the beginning of each school year, Renaissance issues its own calendar detailing key dates, events and information pertinent to the school. Renaissance generally follows the student calendar of the New York City Department of Education for half-days, holidays and breaks *with some variations*. The calendar appears on the school's website, rencharters.org. Other information regarding school operations including the daily student arrival/dismissal time, school bus procedures, drop off/pick-up procedures, etc., vary according to grade level and is communicated in other ways.

School Closings Policy

The Renaissance Charter School 2 has a discretionary policy for school closings, in the event of inclement weather or other emergencies. In the event of a school closure, parents and families will be notified in advance. Check the following TV and radio morning news programs for information about school closings: Radio: WINS 1010 AM, WABC 770 AM, WCBS 880 AM. Local TV: WCBS, WNBC, FOX, WABC (Channels 2, 4, 5, and 7). Cable TV: New York 1 (Channel 1).

Breakfast and Lunch Programs

The Renaissance Charter School 2 and Martin Luther School share a full kitchen staff to provide a wide variety of fresh food daily in our kitchen. Breakfast is available daily in the school cafeteria in the mornings, lunch is served during several different periods according to grade level, snack is available to certain classrooms. Starting with the 2020 school year, Renaissance has been approved to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) which allows universal free lunch to all students. Snacks are offered for free to all students. Food menus are prepared to provide healthy, nutritious and tasty meals. Soft drinks and sugary snacks are not provided. Children may bring a non-perishable lunch from home. Drinks in glass bottles are not allowed, and all food carried in from the outside must be stored inside a back-pack or locker. No open drinks are allowed to be carried into the building.

School Bus

Renaissance utilizes the New York City Department of Education's Office of Pupil Transportation for school bus service for eligible K-5 and special education students. It is imperative that students utilizing this service understand that the bus driver is the source of authority on every school bus and all students must follow his/her directions and instructions. The potential for serious accidents is a very real consequence if the driver of a bus is constantly distracted by the misbehavior of students behind her/him. Students are to show respect and be polite to the driver at all times and should remain seated with seat belts fastened during the entire bus ride. All general school rules apply on the bus. Students who do not follow these rules will lose all or part of their bus privileges and face the consequences listed in the *Discipline Policy Handbook*. Detailed instructions and rules for students who ride the buses will be distributed at the beginning of the school year or can be obtained in the main office.

MetroCards

Renaissance provides student MetroCards for eligible students twice during the school year, at the beginning of each semester. The office of Pupil Transportation, NYC Department of Education, *not* Renaissance, makes eligibility determinations for yellow bus service and MetroCards. Under no circumstances can a student both ride the yellow bus and receive a MetroCard. MetroCards should be kept in a safe place. The school cannot guarantee replacement of a lost card.

Personal Items and Lost and Found

Personal items must be kept on the student's person, or in their secured locker. Items left in common spaces or unattended may be lost or disappear. In order to safeguard possessions, students should leave unnecessary personal items, large amounts of cash and electronics at home.

A Lost and Found is maintained in the cafeteria. Over the school year our staff finds many unmarked student belongings. Students are encouraged to keep their coats and other extra clothing in their lockers, and to mark all their belongings for identification.

What to Bring and Not to Bring to School

Students should always bring pencils, pens, paper and a folder for notices. Early grade classrooms are furnished with cubbies or desks to store personal items, and 5th-12th grade students are furnished with a locker. Renaissance will issue locks for all school lockers. No outside locks will be permitted and students without a school lock will not be issued a locker. Locks need only be purchased once, unless they are lost and need to be replaced. Returning students who paid for their locks and returned them will get their lock at no cost.

The following items are always prohibited: laser pointers, weapons of any kind (including pocket knives, razors, items with spikes), illegal and/or non-prescribed medications, tobacco, alcohol, glass containers, matches, lighters, stink bombs, spray paint and any other item that may jeopardize the health, welfare, or safety of the school community. We will confiscate all prohibited items and students will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension and expulsion. We will also contact the police as necessary.

Students are not permitted to take any medication on school property without having a 504 form on file with the Medical Office. This includes Tylenol, ibuprofen, cough medicine, Benadryl or other allergy medication and all prescription medications. If your child needs to take any medication for any reason, please contact the main office.

Admissions Policies

The Renaissance Charter School 2 is a non-sectarian, public school. Renaissance does not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Admission to Renaissance is determined according to guidelines that are specified in our Charter. Parents/Guardians interested in having their child attend TRCS are strongly encouraged to attend an Open House.

Applications will be available at the school beginning on a date to be determined each year, at the conclusion of each open house and at our website. Renaissance also participates in the NYC Charter School Online Common Application. Renaissance will conduct a lottery for openings in kindergarten, first, and second grades. Applications for these grades are automatically wait listed and will be considered only if openings occur. Siblings of current Renaissance students will be given priority. A lottery will be conducted if applicants exceed available seats. If seats become available after the initial lottery, a lottery of wait list applications will be conducted. Final acceptance of all students into Pre-kindergarten is conditional upon the student turning 4 years of age no later than December 31 of the year admitted, and is conditional for kindergarten students upon the student turning 5 years of age no later than December 31 of the year admitted. Students applying for grades 1-12 must submit copies of final report cards and/or transcripts from current schools and must meet the criteria for promotion to the grade for which they are applying. More complete details on the admissions procedures are available upon request.

Class Trips

Most of our students attend various field trips during the year to enhance their educational experience. The field trips are an integral part of the curriculum at The Renaissance Charter School, and connect to classwork and homework assignments that students receive. If a student is unable to attend a trip, she/he may be given an alternative assignment to compensate for the missed activity.

Participation in a class trip requires that students be attentive, responsible, and respectful to others, for the safety and well being of all concerned. If a student's behavior in school indicates that she/he is lacking in self control or

the ability to follow directions, it may be necessary that a parent or guardian accompany the student on the trip or the student may be required to remain at school with alternative work.

Permission slips will be sent home before each trip and must be signed by a parent/guardian in order for the student to participate. If a student does not have a signed permission slip on the day of the activity, she/he must remain at school. The school should receive a parent or guardian's permission in writing.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

We believe that students can develop when they feel safe and supported, and are challenged to do their best. Teachers often instruct students for more than one year. This enables teachers to better know the individual abilities and needs of each student and more effectively provide instruction. The following services are available to students.

Instructional Support Services (ISS)

The Renaissance Charter School is committed to an inclusive model of instruction for special needs students. This model provides an opportunity for special needs students to grow and learn in the least restrictive environment and for general education students to develop their leadership skills

- **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

This is an educational plan created by a multi-disciplinary team consisting of at least an educational evaluator, psychologist, social worker, parent, related services providers, and classroom teacher under the auspices of the Committee of Special Education (CSE). The team discusses results of the various evaluations, classroom observations and parent input. Based on the profile developed, the IEP includes the type of classroom placement, related services and modifications (testing, promotion, etc.). This plan is then implemented by the school.

- **Section 504**

This is a regulation under federal Rehabilitation Act (1973). It allows for "leveling of the playing field" for people with disabilities to prevent discrimination due to disability. For schools, this process allows for emergency modifications in various aspects of school life, such as testing modifications, elevator pass, etc.

- **English Language Learners (ELL)**

TRCS offers services for English Language Learners using structured English language immersion so that they achieve proficiency in English as quickly as possible. TRCS ensures that ELL students will not be excluded from curricular and extra curricular activities based on an inability to speak and understand the language of instruction, and also that ELL students will not be assigned to special education because of their lack of English Language proficiency.

- **Support for special needs students**

The ISS staff provides educational assistance to special needs students through classes called Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS). SETSS is a regularly scheduled class incorporated into a student's schedule as required by her/his IEP (individualized education plan). Students with IEPs have been evaluated based on a battery of tests by a team of professionals.

SETSS is not a credit-bearing course. Conducted by certified special education teachers, its function is not to teach new curricula but to support students with their academic coursework, providing learning strategies and reinforcement of skills through tutoring, modified instruction, and smaller groupings.

The ISS staff also provides assistance to special needs students through inclusion or "push in" instruction. In this model, the SETSS teacher attends academic classes with students and works together with the class instructor in a co-teaching capacity to provide additional support. Students with IEPs are often provided with differentiated instruction in the same classroom as their peers, reviewing the same or similar materials.

- **Response to Intervention and support for at-risk students**

Middle School and High School Students who are considered at-risk of academic failure are sometimes also referred for The Learning Center (TLC) support services on a temporary basis. The type of intervention is determined by the needs of the student. These students are generally identified by their general education teachers as being in need of additional services. This is not a substitute for services mandated under an IEP (SETTS); it is solely to serve as a supplementary and, in general, short term intervention. For ongoing support, the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the Department of Education (DOE) must refer a student who has failed to respond sufficiently to intervention for evaluation.

Counseling Services and Guidance

The Renaissance Charter School has a licensed, certified social worker and a school counselor, who are full-time members of the ISS Team. The school social worker and counselor's primary responsibilities are to provide mandated counseling for students with IEPs. Additional appointments for other students are available on a limited basis.

Appointments with the school social worker or school counselor must be made through ISS. If students need to see the school social worker or school counselor during class hours, it is important that they first notify their teacher in person. The teacher will call ISS and provide a pass. For a first appointment with the social worker, students may be referred by a teacher or refer themselves. Parents must sign a consent form for subsequent appointments or ongoing counseling.

There are also walk-in times when the school social worker or school counselor are available to meet with students, when classes are not scheduled and after school.

The Student Support Team

Student Support (SST) was established to, among other things:

- (1) Provide support for students to help prevent discipline code infractions. This support includes: Peace Studies Programs, Peer Mediation Programs, Behavior Plans, Advisories, support to individual students, support to parents and legal guardians ("parents") through conferences and parent meetings, working with teaching and learning to provide professional development to staff in related matters and referral to the counseling department, and the intervention team when needed;
- (2) Investigate incidents and determine the appropriate consequences for students who violate the school's discipline code. This includes: Investigating all occurrences of disciplinary infractions, determining and implementing consequences on a case-by-case basis, including suspension and expulsion when deemed necessary; and
- (3) Assist The Learning Center staff with both in- and out-of- school suspensions.
- (4) Conduct Child Studies in cooperation with the classroom teacher and the Child Study Team.

- **The At-Risk Population**

The students in this program are identified by their general education teachers as being in need of receiving additional educational services (i.e. tutoring, modified instruction, smaller groupings, etc) in order to meet the immediate need of their general education class. This in no way is to substitute for services mandated under an IEP (i.e. SETSS). This is solely to serve as a supplement and, in general, is a short-term intervention.

- **The Enrichment Program**

The students in this program are identified by their general education teachers as functioning at, or above, grade level and are in need of enriched or expanded learning tasks. This program is a short term supplement to the regular class and asks students to provide a higher level of direction and initiative. This program promotes higher order thinking processes that bring students to a new level of mastery of the subject.

- **Suspension Program – Alternative Instruction**

When, in the course of the school year, a student is in need of either in-school or out-of-school suspension, the educational component or alternative instruction for the suspension may be conducted in TLC or another designated location in the school.

Supervision of in-school suspensions:

When a student is in need of either in-school or out-of-school suspension, the educational component of this suspension is conducted by a member of the SST .

If the Student Support Team determines that all or part of the student’s suspense is to be served in-school, a representative of the team will make arrangements for the appropriate physical placement of the suspended student. Suspended students who stay in school will be under the supervision of a member of the SST and will be provided a safe place to complete class assignments and school work.

In the case of an out-of-school suspension, the student will be given a scheduled time to attend school for one hour of supervised academic instruction for students up to 6th grade. The student must remain with the member of the SST who is supervising the instruction unless directed otherwise by staff.

Please note that in the event of suspension, students will be provided with applicable assignments and materials from their scheduled classes. During a suspension, students will be permitted to take any examinations required for their scheduled classes.

Teacher Teams

The general education teachers meet frequently with other teachers in grade level meetings to discuss students, coordinate cross-classroom collaborations, and develop curriculum. These meetings may also include short discussions on specific issues concerning particular students. Lengthier discussions known as "child studies" may also take place. Child studies include a review of the student’s academic history, family history, classroom observations and current academic issues.

In addition to the general education teachers, meetings include representatives from Instructional Support Services, specifically, the special education teacher and the social worker or guidance counselor. Also, in certain cases, it may be appropriate for the student’s parents to participate in family conferences with the above personnel.

Based on the recommendations developed at the cluster meetings certain action plans are put into place. These include at-risk services, tutoring, counseling (parental consent is required), informal behavior plans (i.e., without CSE involvement) and outside referrals (e.g., medical). A recommendation may be made for the ISS team to perform an evaluation, or vision and hearing screenings. A referral to the CSE for comprehensive evaluation may also result from the cluster group’s efforts.

Transportation

TRCS 2 will utilize the New York City Department of Education’s Office of Pupil Transportation for school bus service for eligible K-6 and special education students and MetroCards for eligible K-6 students.

The bus driver is the source of authority on every school bus and all students must follow his/her directions and instructions. The potential for serious accidents is a very real consequence if the driver of a bus is constantly distracted by the misbehavior of students behind her/him. Students are to show respect and be polite to the driver at all times. Students are to remain seated with seat belts fastened during the entire bus ride. Students are the ambassadors of our school to the community and are expected to be courteous to all community residents while waiting for, riding on or exiting a bus. Students are not to yell, curse, insult, or “dis”. Fighting or play fighting on the bus is strictly forbidden. Older students are expected to be role models for and nurture younger students. All general school rules apply on the bus. Violations that result in suspension on the school campus will also result in suspension on the bus. In addition, students who do not follow these rules will lose all or part of their bus privileges and face the consequences listed in other sections of the discipline code.

We expect our students:

- To follow the directions of the driver.
- To board the bus quickly and remain in their seats patiently while waiting for others to board.
- To wear a seat belt at all times.
- To stay in assigned seats facing the front of the bus at all times. Students may not sit on book bags or face sideways in seats. (As the bus approaches your stop, stay seated until the bus reaches a complete stop.)
- To keep all parts of your body in the bus and the aisle clear at all times.
- To refrain from throwing anything on the bus or out of the window.
- To talk in a quiet voice and only to the people near you.
- To refrain from taking glass containers on board the bus.
- To know that riding a school bus is a privilege that may be lost for failure to obey the rules.
- To be completely ready when the bus arrives. There must be someone at home when the bus drops children off.

Students cannot ride another bus or get off at a different stop unless this request is put in writing. Phone calls will not be accepted to arrange bus changes. Drivers will not let students on their buses or put them off at different stops without an authorized note. When requesting a bus change the note should include: the student's name, teacher, the reason for the different bus or bus stop, the date, and number that the parents can be reached at in case the request cannot be granted. This is for the safety of the students and the drivers. Drivers are not allowed to make stops that are not on their routes. They are not allowed to let students off at stops other than their designated stop.

Grievances

Individuals with grievances should first speak with the staff member directly involved with the situation. If the issue is not resolved after this discussion, the matter should be referred to a member of the SMT. If the matter is still not resolved after the SMT member's intervention, it will be referred to the Principal. In the event that the Principal cannot resolve the situation, the following grievance procedures will be followed:

- Individuals should address their issue in writing to the Chairperson of The Board of Trustees (Dr. Monte Joffee, mjjoffee@rencharter.org).
- Once the committee reviews the issues, the matter will be referred to the appropriate person, cluster or committee for further investigation, mediation, action and/or recommendations. A report will be generated back to the Board's Grievance Committee for its recommendation to the full Board. The full board will vote on a decision.
- People who have had their grievances denied by the Board of Trustees will be notified in writing of their right to appeal the decision to the New York State Board of Regents of NYSED. More information on filing a complaint with NYSED can be found at <http://www.nysed.gov/charter-schools/complaint-process>.