

# **Tomorrow River Virtual Charter School**

## **SCHOOL AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

Enrollment in the Tomorrow River Virtual Charter School (TRVCS) is a choice to participate in a specific approach to education that requires a strong working partnership between the school and every family member.

As family members, we agree to the following:

The school will:

- Provide a safe and positive learning environment and program guided by the principles of Public Waldorf Education.
- Treat family members and students respectfully.
- Maintain regular ongoing communication with families.
- Inform family members of the progress and activities.
- Provide opportunities for family and community education throughout the year.
- Encourage open and direct communication, with opportunities for parents to provide feedback and input.

Family members will agree to the following:

- Provide a home life for their children that supports the efforts and approach of the school, including a rhythmic daily schedule, adequate sleep, a healthy diet, restricting electronic media exposure, and minimizing stressful circumstances in daily life.
- Read the TRCCS Electronic Media Concerns and Guidelines and make the necessary changes to be in alignment with the school and other families in this mutual effort.
- Read the TRVCS Student Handbook and follow the school's policies, procedures, and practices.
- Read the school Newsletter to stay informed and respond as needed.
- Learn about Waldorf education to understand and be able to support the approach.
- Ensure regular and punctual daily participation by their children.
- Monitor and support their children's adherence to the school's dress and behavior codes.
- Attend regularly scheduled family meetings and individual parent/teacher conferences.
- Participate in community service (volunteer) activities for the school using a guideline of 40 hours per primary parent or guardian per year as the expected contribution.
- Participate in our parent support program so that the school can continue to provide a full Waldorf inspired program for all students.
- Treat teachers and staff respectfully.
- Communicate concerns or conflicts quickly and directly to the appropriate person; follow the established procedures for healthy resolution of disagreements or conflicts.

### **TRCCS Electronic Media Concerns and Guidelines**

At the TRVCS, there is a conscious intention and effort to provide an educational environment that nurtures the imagination and healthy development of every child. Because electronic media exposure tends to work at cross-purposes to this intention and effort, the TRVCS teachers need the support of parents in restricting media use in the home. Similarly, parents who choose our school because they want to protect their children as much as possible from the negative effects of electronic media also need the support of the parents of their children's classmates.

For these reasons, we request that the Pre-kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student’s parents limit or remove children’s exposure to electronic media to support and maintain an environment that cultivates imagination, wonder and beauty. TRVCS’s definition of electronic media includes all electronic screen and voice technology devices: TV, videos/DVD, movies, video games, computers, cell phones, etc. This excludes the use of electronic devices for educational purposes through the virtual program.

We ask that any exposure to electronic media with children in grades 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> be limited and mostly on the weekends. Attention to content is particularly important if use is allowed. We ask that parents of these older students work to limit exposure to electronic media in ways that protect them from its negative influences while also encouraging their increasing capacities for discernment, critical thinking, and self-discipline (i.e., media literacy). This excludes the use of electronic devices for educational purposes through the virtual program.

We recognize that restricting electronic media use in the home requires a commitment to a family lifestyle that runs counter to our mainstream culture. We also recognize that protecting children from media exposure is especially challenging in homes where older siblings are present, and when a child lives in more than one household. A wholehearted effort to thoughtfully protect children from media exposure can only be successful when we educate ourselves about the effects of electronic media on children, and then exercise continual determination to go “against the grain” in order to do what we believe is most healthy for them. We ask that every parent join us in this challenging, but so very important, commitment.

It is important that new families understand how we must work together to create this Waldorf-inspired environment for all of our students.

\_\_\_\_\_ Our household is already in alignment with these guidelines

\_\_\_\_\_ We are willing to make the necessary changes to be in alignment with the guidelines

\_\_\_\_\_ The guidelines are not a good fit for our family

Please check below what best describes your child’s current use of electronic media:

- |               |            |                                 |                              |
|---------------|------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • TV          | _____ None | _____ No more than 4 hrs/ week  | _____ More than 4 hrs/week   |
| • Movies      | _____ None | _____ No more than one per week | _____ More than one per week |
| • Computer    | _____ None | _____ No more than 4 hrs/ week  | _____ More than 4 hrs/week   |
| • Video Games | _____ None | _____ No more than 4 hrs/ week  | _____ More than 4 hrs/week   |

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Above you found the *TRVCS School and Family Partnership Agreement*, which we ask all families to abide by if offered a space in our school.

If my child is offered a space at the Tomorrow River Virtual Charter School, I/we will follow through with the expectations of the School and Family Partnership Agreement.

Parent/Guardian Signatures: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The TRVCS emphasizes parent involvement and contribution as key elements of our charter, and our enriched curriculum is dependent on financial and time donations from our parent body. How will you be able to participate in volunteering, teaching, committee participation, donations, fundraising, or other ways of supporting your child's education at the TRVCS?

### **Family Questionnaire**

*Important: Our charter school is a school of choice, meaning that you should only apply if you understand what we offer in terms of educational program and expectations for students and parents, and believe the school is a good fit for your interests and educational desires. Families choose the TRVCS because of the environment we strive to provide. We are interdependent on each other to ensure that environment can be maintained. Please only apply if you are committed to work together in this way. Please answer the following questions. (You may attach additional sheets if desired)*

What languages are spoken at home?

Please describe the type of education that you want for your child. Explain what you believe is important.

Please describe your child's strengths.

Please describe your child's challenges.

What are your child's extracurricular activities (sports, dance, martial arts, theatre, music, etc.)?

What has led you to seek a Waldorf methods education at the TRVCS for your child?

How familiar are you with Waldorf philosophy, curriculum, and approaches to learning/education?

If applicable, in what ways have you brought this knowledge into your home life?

Choosing the TRVCS is a choice for a particular approach to education. If you have little or no familiarity with Waldorf methods, would you be willing to become more informed through reading and attending parent education events?

What, if any, experience does your child have with Waldorf-inspired education?