

Richland Parish School System Student Handbook 2009-2010

I. Introduction

Richland Parish School System Mission Statement

The mission of the Richland Parish School System is to increase the academic achievement and workforce skills of all students while preparing them to be responsible and productive citizens through focused teamwork among educators, parents, community members, and students.

Belief and Assumption Statements

The Richland Parish School System and members of the community believe that each child is an individual of great worth and is entitled to develop to his/her fullest potential. Achieving respect for self, for others, and for the values inherent in a democracy is an essential ingredient in the development of the individual. Enthusiasm for life, good health, and a love of learning should be fostered in a safe, secure, stimulating environment. The Richland Parish School Board and the community share the responsibility for providing:

1. An opportunity for each student to progress academically and to achieve workforce skills.
2. A chance for each child to use technology to acquire and share information in an ethical manner.
3. Experiences that will encourage the development of responsibility and respect among all students to foster their citizenship at home, in school, and in the community.
4. Opportunities for cooperation and teamwork among educators, parents, community members, and students in meeting the school system's goals and objectives.

Goals

Richland Parish Schools will:

1. Teach the skills and content required for grade-level competency in all subjects while addressing the individual needs of all students.
2. Provide learning experiences that prepare students to become productive citizens and active community members.
3. Provide safe, secure environments on each school campus.
4. Through focused teamwork, encourage participation and involvement of parents and other community members in the educational programs of the parish.

Non-discrimination Statement

The Richland Parish School System adheres to the equal opportunity provisions of federal civil rights laws and regulations that are applicable to this agency. Therefore, no one will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972); disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) in attaining educational goals and objectives and in the administration of personnel policies and procedures. Any one with questions regarding this policy may contact the Richland Parish School Board at 728-5964, 411 Foster Street, Rayville, Louisiana 71269.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

All Richland Parish high schools are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The Richland Parish School System has demonstrated a commitment to excellence that meets or exceeds State standards.

Responsibilities of the Principal

Principals are the instructional leaders of the school. Principal's responsibilities include:

1. Maintaining a vision that is communicated to students, employees, and parents/guardians for school improvement.
2. Ensuring that all classes are covered if a teacher is absent.
3. Managing fiscal resources in a responsible manner.
4. Serving as the building administrator.
5. Coordinating and ensuring supervision at all extracurricular or after school activities.
6. Being available for parent/guardian conferences.
7. Identifying ways to include parents/guardians and community representatives in the school in a productive manner.

Remember: As goes the principal, so goes the school.

Responsibilities of the Teacher

Teachers have the responsibility of creating an environment that promotes student involvement in the learning process. They can not do this without the cooperation of students and their parents/guardians. Below are the responsibilities of teachers:

1. Plan lessons that address student achievement.
2. Follow classroom management policy and procedures set forth in the school's teacher handbook and *The Richland Parish Policy Manual*. Students are not to be placed in the hallway for extended times due to behavioral problems. On minor infractions, write the office referral prior to sending the student out of class.
3. In a timely manner, usually defined as – days after the event, inform parents when their child is violating school policies or not completing work. This may be communicated through a letter or a telephone call.
4. Speak to students and parents in a professional manner. Teachers must model the appropriate behavior that we want our students to exhibit.
5. Maintain a grade book that accurately reflects grades that are assigned on Progress Reports or Report Cards.
6. To be available for parent/guardian conferences during planning periods or before or after school at a time that is convenient for the parent/guardian and the teacher. The principal or counselor may be present during conferences.
7. Complete activities identified on the School Improvement Plan.

Student Expectations

The Richland Parish School System has the following expectations of all of its students:

1. To be on time. Students are required to have 63,720 instructional minutes each year.
2. Come to school with the attitude of receiving an education. Students should not have any other agenda.
3. Complete classroom and homework assignments and turn these in to the teacher at the designated time.
4. Observe policies set forth in the student handbook and *The Richland Parish Policy Manual*.

5. Remain in class the entire class period or school day unless you are ill. There are ample opportunities for students to go to the restroom outside of class. Any medical issues will be addressed by the administration when proper medical information is submitted.
6. Respect self and others.
7. Keep head up and pay attention in class. Do not sleep in class.
8. Do not harm another student or any school employee.
9. Do not use, possess, or distribute alcohol or other illegal drugs.
10. Do not talk in class to friends about issues other than the topic of study. Do not pass notes.
11. On the school bus, sit in assigned seat. Remain seated while riding and only stand up at his/her stop.
12. Report any harassment immediately to (a) teacher or (b) principal. If the student does not want this to be a verbal conference, write the information down and give to one of the above individuals on the day that the harassment occurs.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

The support of student learning from parents/guardians is crucial to a student's success. Some identified responsibilities include:

1. Go over the school's handbook with your child to ensure that he/she is well aware that you support these rules. Talking negatively about teachers, principals, and school policies in front of and to students only leads to students becoming confused, frustrated, and uncooperative in school.
2. Ensure that your child is at home at an early hour on school nights and gets plenty of rest.
3. Ensure that the school has current telephone numbers and addresses.
4. Send your child to the school where he or she is zoned to attend unless you have permission from the school board at the beginning of the school year to attend another school based on reasons outlined in the 1976 court decree.
5. Continually monitor your child's behavior, completion of homework, and dress.
6. Do not support your child if he or she violates a rule. Schedule a conference to discuss the issue with the person who identified the violation as he/she should have the pertinent information.
7. Speak to teachers, principals, and school employees in a tone and with words that you would want used when being addressed. Persons who use profanity or attempt to intimidate school employees or students will be asked to leave the campus, and may be subject to arrest.
8. Follow the protocol included in this handbook to handle concerns regarding your child.

Scheduling Conferences with Teachers, Principals, and the Superintendent

When you have a concern, you are encouraged to contact the administration at the school. We request that you phone the school to schedule a conference. Please identify times that are convenient for you. The same consideration should be extended to the teacher and the principal. A mutual time is to be agreed upon. While making the initial telephone call, state the nature of your concern. Please keep in mind that teachers are charged with teaching students during specified times. Also, many teachers have children for whom they must make arrangements before and after the school day.

Principals are not always available to see visitors who come to the school. As part of their duties, principals must observe and evaluate employees at a specific time. Principals must also

attend meetings at the Central Office. Additionally, many principals also have family responsibilities. If we are to have successful partnerships, we must respect each other. The Superintendent has responsibilities at the local and state level. She is open to meeting with individuals who have followed the Richland Parish protocol for addressing concerns. There are over 500 employees and 3,500 students in our system. There are laws that govern the amount and the type of information that can be shared with the public related to students and employees of the system. Among the topics that fall in this category, please be aware that she can not legally discuss an employee's credentials, make public any disciplinary action against an employee, or discuss a student with anyone who is not the legal guardian unless the legal guardian gives permission in writing. (See the definition of FERPA on page 8.)

Services

It is not easy to rear children in these times. However, there are many supportive agencies that are willing to assist parents and guardians with concerns/issues regarding the children in their care. Some of these include:

1. School Building Level Committee (SBLC) is a committee at each school composed of knowledgeable educators who meet as needed to discuss academic, behavioral, or medical concerns of students. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend the meeting pertaining to their child. If you need assistance from this committee, contact your school principal;
2. Families in Need of Services (FINS) is a very helpful service with students who continually violate school and home expectations;
3. Richland Parish has trained psychologists and school counselors who can assist teachers and parents/guardians in developing a behavior management plan for students who are continually committing school violations;
4. We are fortunate to have many faith-based groups with adult male and female representatives who are willing to ensure that our students are engaged in wholesome activities instead of illegal activities;
5. Richland Parish School Truancy Officer/Community Liaison Officer is an individual who has received training in working with students who choose not to attend school or who do not follow school policies. He also works with students to find programs/activities that will assist them in changing their behavior and ensuring that they become productive citizens. He reports directly to the Superintendent; and
6. Richland Parish has a Parental Involvement Supervisor. She can be reached by calling 728-5964.

II. 2009-2010 School Year Calendar

SCHOOL CALENDAR - 2009-2010

General Events

Date	Event	Day
August 11, 2009	School Opens – All personnel report	Tuesday
August 13, 2009	First day for Students	Thursday
May 6, 2010	Last Day for Seniors	Thursday

May 20, 2010 Last Day for Students Thursday
 May 21, 2010 Regular School Year Ends Friday
 # of Instructional Minutes to place in schedule: 377

Non-student Days

Date	Event	# of days
August 11-12, 2009	Staff Development/All employees	2
October 2, 2009	Parent Teacher Conference Day	1
October 19, 2009	Staff Development/All employees	1
January 4, 2010	Staff Development/All employees	1
March 5, 2010	Parent Teacher Conference Day	1
May 21, 2010	Staff Development/End of School /All employees	1
	Total # of days	7

(Oct. 2 and Mar. 5 - Parent Teacher Conference Days- 9 month custodians, lunchroom technicians, paraprofessionals, and bus drivers do not work)

Holidays Non-Teaching Days

Date	Holiday
September 7, 2009	Labor Day
November 23-27, 2009	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 21, 2009-January 1, 2010	Christmas/New Year's Holidays
January 18, 2010	Martin L. King Holiday
February 5, 2010	Stockshow Day
February 15, 2010	Presidents' Day
April 2-5, 2010	Easter Holidays
April 26-30, 2010	Spring Break
Spring iLEAP, LEAP, GEE testing dates - April 12-16, 2010	

Marking Periods

Marking Periods	Student Days	Report Card Distribution
August 13, 2009 - September 24, 2009	30	October 2, 2009
September 25, 2009 - November 5, 2009	28	November 11, 2009
November 6, 2009 - January 7, 2010	29	January 13, 2010
January 8, 2010 - February 23, 2010	30	March 5, 2010
February 24, 2010 - April 7, 2010	28	April 16, 2010
April 8, 2010 - May 20, 2010	26	May 20, 2010

Approved April 7, 2009.

Student Attendance Days ----- 171 Days
 Teacher Attendance Days ----- 180 Days