RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT POLICY

BOARD APPROVED DECEMBER 4, 2019

PURPOSE

To establish procedures which govern the enrollment process (including recruitment, eligibility and preference for enrollment; the application process; the lottery; enrollment offers; and waitlists) thus ensuring access, equity, and transparency in the enrollment process.

OVERVIEW

River Valley Charter School (RVCS), a Massachusetts Commonwealth charter school, is a regional school enrolling grade K-8 students primarily from the following four districts: Amesbury, Newburyport, Pentucket, and Triton.. The school accepts applications for enrollment for grades K-8 during its annual enrollment period.

The school adheres to regulations regarding Student Recruitment, Enrollment, and Retention as set forth in Massachusetts 603 CMR 1.05¹. A Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) approved Recruitment and Retention Plan guides the school's recruitment and retention efforts. The Plan includes deliberate, specific strategies that RVCS will use to attract, enroll, and retain a student population that is demographically comparable to similar grades in the districts from which RVCS enrolls its students. Definitions related to the enrollment process are included at the end of this policy.

The River Valley Charter School enrollment process is not integrated with that of any of its sending districts. Enrollment is conducted via public lottery for which a parent/legal guardian must submit an application and supporting enrollment materials (proof of residency and a copy of the birth certificate for kindergarten applicants) prior to the application deadline. Preference for admission is given to siblings of attending students and residents of the four districts in the school's chartered region: Amesbury, Newburyport, Pentucket, and Triton (which includes the eight towns of Amesbury, Groveland, Merrimac, Newbury, Newburyport, Rowley, Salisbury, and West Newbury). River Valley Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed or religion, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language, or prior academic achievement.

Every year the school will determine the number of openings available for admission at each grade level; the optimal number is 32. Each year approximately 32 students will be offered enrollment at the kindergarten level. Other grade levels will be offered admission as openings become available such that the school maintains its chartered capacity of 288 students. At all times, the school will follow the regulations governing enrollment preference and backfilling.

RECRUITMENT

Annually, RVCS will publicly post the deadline for submitting applications as well as the date, time, and location of the public lottery on its website and in the local newspaper. The information will be publicized at least one month in advance of the deadlines. Extensive recruitment strategies are described in the school's annual Recruitment and Retention Plan but at a minimum, every recruitment period will begin with advertisements in the local newspaper, flyer distribution to local preschools, and notice on the school's website.

Enrollment materials will be made available to all interested parties and will include an application, background information about RVCS including the availability of services, and notification of timelines and deadlines. All

¹ http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr1.html?section=05

recruitment and application material will include written notification that students with diverse learning needs have the right to attend RVCS and to receive accommodations and support services, including students who have disabilities, require special education, or are English language learners. All recruitment and application materials will also contain a statement indicating that should a family need materials interpreted or translated into a language other than English; such materials will be made available.

The official enrollment period will begin every year on the first school day after the New Year and end at the time of the lottery. The enrollment period will last for a minimum of one month. The lottery will be held on the Tuesday following the February school vacation week. Enrollment Information Sessions will be held annually during the months of January and February and will include a morning, an evening, and a weekend option. While attendance is not required at an Information Session, they are offered prior to the lottery to provide information on Massachusetts charter schools, the Montessori philosophy, the mission of RVCS, and the enrollment process.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ENROLLMENT

Applicants must be a resident of Massachusetts at the time of application and during their entire tenure at RVCS. Currently attending students maintain their enrollment status regardless if they move out of the chartered region so long as they remain residents of Massachusetts. All applications must be accompanied by proof of residency (except in the case of homeless students). Kindergarten applications must be accompanied by a copy of the child's birth certificate as well. Children who do not have a birth certificate (as in the case of some adoptions) may submit a doctor's note indicating student age or provide other legal documentation. Proof of residency can be offered in the form of a utility bill (excluding water or cell phone bills), a rental, lease or Section 8 agreement, a landlord affidavit, a deed or mortgage payment (dated within the past 60 days), a real estate tax statement (dated within the last year), a W2 form (dated within the year), a payroll stub (dated within the past 60 days), or a letter from an approved governmental agency (such as the Department of Revenue, Children and Family Services, Transitional Assistance, Youth Services, or Social Security). Students who do not live in Massachusetts will be informed that they are not eligible for admission.

Students seeking enrollment in the Kindergarten program (Kinderhaus) must be five years old on or before September 1 for the year in which they are applying. Student age will be verified via the birth certificate during the application process. Applications for grades 1-8 will be placed in the lottery based on the last grade successfully completed. Parents/guardians are required to keep RVCS informed of residency and/or grade changes (as might occur if a student is retained or if the family moves). If the student's grade level does not correspond to the opening, the enrollment offer will be void and the student must reapply for the correct grade the following year.

Should an applicant be placed on the waitlist and an offer of admission be made 60 days after the lottery, RVCS may request re-submission of proof of residency before confirming the admission offer. If proof of residency cannot be confirmed, the enrollment offer will be void. Although RVCS is a regional charter school enrolling students from Amesbury, Newburyport, and the six towns in the Pentucket and Triton districts, transportation services are only made available to residents of Newburyport.

River Valley Charter School does not require potential students or their families to attend interviews or informational meetings as a condition of enrollment, nor does the school administer tests to potential applicants or predicate enrollment on results from any test of ability or achievement. Further, RVCS does not charge an application fee, nor use financial incentives to recruit students, nor does the school request financial donations or commitments of volunteer time as part of the enrollment process.

Sibling Preference

Massachusetts charter school legislation requires preference be given to siblings (both residents and non-residents of the chartered region) of students currently enrolled and attending the school. Siblings are defined as those children who share a biological or legal parent/guardian (regardless of domicile) or are siblings of students who are due to graduate at the end of the school year in which the lottery is held. Children living in the same household

without a common biological or legal parent/guardian are not considered siblings; nor are foster children, siblings of alumni, or siblings of accepted students who are not yet attending the school. Sibling status is verified by comparing information in the students' birth certificates (or other legal documentation). An attending student is one that is currently participating in the educational program at the school.

Applicants are moved to the sibling section of the waitlist when the applicant officially becomes a sibling, i.e., when the applicant's sibling attends class/school at RVCS for the first time. In the event that applicants officially become siblings at the same time, such as occurs on the first day of a new school year, the sibling applicants will be arranged on the waitlist based on their rank order from the lottery. Siblings on the waitlist maintain their sibling status as long as there is a sibling attending the school. Siblings of graduating 8th grade students maintain sibling status until the day following the last day of the schoolyear.

APPLICATIONS

Applications for enrollment are accepted year-round for grade K-8 students and can be submitted either in person, via postal mail, or online. All required enrollment materials must be **received** by the stated deadline to be entered in the lottery. The application deadline will be advertised in all school enrollment materials.

River Valley Charter School is not responsible for applications or supporting documentation that are not received by the deadline or are lost in the mail. Application deadlines and enrollment lotteries for student admission will not occur prior to January 1st of each year, and the principal enrollment process shall be completed by March 15th of each year. In most cases, the application deadline and public enrollment lottery will be the Tuesday and Thursday following February vacation week, respectively.

Applications are accepted up to 4:00 p.m. on the date of the established deadline, which can be found at www.rivervalleycharter.org. Should there be an RVCS snow day or a state-mandated emergency closing, the application deadline will be extended to 4:00 p.m. the following school day and the lottery will occur as scheduled. Additional school closures will push the entire process forward by one school day. A delayed opening will have no impact on the process.

Complete applications include: the enrollment application, proof of residency and a copy of the child's birth certificate or an equivalent legal document (for kindergarten applicants). Applications need be submitted by only one parent/guardian unless a court order indicates otherwise. All information requested in the application and during the enrollment process, such as language spoken at home or race/ethnicity, is not intended, and will not be used to discriminate. Applications do not require a student's social security number.

River Valley Charter School will confirm when it has received a complete application package. If the application package is not complete, the parent/guardian will be notified by email, thus providing parents/guardians with an opportunity to supply the missing information. If a complete application is not received by the deadline specified, the application will be considered incomplete and not entered in the lottery. Enrollment materials received for children that do not meet the designated age requirement for kindergarten will not be entered in the lottery and the applicant's parent/guardian will be notified.

Application information is maintained in a database and includes the date the application was submitted, the grade level sought, whether the applicant is a sibling of a currently attending student, and student residency. (Inclusion of sibling and residential status is used to help with administrative functions and has no bearing on the order in which a student is ranked in the lottery process.) A unique application number is assigned to each application and will be emailed to the address given on the application. Parents may use this identification number to track information about their child's position in the lottery.

Applicants who apply for admission and are not offered a spot will receive an email from the school during the following enrollment period, reminding the parent/guardian to submit an application in the next lottery if they

continue to be interested in RVCS. Information may be pre-filled on the application but the parent will be required to verify the information and submit a new application every year.

Students who are currently enrolled and who are returning to RVCS need not reapply.

LOTTERY

Each year, RVCS will determine the number of spaces available in each grade. Whenever there are fewer spaces than eligible applications, students shall be accepted for admission by a lottery process. The lottery will be held at the end of the enrollment period and is a random selection process that results in a completely unbiased ranking of applicants within each grade. The lottery will be conducted at River Valley Charter School, 2 Perry Way, Newburyport, MA 01950, with an unbiased third party not affiliated with RVCS certifying that the process is fair and selection is random. Parents/guardians are not required to attend the lottery to be considered for admission but are welcome should they wish to attend. At least one week's notice is given prior to every enrollment lottery.

All eligible applicants will be entered into one lottery. The lottery consists of random shuffling of the unique application numbers. The applicants are then put into sequential order to establish the original random rank order. After this random rank order has been established, preferences for admission (siblings, then residents, then non-residents) will be applied. By conducting one lottery in which siblings, residents, and non-residents are included, the integrity of order is maintained should a non-resident student become a resident and vice versa, or a non-sibling become a sibling or vice versa. Offers of admission will be made based on the number of seats available. Students not offered admission during the lottery shall be placed on a waitlist in the order the names were selected, while taking into account sibling and resident preference (both of which may change over time). The lottery process described above will occur for each grade. If RVCS determines that no seats are available for a specific grade, the lottery will determine the initial waitlist order for that grade.

If the principal enrollment process fails to produce an adequate number of enrolled students and no waiting list exists, the enrollment process may be repeated. The previously described enrollment process will be followed. Similarly, should spaces become available during the school year in grades in which there are no waitlisted students, RVCS may repeat the enrollment process to fill openings to meet the requirements of GL Chapter 70, Section 89(n) and 603 CMR 1.05(8)

ENROLLMENT PREFERENCE

Students not offered admission during the lottery will form the waitlist in the order the names were selected. RVCS will use the waitlist to fill openings while taking into consideration preferences for admission, which may change over time. It is important for families to update the school if any of their information changes as it can affect the applicant's position on the waitlist. RVCS will offer admission to the grades for which there are openings, abiding by the following priority sequence of preference at the time the offer is made:

- siblings of currently attending students, regardless of residency (the sibling section),
- non-siblings from the school's chartered region (the general section), and
- nonresidents of the school's chartered region who are residents of other Massachusetts cities and towns (the non-resident section).

ENROLLMENT OFFERS

Offers of admission will be made via phone or email and are valid for five school days during the school year and for five business days during the summer. If a parent/guardian does not respond to the offer within the time frame, the applicant's name will be removed from the waitlist.

Students who are offered admission and accept the offer of admission but do not attend school within the first ten days of their anticipated start date (e.g., the first day of school), in accordance with the school's attendance policy, will forgo their spot.

Those students for whom enrollment in the charter school would cause the sending district to exceed their tuition cap will not be offered admission but will remain on the waiting list. If those students are siblings of students currently in attendance at the school, and the school has not admitted other students prior to admitting the sibling, the sibling may be offered admission and the State may pay the child's tuition, subject to appropriation. No student will be admitted ahead of other eligible students who were previously placed on a waitlist during a prior enrollment process except in cases where enrollment preferences changes as described below.

ENROLLMENT CRITERIA

Whenever there is an opening in grades K-4, RVCS will backfill the position with a student from the waitlist of the same grade as the withdrawal, through February 15th of the school year. Whenever there are **openings in grades K-4** *after* **February 15th** RVCS will fill the opening with a student in the same cohort at the start of the next school year. For example, if a 3rd grader withdraws on March 1st, the opening will be filled with a 4th grade at the start of the next school year.

Whenever there is an opening in grades 5-8 through February 15th, RVCS will only fill the position with a student from the waitlist taking into consideration the following: overall school enrollment, ideal cohort size (32 students), academic programming, staffing, and/or financial considerations. Openings after February 15th will be filled the following year in the same cohort, except for grade 8.

WAITLISTS

Accurate waitlists will include the students' first, middle and last names, date of birth, home address including the city/town of residence, telephone numbers, email addresses and the grade level sought and will remain in effect until February 15th. Names will be placed on the waitlist in the order the names were selected and reflect preference for siblings and residents. Siblings of newly enrolled and attending students who are on the general waitlist are flagged for sibling preference as soon as the sibling attends school. Students that move to the sibling list at the same time (e.g., when multiple students with siblings attend school on the first day of the new school year are ranked in the order in which they were drawn in the lottery).

Any parent/legal guardian who withdraws their child or declines an offer of admission is asked to provide written documentation of declination to the school but verbal declinations will be documented and accepted as well. Declinations of an offer or withdrawals are binding and parents/guardians may not seek recourse to have their child re-enrolled.

Student Information Requirements

River Valley Charter School will adhere to regulations regarding the disclosure of student information and will provide an opportunity for parents/guardians to consent or deny disclosure of student information. Upon request, the school will provide the names and addresses of students to a third-party mail house for mailings unless the parent requests that the school withhold their child's information.

Definitions

Application: The primary document/form used to make a request for admission to the school. The application includes student's full name, place of residency, address, date of birth, grade for which the student is applying and parent/guardian contact information, and an inquiry as to how the applicant learned about River Valley. The school's DESE approved Application for Admission is attached.

Applicant: Someone who formally applies for admission to the school.

Siblings: Children who share a common biological or legal guardian (as in through adoption), as opposed to children who live in the same household but do not share a common biological or legal guardian. Charter schools may require proof of sibling status.

Receive Sibling Preference ⁱ	Do Not Receive Sibling Preference
Children who live in different households but share a common biological or legal parent	• Children who live in the same household but do not share a common biological or legal parent
Siblings of students who are due to graduate at the end of the school year in which the lottery is held	• Foster children without a common biological or legal parent
• If a student moves out of the local city or town but remains enrolled, that student's siblings have preference in admission even though they are nonresidents at the	 Step-siblings without a common or biological or legal parent
time of application	• Siblings of alumni/ae
	• Siblings of applicants who have been accepted for admission but are not yet attending (including twins)

Residents: Students who live in the city in which the school is located or who live in any of the districts in the school's chartered region at the time of lottery as well as at the time an offer of admission is made. Residency is determined by where the child actually lives, irrespective of guardianship, custody, and domicile. A student who lives for part of the time in the charter school's preference region is given preference. Students must be residents of the relevant city/town at the time of application and at the time of the enrollment offer. River Valley will request confirmation of residency for any offer that is made more than 60 days after the lottery.

Non-residents: Students who live in Massachusetts but outside the chartered region. All applicants *must* be residents of Massachusetts at the time of lottery in order to apply for admission and to attend River Valley Charter School.

Admitted: Students whose parents or legal guardians have accepted an offer of admission to the school.

Currently Attending: A student who is currently participating in classes at the school.

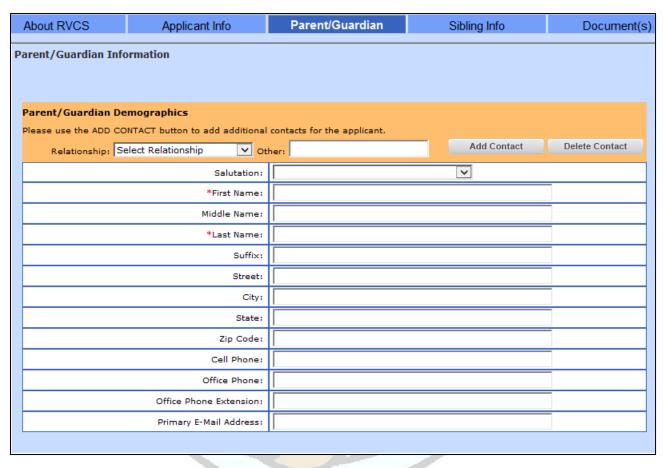
Enrolled: A student is considered to be enrolled in a charter school if a written offer of admission is made and a written acceptance is received. After the student is enrolled, the school may determine whether the student needs to be placed in a grade other than the one for which he/she applied. If this is the case, the charter school must provide a space in the appropriate grade.

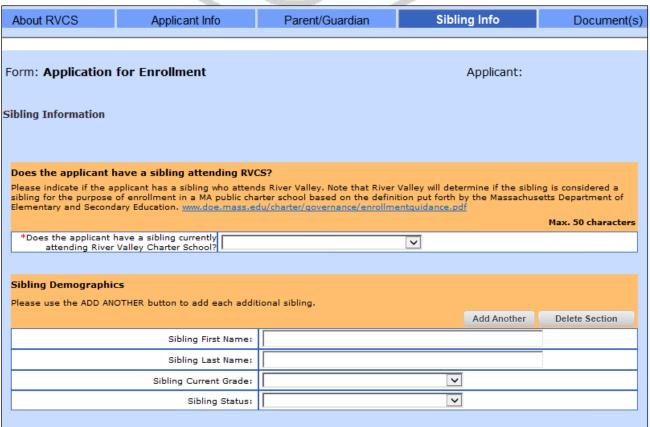
Proof of Residency: includes any of the following: a rental or lease agreement, bill, or receipt; a utility bill; a copy of the custodial adult's driver's license; a mortgage statement; or real estate tax statement. If a family is homeless or living with someone, they are not required to provide proof of residency. Homeless students receive residency preference based on the location of their current or temporary residence.

Attachment A: Online Application for Enrollment (screenshots)

About RVCS	Applicant Info	Parent/Guardian	Sibling Info	Document(s)
Forms Application	for Engellment		Applicants	
Form: Application	for Enrollment		Applicant:	
4:4 6 6.	+ BVCC3			
How did you hear abo	out RVCS?			
	Charter School! We are excited t			
application process an ea heard about River Valley	ssy one. Before you get started, Charter School.	could you please help us with o	ur outreach and marketing et	forts by sharing how you
			Add Another	Delete Section
Sou	rce of knowledge about RVCS:			
About RVCS	Applicant Info	Parent/Guardian	Sibling Info	Document(s
71000171100		r anome oran alam	Cibining in its	Dood.mom(o
Demographics				
gp				Max. 50 characters
	Street			
	nysical location; not a PO Box):	I.		
	town from the pull-down list or city name in the "other" field.		∨ Other:	
	*State			
(1	only MA residents are eligible):	I.		
	Zip Code:			
/i	*Home Phone			
(or primary p	parent/guardian's cell number):	'		
	Gender:		<u> </u>	
	Date of Birth:	MMM V DD V YYYY V		
	City of Birth:			
	City of Birth:			
	State of Birth:			
	Country of Birth:			
	Country or bittin			
	Nickname:			
	Current Grade:		<u> </u>	
	Current School:			

^{*} items with a red asterisk(*) are mandatory fields.





About RVCS	Applicant Info	Parent/Guardian	Sibling Info	Document(s)
Form: Application	for Enrollment		Applicant:	
Required Document(s) You may upload document(s) here, drop them off at the school, send them via postal mail or fax them to (978) 465-0119.				
Required Document	(s)			
landlord affidavit, estate tax statemen	Proof of Residency er bill, rental/lease agreement, deed, mortgage payment, real it, W2, payroll stub, letter from approved government agency):			Browse
	Birth Certificate cumentation of the child's age) eking kindergarten admission:			Browse

Applicant Info	Parent/Guardian	Sibling Info	Document(s)	Signature	
Form: Application	for Enrollment		Applicant:		
Acknowledgement an	Acknowledgement and Signature				
River Valley Charter School will destroy the file associated with this application three years after it was submitted. You have a right to request a copy of the information in the file before it is destroyed. To do so, please contact the school.					
Please be advised that River Valley Charter School complies with all applicable Commonwealth and Federal Law(s) having to do with non-discrimination and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed or religion, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special needs, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievment in its educational programs or activities, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151B and 151C, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, M.G.L. c76,S5, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, American with Disabilities Act, and regulations promulgated thereunder, 34 C.F.R. Part 100 (Title VI), Part 106 (Title IX) and Part 104 (Section 504).					
Acknowledgement					
	ll information submitted in this pplication is true and accurate.	○ Yes			

PAPER APPLICATION FOR ENROLLMENT LOTTERY

Student Information	Family Information			
Today's Date:	Primary Parent/Guardian Name:			
Student's Last Name:				
	Relationship to Child	Mother	Father Other	
Student's Middle Name (enter NMN if there is none):	Address (if different):	-1175		
Student's First Name:		ハリク	1	
Home Address:	Primary Guardian's Email:		7	
		4		
	Cell Number:	Work I	Number:	_
	Och Namber.	Work	varibor.	
Home Phone:	(Optional) Second Parent	t/Guardian's N	ame:	
		2		
Gender: Male Female Non-binary	Relationship to Child	Mother	Father Other	
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy):	Address (if different):	-		
		_	7	
City/State of Birth:		00		
	Second Guardian's Email:			
Grade applying for:				
K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Cell Number:	Work I	Number:	
Name and Town of Student's Current School (optional):				
Sibling Information				
If you have other children attending or applying* to (*A separate application is requ			piete the following:	
First and Last Name:	First and Last Name:	<u>.g</u>		
Applicative Very No.	Anglein av Ve		in an Man Na	_
Applying: Yes No Attending: Yes No Current Grade:	Applying: Yes No Grade:		ing: Yes No tt Grade:	
Please use other side of this application form i	<mark>f you need to pr</mark> ovide additio	onal sibling info	rmation.	_

Offers of admission are made by email and/or by telephone. Please keep your contact information up to date.

Please return the completed application, a copy of your child's birth certificate (for kindergarten applicants), and proof of residency to River Valley Charter School, 2 Perry Way, Newburyport, MA 01950.

		- 4	7
Ok to share directory information wit	th third parties?	Yes N	lo .

River Valley Charter School complies with all applicable Commonwealth and Federal Law having to do with non-discrimination and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion or creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement in its educational programs or activities pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151B and 151C, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; M.G.L. c76,s5, Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Americans with Disabilities Act, and regulations promulgated thereunder, 34 C.F.R. Part 100 (Title VI), Part 106 (Title IX) and Part 104 (Section 504).

Comuníquese con nosotros al (978) 465-0065 si necesita esta política o cualquier otra información de inscripción traducida o interpretada en un idioma que no sea el inglés

Attachment B: ACCEPT/DECLINE ENROLLMENT RESPONSE FORM

Please return this form to the school via email, fax, postal mail, or in person.

☐ We accept enrollment for our child,	, who will be
entering River Valley Charter School in the 20XX-20XX	
registration and medical records prior to our child attendi	· ·
	V. 3
(parent or guardian signature)	(date)
Child's Formal Name:	Nickname:
	775
Child's Legal Address:	PPT
(street, city, zip)	753
Custody: legally shared by both parents legally and physical	ly by one parent/guardianother* *please explain on reverse side
M	please explain on reverse state
Parent/Guardian(s)' Name(s):	
Telephone Number(s):(home)	(cell, if different)
(nome)	(ceii, ij uijjereni)
Preferred Email Address for School Communications:	
☐ Regrettably, we will not be accepting enrollment for or	ar child,
Please feel free to provide us with insight regarding yo	
side so that we may work to continuously imp <mark>rove our p</mark>	<mark>orogram.</mark>

River Valley Charter School complies with all applicable Commonwealth and Federal law having to do with non-discrimination and does not discriminate on basis of race, color, national origin, religion or creed, sex, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement in its educational programs.



Date of Board Approval of the Enrollment Policy: December 4, 2019