

# Rising Leaders Academy

## Student Handbook

2020-2021



*Where Students Rise to be Leaders*

**Charter School  
Part of Bay District Schools**



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## DISTRICT VISION, MISSION, CORE BELIEFS

**Vision:** Bay District Schools will develop high academic achievers in an effort to produce successful, innovative leaders (citizens) for tomorrow's world.

**Mission:** Bay District Schools will deliver a high quality education in a collaborative, safe, and respectful environment. We are passionate in our commitment to inspire students in the acquisition and use of knowledge, skills, and character in preparation for fulfilling life and work in the global economy, and diverse world.

**Core Beliefs:** We believe that...



- Everyone must have a passionate commitment to academic excellence through high standards.
- Relationships of students and adults must show empathy, care, and trust.
- Compassion, conviction, and intense dedication to student academic success should stand as our hallmark.
- A professional teaching environment must be collaborative, innovative, and progressive.
- Data is revered as a means to provide feedback to students, refine instructional practice, and drive intervention decisions.
- Connections with the community will help to enhance student engagement.
- Technology skills are essential in the global economy.
- Equitable distribution of academic and operational resources will promote student success.

### BAY DISTRICT SCHOOLS ANNUAL NOTICE REGARDING DISCLOSURE OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Federal and State laws require that Bay District Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records. However, Bay District Schools may disclose appropriately designated directory information without written consent UNLESS you advise Bay District Schools to the contrary. Parent(s), adult students or former students shall have 30 days from the date of this notice to inform the student's school principal, in writing, that any or all of the directory information should not be released without their consent. Bay District Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- A student's name, address, and telephone number (if there is a listed number)
- Image or likeness in photographs, videotape, film or other medium
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Current grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of athletic team members
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees and awards received
- Most recent previous educational agency or institution (school or center) attended by the student.

Directory information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released.

Directory information relating to students shall be released only to the following:

- In-school use of student directory information for official school business.

- Student directory information, without addresses or telephone numbers, for school annuals, school newspapers, honors lists, and printed materials or programs for extracurricular activities.
- Student directory information of junior and senior students may be furnished, upon request, to Armed Forces Recruiting Officers, including the U.S. Coast Guard, for their use in providing for mail out information to student in regard to opportunities available to them in the United States Armed Services; provided, however, that any student may request that his/her name not be given for this purpose.
- Florida public universities and colleges.
- United States Congressman and Senators and Florida legislators

## **Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy**

### **General Policy**

It is the policy of Bay District School Board that there shall be zero tolerance of misbehavior of all kinds. Schools and teachers may develop individual rules and disciplinary practices which supplement the School Board rules but do not conflict with those rules.

Discipline should be applied after consideration of the eventual effect on behavior of the student and should promote improved conduct. Students shall be subject to provisions of this policy while attending school or on school premises, at any school function, or on any school sponsored transportation. Parents, legal guardians or adult students will be financially responsible for any damage to school property. A student's academic grade shall not be reduced as a disciplinary measure.

### **Classroom Policies**

The student has a responsibility to be aware of the policies in each class and to abide by them. Teachers will review their written classroom policies with the students.

### **Grounds for Disciplinary Actions**

Since misconduct of any degree or frequency is undesirable and not conducive to a positive learning environment for all, students should understand that certain consequences are applicable to their behaviors. Because some behaviors are more serious and disruptive than others, the frequency, nature and degree of the misconduct will determine the specific disciplinary action which shall be taken. All students suspended from school may not attend any school function, nor come to the school until suspension is completed.

### **Discipline**

The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviors for which disciplinary action of some type will be taken.

- Dress Code Violation
- Tardiness
- Absences
- Disrespect for a teacher
- Skipping class or off campus without permission
- Failure to follow instructions
- Loss or damage to materials belonging to the school
- Disruption of class or school activities
- Distribution of unauthorized materials
- Libelous statements
- Teasing and horseplay
- Cheating and lying
- Unauthorized assembly
- Stealing/larceny/theft
- Abusive language

- Damage to school plant and grounds
- Threats of physical violence
- Damage to personal property of students and staff members
- Defiance/insubordination
- Vandalism
- Fighting
- Assault and battery
- Harassment and/or physical or verbal abuse of students or staff members
- Possession/use/sale/purchase of unauthorized substances
- Use or possession of weapons, chemical propellant sprays, laser pens
- Possession of any gun or knife (real or toy)
- Rude or obscene behavior and/or language (profanity)
- School bus misconduct
- Unauthorized use of a free and/or reduced lunch number
- Possession of matches or cigarette lighters
- Violation of detention/work detail
- Violating rights of others
- Refusing corporal punishment or detention
- Trespassing
- Motor vehicle infraction
- Possession or use of fireworks
- Firearm possession
- Sexual battery
- Sexual harassment or offense
- Excessive talking in class
- Possession or use of tobacco
- Possession or consumption of commercial non-alcoholic beverages advertised by the beer and liquor industries<sup>20</sup>
- Public display of affection
- Use of skateboards on campus
- Aiding/abetting another person in violating a school board policy

**Parents and adult students shall be financially responsible for any damage done by students to property.**

Essentially there are two types of student misconduct. The first behavior invokes informal disciplinary procedures, while more serious misconduct requires formal disciplinary procedures

**Informal Disciplinary Procedures**

Examples of behavior which invoke informal disciplinary procedures include but are not limited to the following:

- Tardiness
- Failing to have required equipment
- Cheating or plagiarism
- Unauthorized use of school property
- Failing to report to class
- Being in unauthorized parts of the school facility

References to such misconduct, of course, involve a matter of degree, and some behaviors are more serious than others. The

following is a list of possible alternative solutions and other actions deemed necessary by the administrator.

- Counseling by teachers, student services personnel
- Contacting parents through notes, letters, phone calls or conferences

- Administrative warning
- Assigning detention
- Changes in class or teacher assignment
- Withdrawal of school privileges
- Assigning school clean-up services
- In-school suspension

Repeated occurrence of the above violations will be dealt with in the same manner as misconduct of a more serious nature which invokes formal procedures.

### **Formal Disciplinary Procedures**

Examples of more serious misconduct of students or parents, which invoke formal disciplinary procedures include but are not limited to the following:

- Intentional disruption or obstruction of the orderly educational process
- Defacement or vandalism of school property
- Willful disrespect or disobedience of school officials, teachers and non-instructional personnel acting pursuant to their official responsibilities.
- Intentional interference with or intimidation of students or school personnel by threat of force or violence
- Fighting on the school grounds or while under supervision of school personnel
- Participation in secret societies
- Illegal use or possession of drugs or alcoholic beverages (Bay District School Board Policy 4.35)
- Violation of school rules regarding the use of tobacco
- Participation in/ leading a riot / disturbance on school property
- Use of profane, obscene, or abusive language
- Lewd or lascivious behavior
- Stealing
- Continued misconduct of a less serious nature
- Cheating or plagiarism (copying another's work)
- Entering another school/campus unauthorized
- Sexual harassment
- False accusation of any kind toward another student and/or staff member

References to such misconduct involve a matter of degree, and some of these are more serious than others. Solutions for dealing with these violations of a lesser degree are listed under "Informal Disciplinary Procedures."

The following list of possible alternative solutions and other actions may be deemed necessary by the administration.

Corporal punishment  
 Assignment to detention  
 In-school suspension  
 Suspension  
 Expulsion

### Alternative measures for students with special needs

Some of the violations of school rules are also violations of the laws in the Criminal Code of the State of Florida. If students violate these laws, they will be subject to suspension from school and other more serious actions. In addition, the local law enforcement officials may be contacted, and the student's misconduct will also be handled by these authorities. Examples of infractions of school rules involving violations of the Criminal Code are:

Arson  
 Burglary

Extortion

Possession or use of firearms, any knife, other weapons, or such objects, including laser pens, which are utilized as or are intended to function as a weapon

Indecent exposure

Larceny<sup>21</sup>

Malicious mischief; intentional damage to property. Vandalism

Robbery

Sale of drugs

Sale of alcoholic beverages

Trespassing

Leading or participating in a riot on school grounds

Homicide

Kidnapping

Motor vehicle theft

Breaking and entering of buildings or vehicles

Possession of any software, hardware, etc., which if used could disrupt or corrupt any computer system

The possession or sale of controlled substances as defined in Florida Statute 893 or weapons by any student while such student is upon school property, school transportation, or in attendance at a school function are grounds for expulsion.

### **Health Certificates**

All students must have a completed Florida Certificate of Immunization as required by Florida Statutes to attend school.

## **ABOUT RISING LEADERS ACADEMY**

Rising Leaders Academy (RLA) is a K-8 school that is dedicated to preparing students for outstanding academic achievement, interpersonal skills, elevated ethical character, a firm command of foreign languages, and knowledge of meaningful careers. RLA meets the needs of every student in an inclusive classroom setting, which encourages lifelong learning through a focus on strong leadership skills. Students will achieve academic excellence through a developmentally rigorous, innovative, challenging, college preparatory curriculum in a warm, nurturing environment.

RLA has defined a number of broad goals for the school that include both targets for student achievement and goals for the broader community.

- Goal 1: Demonstrate a high level of academic performance.
- Goal 2: Develop clear and effective oral and written communication skills in each student.
- Goal 3: Develop strong foreign language skills in each student.
- Goal 4: Enhance students' ethical character development.
- Goal 5: Develop an environmental consciousness in students.
- Goal 6: Empower students to pursue excellence.
- Goal 7: Encourage civic responsibility.
- Goal 8: Create an environment where parents and family members are actively engaged in students' education.
- Goal 9: Develop and maintain outstanding teachers.
- Goal 10: Establish sound and accurate financial management practices in all areas of the school's business operations.

RLA prepares students for high academic achievement by emphasizing individual learning styles and critical-thinking skills through in-depth, experience-based, thematic instruction and relevant co-curricular and extracurricular activities. We will partner with Expeditionary Learning (EL), one of the Nation's most innovative and successful school design instructional models. Through EL's design principles and practices, EL school designers will enable our teachers to implement real life, project-based learning expeditions that promote literacy and integrate curricular content. Through the partnership with EL and the full range of training and professional development provided by EL, RLA teachers will learn how to manage classes containing students with differing skill levels and abilities. RLA will focus on constructivism, differentiated instruction, and creating a reading culture throughout the school to increase learning opportunities for the students. Students will also receive hands-on experience in flourishing careers, such as medicine, technology, and education and learn by serving the community. This will help promote civic and environmental responsibility through real-world applications, community service, and by fostering a global mindset with an appreciation for the natural world and the rich diversity of humanity. The hands-on experience will help students improve the community and expand their knowledge and skills. They will be motivated to rise to leaders who will make a difference in this world.

### **MISSION, VISION, AND FEATURES of RISING LEADERS**

**The Vision of the Charter** is to be recognized as one of the best schools in nation that empowers students with the academic excellence, interpersonal skills, and elevated ethical character necessary to be Rising Leaders.

**The Mission of the Charter** is to prepare the students in Bay County for outstanding academic achievement, interpersonal skills, elevated ethical character, and a firm command of foreign languages. Students will achieve academic excellence through a developmentally rigorous, innovative, challenging, college preparatory curriculum in a warm, nurturing environment. RLA will make every effort to unleash the creative and leadership abilities of its students. RLA will strive to create a professional learning community of students, teachers, parents, and families embracing collective responsibility for students to learn and give back to the community.



**RLA is dedicated to providing the best educational practices in Bay County to help students and teachers excel.** Our mission includes full inclusion of all students across the range of academic and language achievement from educationally disadvantaged to gifted. RLA will have unique features that make it top notch, such as:

- **Offer Harvard research-based educational program:** Hundreds of advanced schools in the U.S. are applying the Harvard research-based educational program, known as Expeditionary Learning. Schools that implemented this advanced program have outperformed district averages in language arts and math. RLA was among the first 2 schools in the state to implement this exceptional program, in which teachers implement real life, project-based learning expeditions that promote literacy and integrate curricular content.
- **Offer leadership training with focus on interpersonal skills through the Harvard-based educational program:** RLA will emphasize leadership skills in curriculum, instruction, and school culture through Expeditionary Learning. Every student will be given the opportunity to lead. This will increase the students' confidence and self-esteem.
- **Offer foreign languages to all students from kindergarten:** In addition to all subjects being taught in English, RLA will also introduce students to one or more of the six UN languages in every grade. Research shows that students who learn a second language will achieve greater divergent thinking, creativity, and cognitive development compared to monolingual student.
- **Promote community service:** RLA will prepare students to have a sincere responsibility to give back to the community through clinics and other locations where volunteering is permissible.
- **Offer STEM and hands-on experiences**

## Uniform

All students are required to wear uniforms. Research shows that students perform better academically and socially without distractions of various clothing styles. Students must wear the school shirt, which is green with the school logo. The shirts are sold through the school. The parents can buy the bottoms on their own, which must be khaki colors. The bottoms can be pants, caprice, or short/skorts (knee height or below). The shoes must be supported from the back (No flip-flops).

## School Hours

School begins at **7:45 a.m.** Students need to be dropped off at RLA before school begins, where they will wait in the cafeteria for their teacher to greet them. The teacher will walk them up to their classroom in an orderly fashion. **Parents should drop off their students at the school door, saying any “good-byes” there.** This helps the child develop independence and an understanding that school is their “job” and the classroom duties (putting away their backpack and lunch, etc.) are their own responsibility (not that of the parent).

Monday through Thursday, school is dismissed at **3:15 p.m.** **Fridays** are early release days which dismiss at **12:45 p.m.** If your child walks home with a sibling or will be picked up by an adult, he/she will be walked out of the building by a school representative, who will wait with them until an adult or sibling comes for them. **Please do not come to the classroom directly.**

## Sample Schedule

### Monday – Thursday Schedule

#### K1

7:45 – 8:00	Crew (morning meeting)
8:00 – 8:45	English Language Arts
8:45 – 9:30	English Language Arts
9:30 – 10:15	Foreign Language (Spanish)
10:15 – 11:00	Mathematics
11:00 – 11:45	Mathematics
11:45 – 12:15	LUNCH
12:15 – 1:00	Physical Education
1:00 – 1:45	Science
1:45 – 2:30	Social Studies
2:30 – 3:15	Foreign Language (Arabic)

### Friday Schedule

7:45 – 8:00	Crew (morning meeting)
8:00 – 8:30	English Language Arts
8:30 – 9:00	English Language Arts
9:00 – 9:30	Mathematics
9:30 – 10:15	PE
10:15 – 10:45	Mathematics
10:45 – 11:15	LUNCH
11:15 – 12:00	Science
12:00 – 12:45	Social Studies

## About Expeditionary Learning

We will partner with Expeditionary Learning (EL), one of the Nation’s most innovative and successful school design instructional models. Through EL’s design principles and practices, EL school designers will enable our teachers to implement real life, project-based learning expeditions that promote literacy and integrate curricular content. EL will also deliver on our guiding principle of building communication skills, student character and community/environmental responsibility. Teachers structure learning around real problems, encouraging students to also learn in settings outside the classroom and the school building. Through the partnership with EL and the full range of training and professional development provided by them, RLA teachers will learn how to manage classes containing students with differing skill levels and abilities.

## Foreign Languages

Rising Leaders Academy will also increase the student’s learning opportunities by teaching each student a foreign language (or two), other than English, to learn. RLA will teach one (or two if the budget permits) of the six official UN languages, in which English will be taught as the main language for all subject. The six official languages of the United Nations, used in intergovernmental meetings and documents, are English, French, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish. According to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, “*language and communication*” are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. Children who come to school from non-English backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language”.

Learning a second language has many advantages, which include:

- An increase understanding and compassion for other cultures.

- Students achieving greater divergent thinking, creativity, and cognitive development compared to monolingual children.
- Delay the onset of dementia.

Rising Leaders has chosen to teach both Arabic and Spanish during the school hours.

#### Why Arabic and Spanish?

Learning Arabic and Spanish will improve student learning and serve as competitive advantage to students through exemplary foreign language instruction that enhances cognitive skills, broadens students' perspectives and bridges cultural gaps. Teachers will integrate art and music with both languages. Both languages are challenging and fascinating for students. They will be proud to write a language that is different than English and be able to speak it. Both Arabic and Spanish are among the most critical languages for Americans to learn according to the U.S. government.

## Parent Drop Off and Pick Up for Rising Leaders Academy (Morning and Afternoon)

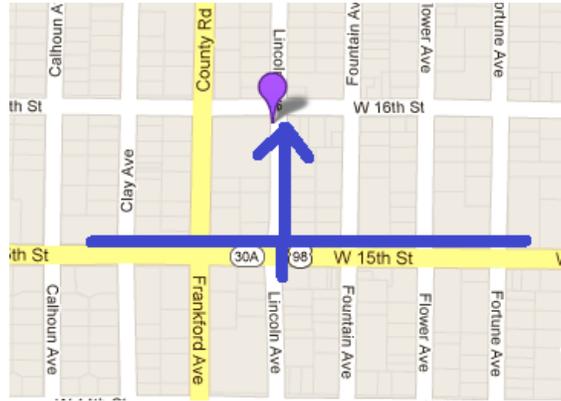
School Hours: Monday - Thursday 7:45 am - 3:15 pm  
Friday 7:45 am - 12:45 pm

Parents drop off: Monday - Friday 7:30 - 7:45 am

Parents pick up: Monday - Thursday at 3:15, Friday at 12:45 pm

Follow the following procedures:

- From 15th street, turn north on Lincoln Avenue. The school is on 1527 Lincoln Avenue.



- Display the Yellow tag with your child's name from the rear view mirror.

- In the morning, the staff will take the students from the car to the cafeteria from 7:30 to 7:45 am. At 7:45 am, the students and staff will all recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Then the teachers will take the students to their classes.

- In the afternoon, the students will sit in the cafeteria where staff will bring the students to the car as the parents reach the front door.

- Parents may also park around the school and walk their children to the front door in the morning and walk to the door to pick them up in the afternoon. - Students who come to school after 7:45 am must go to the office first, where the student will be marked late.

The safety of all of our children is our primary concern. Thank you for following the guidelines and helping us keep our students safe.

## Rising Leaders Academy Parent Contract

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_ have read and agree to abide by the following:

WHEREAS, the undersigned parent(s)/guardian(s) has made a personal decision to enroll my child(ren) at the Rising Leaders Academy in order to provide my child with a unique educational opportunity;

WHEREAS, my desire and decision to enroll my child at the School is based upon my desire to become an active partner in the education of my child; and

WHEREAS, I recognize that the School is a public charter school of choice not entitlement;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing;

1. As a parent of a student at the School, my commitment is to abide by the following rules and regulations:

- A. To recognize and embrace my role as having primary responsibility for the education of my child.
- B. To attend all conferences scheduled with any member of staff.
- C. To participate in the Parent Volunteer Program, including required volunteering 20 hours per family, in a capacity that is sensitive to the needs of the school. In accordance with Florida Statute Section 1002.33(10)(e)5 failure of a parent or parents to uphold or fulfill their responsibilities under that contract would be sufficient grounds for that charter school to deny admissions to the child the following year.
- D. To provide transportation to and from school for my child unless my child is carpooling or going through the Childcare Network. If I am late picking up my child, I understand that I will be charged for after-school care at whatever rate is in existence at that time. If my child is continually tardy, I understand that for the benefit of my child's education, he/she may be required to attend a school that is more accessible for my child.
- E. To purchase uniforms for my child and ensure my child abides by the Dress Code of the School.
- F. To supply a healthy lunch and snack, either brown bagged or purchased from the School board-approved vendor, each school day for my child.
- G. To be responsible for timely payment of any fees accrued to my account at the School.
- H. To encourage my child to abide by the County Public School Code of Conduct.
- I. To bring my child to school by 7:45 am daily. I understand that students who accumulate 10 unexcused absences throughout the year will be dismissed from RLA. Three tardies constitute one absence.
- J. To strive to keep the school environment safe and nurturing for all staff and students. If a child or parent/guardian interferes with the educational environment in a disruptive or disrespectful manner towards any student or staff, the parents will be notified of such behavior. If such behavior continues after such notification, the child may be dismissed from the school. RLA has the right to dismiss a student if the student or parent/guardian has continuous disruptive or disrespectful behavior towards any student or staff

2. In order to enhance my child's academic growth, I agree to do the following:

- A. To read and use information sent home by the school to keep parents informed of the academic topics to be introduced and studied in the classroom.
- B. To provide a suitable time and place within the home for homework.
- C. To assist my child in obtaining and regularly using a library card at the Public Library and allow for thirty minutes of reading daily.
- D. To limit television and video games during the week and allow more time for reading, studying, and family time.
- E. To check my child's homework folder nightly.
- F. To encourage my child to research his or her academic level with deep commitment and enthusiasm for learning.
- G. To ensure your child is in school on time daily at 7:45 am and picked up on time.

I (We) understand that by not fulfilling my contractual obligations to the School and to my child, this may result in my child being suspended or withdrawn at the end of the school year and referred to a regular Public School or a private school of the parent's choice as approved by the Board of Directors.

Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledged by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOOL POLICIES

## **RLA Dress Code Policy**

The parents/guardians have the primary responsibility to ensure the students are following the RLA dress code. Students who are not following the dress code will not be allowed in the classroom. The student will remain in the main office until the parents/guardians are called to bring the student the appropriate school attire.

### Top:

Students must wear the school shirt, which is green with the school logo. The shirts are sold through the school. Students cannot wear a different color shirt under the school shirt, except for solid white, beige, black, or green (same as uniform). The undershirt should be tucked in and should not exceed the bottom of the uniform shirt. Every student should have at least one collared shirt. RLA short and long sleeve tee shirts, sweaters, and hoodies are also available at the RLA for purchase.

### Bottom:

The bottoms must be khaki color that can be pants, caprice, or short/skorts (knee height or below), purchased from anywhere. With shorts or skorts, the stockings or socks must be solid white, black, or beige without any designs or holes. No large pocket style pants, cargo pants, bell bottoms, or overalls of any kind are allowed.

### Shoes:

On Mondays – Thursdays, all students must wear closed toed and closed backed shoes for PE. No flip flops or slippers are allowed. Students may wear sandals on Fridays with back or back straps. Shoes above the ankle must be a solid color. Shoes cannot be flashy or have lights.

### Outwear:

Students may wear jackets to school, but must remove them in class. Inside the classroom, the students must be in their RLA school shirt, which can be a short or long shirt, sweater, or hoodie all sold at RLA. Nothing should be cover the uniform during school hours.

### Hair:

Students cannot come to school with any chemicals or unnatural coloring in the hair. Hair under the shoulder must be tied at all time. No headwear except for simple headbands and bows for girls or religious purposes. No shaved heads with designs.

### Jewelry:

Students cannot wear any flashy or heavy jewelry that might create a hazard to a student's safety. Light, small necklaces and bracelets are permissible. Students may not have any body piercing other than small stud earring in the earlobes for girls, which can be gold or silver. No colorful beaded earrings that hang below the ear lop.

### Make-up:

Students cannot come to school with any make-up on the face.

## **RLA Celebrations/Parties Policy**

The mission of RLA is to provide academic excellence in a nurturing environment. The reason for any celebration or party at RLA must be aligned with the mission and related to learning. RLA values students' and staff's time, and therefore the celebrations/parties are meant for meaning fun that is directly related to the learning and will further enhance the learning and environment, such as the Community Circles, which are celebrations of learning. All other celebrations/parties must have administrative approval.

## **RLA Drop-off/Pick-up Policy**

RLA hours are Mondays – Thursdays from 7:45 – 3:15 and on Fridays from 7:45 – 12:45. Parents can drop the students off from 7:30 – 7:45. A staff member will be outside to bring the students to the cafeteria. Parents/guardians are not permitted inside the facility during drop-off/pick-up. Students must be picked up on time. Students who are not picked up on time will be charged a late-fee. Parents must leave immediately after pick-up and can not remain parked in the school parking. Other than the Childcare Network bus, no cars are to park directly in front of the school on the school property. There are parking spots on the sides of the facility, as well as across the street.

## **Contribution to Professional Learning Community Policy**

Researchers have shown that Professional Learning Communities (PLC) improve the schools for both student and adult learning. RLA is a Professional Learning Community (PLC) where the staff, parents, and students share the school's vision, mission, values, goals, and principles. They reinforce the moral purpose and collective responsibility of learning and following the code of conduct and school policies. At RLA, the staff, parents, and students have a commitment towards the mission of the school and promoting a positive learning climate for all. Every member of the RLA community must contribute to a strong collaborative culture with a focus on learning and high moral character. Any staff, parent, or student working against the PLC at RLA may be dismissed from the school.

## **RLA-Parents Partnership Policy**

RLA and Parents are partners in educating our children. Therefore, RLA has the following expectations for Parents that are aligned with our character education program for the students:

- To talk with your child about school and his/her academic and behavioral goals. (Character Traits: Integrity; Passion; Collaboration)
- To model our character traits for RLA students. (Character Traits: Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Trustworthiness, Citizenship)
- To ensure that your child is at school on time and ready to learn. (Character Traits: Self-Discipline; Integrity)
- To ensure that your child gets 8-10 hours of sleep, minimum. (Character Traits: Self-Discipline; Integrity)
- To ensure that your child eats a healthy breakfast. (Character Traits: Self-Discipline; Integrity)
- To get to know your child's teacher and communicate respectfully on a regular basis. (Character Traits: Collaboration; Passion)
- To engage in the life of the school. (Character Traits: Collaboration; Passion)
- To attend school events: Parent meeting, Community Circles, Expeditionary Learning Gallery Night, Presentation of Learning, etc. (Character Traits: Integrity; Passion; Collaboration)
- To be good stewards of our school and community. (Character Traits: Integrity; Passion; Collaboration; Integrity; Self-Discipline)
- Learn with us. Grow with us. Celebrate with us. (Character Traits: Collaboration; Passion)
- To believe that your child can do more than you ever imagined possible. (Character Trait: Passion) In addition, families are required to volunteer 20 hours per year.

## **RLA Dismissal Policy**

All parents will receive a copy of the Bay District Schools Code of Conduct, as well as the RLA Parent/Student Handbook, with the RLA policies. RLA follows all the Bay District Code of Conduct policies and will take action in accordance to the Bay District Schools policies. In addition, all parents must sign the Parent Contract form, which states the expectations and policies for being an RLA member. RLA will strive to keep the school environment safe and nurturing for all staff and students. If a child or parent/guardian interferes with the educational environment in a disruptive or disrespectful manner towards any student or staff, the parents will be notified of such behavior. If such behavior continues after such notification, the child may be dismissed from the school. RLA has the right to dismiss a student if the student or parent/guardian has continuous disruptive or disrespectful behavior towards any student or staff. The parent will receive a dismissal letter and the student will be dropped from all RLA program and not permitted to return back to school. The student's spot will be filled with another student on the waiting list. This action is to preserve the positive energy at RLA.

## **RLA Donation Policy**

All donations to RLA or individual classes must be given to the RLA office. The donor will be given a donation letter. If the donation is for a specific class or expedition, the office will then forward the donation to the specific class. All donations must be recorded and then forwarded to the accountant.

## **RLA Student Lunch Policy**

This year, we will be partnering with Dixi Craft, CEO of Ginge'e'z Enterprises, LLC, who will cater and prepare the kids fresh lunches. She will be onsite daily. This will insure everything is fresh/hot and of great quality. This also helps us offer additional options that are much healthier. Dixi holds a food managers license and is very passionate about delivering quality food. Students may choose to bring their own lunch, but it must be a healthy meal. Students are not allowed to bring soft drink, such as Coke. For safety purposes, students are not permitted to use the microwave, nor should a staff member microwave the meals for the students.

## **RLA Absences Policy**

Parents are expected to notify the school the day of the absence. Parents must provide school personnel with accurate telephone contact numbers (home, cell, and work for parents or legal guardians) and ensure the number(s) are correct if there is a change during the school year. As an Expeditionary Learning School, with foreign languages, RLA provides students with an advanced curriculum, which contains a larger amount information than other schools. Students who are absent frequently miss this information and have difficulty making up all the subject and activities. Therefore, students who accumulate 10 unexcused absences throughout the year will be dismissed from RLA. RLA must receive a written notice (i.e: Doctor's Note) to excuse an absence.

An excused absence includes:

- illness;
- medical or dental appointments (doctor's statement may be required);
- automobile accident;
- deaths or funerals;
- emergency situations acceptable to the Principal or designee;
- required court appearance (subpoena required);
- established religion observance;
- severe weather

## **RLA Tardy/Early Pick-Up Policy**

A student is tardy when the student arrives after the beginning of the school day or when he/she is not in his/her assigned seat or station right after the Pledge of Allegiance. A student's tardiness shall be excused when the reason given is acceptable to the principal or teacher. In the event students do arrive late, the office will issue excused tardies for physician/dentist appointments with a doctor's note. All other tardies are unexcused. Your child should attend school every day on time. Teachers cannot provide an effective instructional program for children who are frequently absent or tardy. Students who arrive tardy for class disrupt the other students who are engaged in learning. Three tardies constitute one absence. If a student has ten unexcused absences, they may be dismissed from the school and/or retention. Therefore, excessive tardies can cause expulsion from school. Early pick-up is when the student is picked up before the end of the school day. An unexcused early pickup counts like a tardy

**Religious Expression Bill (SB 436) - Students in Florida's public schools cannot be punished for including religious materials in their coursework, and that they may pray at school during non-course time. It further states that school employees also may participate voluntarily in religious activities that are initiated by students before or after the school day.**