

RIDGEVIEW CHARTER SCHOOL PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

Reshall L. Williams, Founder and Principal

Dr. Sanders, Assistant Principal

Mrs. J. Wells, Secretary

Board Meetings are open to the public. Meeting dates are posted at the school and on the website.

ABOUT RIDGEVIEW CHARTER SCHOOL

History:

Ridgeview Charter School (RCS) received its North Carolina charter in January of 2018. Its founders, Johnnie and Reshall Williams, along with founding board members developed the mission and vision with the goal of creating a school environment that provides quality guidance and education for children in the areas of academic growth and development, social, emotional and physical wellbeing with a focus on global awareness. In August of 2019 Ridgeview Charter School will welcomed the first K-4 grades and will continue to add a grade level each year until we reach grade eight (8) in the fall of 2023.

Mission:

The mission of Ridgeview Charter School is to provide K-8 students with a global perspective, so they are prepared to compete in the college market. Ridgeview Charter School will create an environment that values and appreciates differences and prepares our students to participate and thrive in an increasingly integrated world.

Goal:

Our goal is to create a learning environment where children will enjoy the learning process, discover new interests and unlock hidden talents.

School Creed: I am a Ridgeview student.

I strive to realize my potential.

I strive to achieve academic excellence.

I exemplify high moral character.

I work diligently to prepare for the future.

I am tomorrow's leader.

R. Williams

School Hours: Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Arrival and Dismissal: 7:55a.m.: Students may report to classroom to begin morning work.

8:00 a.m.: School day begins. Late arrivers need to be signed in by parents in the office.

Student is **tardy** at 8:10 am

3:00 p.m. School day ends. **Early dismissal** is not allowed after 2:15 pm

7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. School office hours

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Teachers reserve early morning for planning. Students are not permitted in the classroom before 7:30 a.m., and, since teachers are supervising and leading students, they are unable to take your phone calls in the morning. You may always contact a teacher by email, but please remember that they are with their students during the day and may not be able to respond until after the normal school day has ended. Teachers will respond within 24 hours.

In case of an emergency situation, the front office will assist you in getting in touch with your child's teacher.

Students arriving late must report to the office. Please accompany your child to the office for late sign-in. Do not take your child directly to the classroom.

School Calendar: The school calendar generally follows Gaston County Public Schools and is posted on our website. Changes may be made as deemed necessary due to inclement weather and/or emergencies through written notice to parents.

Charter School Information: Charter Schools are public schools that operate according to their respective charter signed by the North Carolina Charter Schools Advisory Board. They report to the State Board of Education and are accountable for complying with applicable state and federal laws and its charter. A school board identified as a private nonprofit organization governs the school's operations to ensure fidelity to the charter. The school board must report annually to the State Board of Education, and the State Board of Education conducts an evaluation of the school at least every five years.

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Ridgeview's Purpose, Vision and Philosophy

Purpose and Vision:

RCS believes every student has the right to a global education. RCS will provide the academic program and psycho-social support to lead each child to their personal best in performance and the development of critical thinking skills that will equip them to graduate college. RCS will accomplish this with research based and developmentally appropriate programs, culturally relevant material, intentional planning and data driven decision making processes.

Philosophy:

The primary philosophy behind RCS's instructional method is to use research- based strategies that have been proven effective with preparing students of all demographic backgrounds for college preparatory high school courses including honors, AP and IB programs. The model is global and aligns with Cognitive Process Theory that focuses on what children should learn based on age and brain development. Instruction will be comprehensive and rigorous with a clear process of learning. RCS will use the International Curriculum as the schoolwide instructional model.

Ridgeview support its researched based approach to education by including the following practices in its daily operations:

- **Morning Assembly.** Building a positive culture in our school walls is paramount to RCS's success. Each morning students will assemble for 15 min. for a personal welcome by their Principal. We will sing the national anthem, say the pledge of allegiance and sing our school song (TBA). Each Friday Each classroom teachers will identify a "Student of Week" who demonstrated the character trait of the month. A certificate is given in recognition. Moring Assembly begins the third week of school.
- **College Readiness.** Ridgeview's focus on a well-rounded education provides the academic foundation necessary to succeed in an increasingly global society. In grade school students will focus on mastering core subjects for the majority f the tie with art, music, PE and foreign language rotations being their specials. Ur motivation is to ensure grade level mastery in the early years allowing students to fully participate in college readiness activities such as: ACT & SAT prep, Latin electives, foreign language fluency and other programs.
- **Sex Based Classrooms.** In middle school core classrooms, students will be separated by sex. Studies show that this set up encourages students more in the areas of science, math and language arts. When participating in electives, students will learn in a coed setting
- **Structured Discipline:** Students are expected to follow a clearly defined and structured discipline program. This program encourages personal responsibility and respect for others. As a result, students who have had behavior problems at other schools are often drawn back into a positive learning community.
- **Character Development.** Part of RCS's purpose is to instill positive character in each of our students. The character development program comprehensively identifies the behaviors, skills

and virtues students need to strengthen their moral compass. Character development is an essential part of every student's education.

- Parental Involvement. Research indicates that parental involvement is a leading predictor of student success; therefore, parents are included in many aspects of our education program. RCS's organizational chart cultivates a close working partnership between staff members and parents. Parents may help with PTO/PTA, join a school committee, classroom help, library, office, playground, etc. See office Secretary for more opportunities.

Grand friends. We also know the significance a grandparent/ grand friend has in the life of children. We strongly encourage grandparents/ grand-friends to volunteer wherever opportunities are available.

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Academic Excellence: Curriculum

RCS will provide students with brain-based instruction from which they will develop critical thinking skills and realize their potential as lifelong learners who can think and express themselves intelligently on a global level. To support our mission of providing a global perspective and preparing them for the college market, our curricula will support the following goals of global education: state of the planet awareness, cross-cultural awareness, knowledge of global dynamics, awareness of human choices and perspectives consciousness. This will build critical thinking skills that will push a student beyond knowing facts of a particular subject; RCS students will ask “why” and systematically seek the answer. This is the level of inquiry required for honors, AP, and IB courses designed to prepare students for the college market.

The curriculum will be standards based, aligned with the NC Essential Standards and Common Core and culturally rich with perspectives, discussions, and work that supports our mission of global education. Supportive texts that align with NC Essential Standards and Common Core will be used with the International Curriculum to provide richness in the following subjects:

- English Language Arts: Early reading instruction focuses on the building blocks of reading: phonemic awareness, phonic, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency. Students will receive leveled readers and resources for ESL, EC and AIG students
- Mathematics: Students will develop mathematical skills necessary for everyday life as well in the rigors of high school and post-high school mathematics. In support of our mission our global math program utilizes technology, e-books, and digital applications as learning tools. It has an integrated core program designed for 21st century classroom and a pedagogy fit for MTSS. The learning progression begins with concrete functions, moves to pictorial and ends with abstract learning, allowing students to discuss why the math is accurate.
- Science: Students will have a science curriculum strong in hands on activity and inquiry. When participating in inquiry students will describe objects and events, use predictions, ask questions, construct explanations, test their predictions and communicate their findings to others.
- Social Studies: the curriculum is strong in the area of national and world geography. We build a strong knowledge of social issue and economics allowing students to understand the impact of these forces both personally and internationally in their lives.
- Foreign Languages. RCS has a foreign language program that exposes elementary students to multiple ways of saying common phrases. As students matriculate through middle school, they will be required to choose a language for mastery and fluency. Grammar will be introduced in middle school and interaction with international students via the internet will be utilized to develop language skills.
- Art: Art classes allow students to explore the many aspects of art while acquiring and understanding of the role art has played in the expression of ideas throughout history. Hands on art projects help student creativity and self-expression and are frequently related to classroom topics.
- Music: Students will experience a variety of music during their classes. Topics for all students. will include basic concepts like beat, rhythm and music notation. All concepts are introduced in Kindergarten and developed as the child moves through Middle School.

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- **Physical Education:** Physical Education is a sequence of developmental experiences in which students learn through movement and are given the opportunity to develop a positive attitude toward physical activity. Students will also benefit from skill development and social skills like teamwork and sportsmanship.
- **Educational Technology:** RCS will provide students with rich, quality literature and a variety of informational and technological resources. Technology will be a critical part of the student learning experience. Our library will be based on “Information Literacy Standards” developed by the American association of School Libraries (AASL) and the Association for Educational Communications and technology (AECT).
- **Character Development:** Character development is imperative to the mission of preparing our students to appreciate difference with integrity, dedication and service. Our program is centered on the study of nine (9) virtues: respect, self-control, wisdom, gratitude, perseverance, dedication, service, integrity.
To support our character development program, time is dedicated each day to teaching the character of the month, ex. Gratitude in December. The definition of each character scaffolds in complexity with higher grades, encouraging a deeper and more complex understanding and application of the character to their personal lives. The integration is essential for students to learn the importance of maintain a strong personal character and the qualities necessary for success as both a student and citizen.

Assessments: ISTATION MAP Assessments: These assessments provide growth reports and establish goals for each student. They also provide National norms based on scores and percentiles. The program provides highly accurate data with RIT scales to inform decision making at every level. Assessment drives instruction, and MAP assessments provide entry points for students in all content areas, including math, reading, language arts, and science. The student data provides teacher with suggested skills for instruction that encourages differentiation within the classroom. The data is also used to track student growth. This helps students to take responsibility for tracking their progress and reaching their goals in collaboration with their teachers and parents.

North Carolina End-of-Grade Assessments: Students in grades 3-8 take the NC EOG assessments in Language Arts, Mathematics and Science (selective grades) to establish the rate of growth for RCS students in a given school year.

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Academic Excellence: Grades and Achievement

Grading Scale:

Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd Grade:

4 = Exceeds Grade Level Standards: Indicates that a student consistently produces high-quality work, applies concepts independently, and is self-motivated.

3 = Meets Grade Level Standards: Indicates that the student consistently meets grade level standards. The student regularly demonstrates proficiency in the most of the standards for the current grade level. The student, with limited errors, grasps and applies key concepts, processes and skills for the current grade.

2 = Progressing Toward Grade Level Standards: Indicates that the student is approaching and occasionally meeting the standards for the current grade level. The student is beginning to grasp and apply key concepts, processes, and skills for the current grade level.

1 = Not Meeting Grade Level Standards: Indicates that the student has not yet met minimum level standards. The student needs more time, experience, and possible interventions for concepts, processes, and skills to develop.

3rd Grade and Up:

90 – 100 Excellent 80 – 90 Above Average,

70 – 80 Average 60 – 70 Below Average

0 – 59 Failing

Progress Reports and Report Cards:

Students receive progress reports at the mid-point of each grading period to provide an update about each student's academic progress. At the end of each grading period, students receive report cards.

Conferences:

Parent-Teacher conferences are held for all parents at the end of the first grading period in late October. At that time parents may discuss progress with the teacher and receive the first report card.

Parent-teacher-student conferences are held in all grades. Conferences in grades 3 and up are student led and allow students to present their portfolios and to set academic goals for the remainder of the year. A conference can be set up at any time by sending an email to the teacher.

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Student Grade Placement, Acceleration, Promotion and Retention

The principal is authorized to make initial grade placement of a student and to promote, accelerate or retain students after initial grade placement. After initial grade placement, a student is expected to progress through the grades one year in each grade receiving the benefits of academic, social and physical growth usually accompanied with a full year of development. On occasion, it may be in the best interest of the student to have a new grade placement, be accelerated more than one grade, or be retained in the current grade. In this event, supporting documentation with interventions already offered to the student will be provided by the school.

If a student's parent or teacher believes one of these grade changes should be considered, a written request for consideration should be provided to the principal, including the reasons for such consideration. The final decision regarding placement, acceleration, promotion, or retention of a student rests solely with the principal.

The principal shall consider the following, when making such decisions:

1. The education record of the student, including but not limited to a student's grades, standardized test scores, attendance, discipline, reading, speaking and math skills, the curriculum of each grade, the available teacher(s) skill(s) delivering the instruction and available programs
2. The physical, social and emotional readiness of the student for the curriculum of each grade
3. The current research on grade placement, promotion, acceleration and retention
4. The recommendation of the student's parents and teachers
5. The completed Student Placement Form including, but not limited to, a) an initial request by the school for a parent meeting before winter break, b) a request by the school for a progress meeting with the parent prior to March 1, and c) a request by the school for a final parent meeting prior to the last day of the school year.
6. The applicable laws governing these decisions.

The goal of placing, accelerating, promoting or retaining a student is to enhance the opportunity for the student to achieve learning goals, meet state and school performance expectations, and to be prepared for high school, college, and career plans.

Special Education Students The decision to retain a student with a disability is approached with great caution and is determined by the building principal. Information provided by the Individualized Education Planning Team (IEPT) should be taken into consideration when making this decision. A student with a disability may not be retained based on their disability but may be retained for other factors.

English Learner Students The retention of an English Learner (EL) student is a decision that is carefully considered by the building principal. The principal, in collaboration with the EL Coordinator, EL teacher, and Special Populations Team, should consider evidence related to the student's performance in each subject area when making this determination. An English Learner student may not be retained solely based on a lack of language skills but may be retained for other factors.

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Student Support Services and Special Education

It is the goal of the school to provide appropriate educational opportunities for all students. It is the school's obligation to provide appropriate educational opportunity to all students with suspected disabilities or disabilities, as defined under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and state special education rules and regulations.

For additional specifics regarding a student's special education rights, parents are encouraged to review the Procedural Safeguards that are available from a school administrator or special education provider.

1. Child Find

The IDEA includes a Child Find Mandate. Child Find requires all school districts to locate, identify and evaluate all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of their disability. This obligation encompasses all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children receiving passing grades and "advancing from grade to grade...". A parent who suspects that their child may have a disability and is in need of special education and related services may initiate a free evaluation of their child by contacting the school principal and providing a written request for an evaluation under IDEA and/or Section 504.

The school must take the parents request into consideration and provide a response consistent with State and Federal special education requirements. If the school does not suspect a disability, it may refuse to conduct an evaluation. If the school refuses, it must give the parent written notice explaining the reason(s) why it is declining to initiate an evaluation, what data the decision was based upon, and other factors considered. The parents then have the right, if they choose, to request a due process hearing to seek a ruling to conduct an evaluation.

2. Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Section 504 (General Education) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 794, (sometimes referred to as "Section 504") prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities solely on the basis of their disability. If you have questions regarding Section 504 please contact the school's Section 504 Coordinator. The Section 504 Coordinator is responsible for investigating and resolving complaints. In addition, any individual who desires information related to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act, may contact the school's EC Coordinator.

The school does not discriminate against individuals seeking to access a program or service of the school based on disability. Where an individual desires to participate in a program or service and needs a reasonable accommodation in order to do so, they should contact the school's principal to request an accommodation. In addition, if you suspect that your child has a disability which may qualify him/her for support under Section 504, you should contact the school's principal to begin the referral process.

Upon initiation of the Section 504 referral process, parents will be provided with a copy of the Section 504 Procedural Safeguards and Parent/Student Rights which contains complaint and due process procedures.

3. The Intervention Assistance Team. The Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) is a committee of school personnel set up by the principal to ensure ongoing and effective support for students and classroom teachers. Parents are informed if their child is being considered for referral to the

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IAT for behavioral and/or academic support. The IAT is a general education intervention process and team membership will generally include: a building administrator, the student's general education teacher, and a staff member knowledgeable in accommodations and interventions. Parents may also be invited to participate in this meeting.

The team provides a forum to discuss the student's academic and behavioral data and needs. In addition, the team generates, initiates, and monitors implementation of interventions designed to address the individual needs of the student. This includes use of the resources of the school, family, and the community. This process creates awareness and understanding of the issues affecting the student and their academic and behavioral performance. The IAT may serve as the pre-referral intervention planning team for those "unidentified" students whose difficulties may suggest the presence of a disability. As appropriate, the IAT may refer a student to the Special Education team for formal assessment. Parents should be informed if the IAT is considering a referral of their student to the Special Education team. Prior to initiating a special education evaluation, written parental consent/permission must be obtained. Information gathered through implementation of interventions identified by the IAT will be taken into consideration as a part of the special education evaluation along with progress monitoring and other data sources provided by the parent, educational staff, and others as deemed appropriate. The IAT's review of documentation of intervention strategies, the student's response (progress monitoring data), in addition to a referral for special education testing, fulfills the Child Find requirement under IDEA and State special education requirements.

4. The Individualized Education Program

The school will comply with the IDEA and state regulations and every student identified as having a disability will be provided an Individualized Education Program (IEP) designed to address their unique needs. All required components of the IEP will be addressed including but not limited to: a description of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance including disability related needs, goals and objectives, supplementary aides and services, program services, ancillary services, extended school year, etc. All students with disabilities are considered general education students first. Each IEP is designed to assure that eligible students receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and specialized instruction delivered by highly qualified special education staff within the least restrictive environment (LRE). Prior to the opening of school, registration forms are reviewed to identify students with current IEPs from previous schools attended. The parents are informed of their rights, procedures, and responsibilities under special education law. Decisions regarding an IEP are made by the IEP Team. This team has required participants which minimally includes general and special education providers, administrators, and the parent(s). The IDEA includes specific rights for parents of children with disabilities. This information is contained in the document commonly referred to as the Procedural Safeguards. We encourage parents to review this document carefully, so they are fully informed of their rights. Copies of this document are provided at a minimum of at least once per school year and can be obtained from your school office.

5. Educational Placement of Students with Disabilities

The school is committed to educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in order to meet their educational needs as determined by the students' IEP

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Teams. This means that to the maximum extent appropriate, children who are disabled are educated with children who are nondisabled and special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. In an effort to meet with the LRE requirements, the school must ensure that a continuum of placement options is available to students with disabilities, including: services provided within the general education classroom; pull-out services; special classes; home instruction; instruction in hospitals and institutions; and in unique circumstances, access to programs and services located in settings outside the school. Placement decisions are the determination of the Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT).

6. Transfer Students:

In-State transfer: If a child with a disability (who had an IEP in effect in a previous public agency) transfers to a new school in the same state and enrolls in the new school within the same academic year, the public agency (in consultation with the child's parents) shall provide the child with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the prior IEP, until the public agency adopts the prior IEP or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state laws.

Out of State Transfer: If a child with a disability (who had an IEP in effect in a previous public agency) transfers to a new school in a different state and enrolls in the new school within the same academic year, the public agency (in consultation with the child's parents) shall provide such a child with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the prior IEP's until the public agency conducts an evaluation, if determined to be necessary by the agency, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate, that is consistent with federal and state laws. The evaluation conducted is considered an initial evaluation as special education eligibility within the new state must be determined. In order to comply with these transfer requirements, under certain circumstances the school may need to contract with another school/entity for the provision of educational services.

7. Parent Participation:

Parents are an important member of the school community and have the right to participate in meetings involving the evaluation, identification, and educational placement of their student. Parents will be invited to participate and share information about their student prior to and during the IEPT meeting. Parents are encouraged to review the Procedural Safeguards so that they are fully informed of their rights.

8. Crisis Management: De-escalation, Isolation and Restraint of Students

The school is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. It is the policy of our school to only utilize approved physical restraint in response to emergency or crisis situations and consistent with state law. Use of restraint procedures should: (a) not be viewed as a behavior change or intervention strategy, (b) be implemented only under extreme situations and as a matter of last resort, (c) be implemented only by trained personnel, and (d) be accompanied by school wide pro-active positive behavior supports to prevent the

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need for their use. When such activities are utilized, documentation procedures are required in addition to timely communication with parents and other key members of the educational system. This documentation must remain on file at the school and is considered part of the student's educational record.

Student Responsibility: Homework:

RCS believes that homework is an important component of the educational process. While we consider what is an appropriate amount for a child's developmental level, we believe the following objectives will be accomplished through regular and well-planned homework:

- Students will develop independent study skills.
- Students will develop more self-direction and individual responsibility
- Learning is expanded through extensions not accomplished during the school day
- Students will become more organized
- Students will learn to budget their time.

Guidelines:

1. Parents and students should expect homework each weekday evening. Students in grades 6-8 may also be assigned homework to complete during the weekend.
2. Assigned homework that requires completion is part of each student's evaluation. Any homework assignment that is not turned in on time will have to be completed during the student's free time during the day. Repeated violators may be assigned after school homework detention.
3. As the school year progresses, the amount of homework and the number of days may increase depending on the maturity and ability of the students.

Suggested Homework Guidelines

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Minutes per Day</u>	<u>Days per Week</u>
Kindergarten	10-20	4
First	20-30	4
Second	30-45	4
Third	30-45	4
Fourth	30-60	4
Fifth	60-90	4
Sixth	60-90	4
Seventh	90-120	4
Eighth	90-120	4

Make-Up Work:

Students are expected to complete assignments missed during illness or unexpected absence from school. Students are guaranteed one school day for each day absent from school to make up their work.

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Additional time may be granted by the teacher. We expect parents to help students by contacting teachers to secure missed assignments.

In cases of prolonged absence due to illness, the teacher should be called, and arrangements made to have assignments picked up or emailed. Parents can request assignments for their student if they are absent two or more days. To receive work the same day, parents must call before 8am and pick up by 3:30 pm.

Suspended students' homework may be picked up in the main office after 12:00 pm on the day of suspension. Suspended students are required to turn in their late work the day they return to school. They do not receive make-up days.

Student Responsibility: Student Code of Conduct

In order to provide a quality education, a safe and positive school environment is necessary. Students who do not observe the rules of good conduct in the classroom or on the playground decrease both the learning and safety of others and their own opportunities to learn. As a result, our staff takes a proactive role in enforcing the Student Code of Conduct.

Students are expected to demonstrate respect and courtesy by obeying staff members, being kind to others, and being considerate of others and the school's property.

Acts of Misconduct

The acts of misconduct listed in this Student Code are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list or as a limit action upon the authority of school officials to deal appropriately with other types of conduct which interfere with the good order of the school, the functioning of the educational process, or the health and safety of students.

A student violating any of the acts of misconduct listed in this Code of Conduct may be disciplined under this Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, a student who engages in an act of misconduct that violates the law may be referred to the appropriate police authority. A student who engages in an act of misconduct when the student was enrolled in another school for which the disciplinary action has not been fully served may be required to serve out the length of the suspension or expulsion.

Students are to follow the Code of Conduct:

- On school property
 - In a motor vehicle being used for a school related purpose
 - At a school-related activity, function or event
 - At any time or place (including en route to or from home) when the student's behavior has a direct or immediate effect on maintaining order, safety, health and discipline in the school
- Acts of misconduct include, but are not limited to:
- Failure to cooperate or comply with directions of school personnel and volunteers
 - False allegations against staff, volunteers or students

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 - Falsification of records or scholastic dishonesty (including cheating and plagiarism)
 - Misuse of copyrighted material
 - Improper or disrespectful communications to staff, volunteers, or students
 - Use of profane and/or inappropriate language
 - Disruption of school
 - Bullying and harassment
 - Cyber-bullying pursuant to state law
 - Improper dress in violation of the Cress code
 - Indecency (either with clothing/exposure, pictures or public display of affection)
 - Any public display of affection having sexual connotations
- Violations of building rules and regulations
- Violations of rules or policies as set forth in the Parent and Student Handbook
- Smoking, tobacco possession or use
- Trespassing, loitering
- Suspended or expelled student on school property or attending school activities
- False alarms
- Possession of electronic device(s) defined by school policy
- Defacement/damage of property or theft /possession of stolen property
- Coercion, extortion or blackmail
- Arson
- Possession of firework(s), explosive(s) and/or chemical substance(s)
- Possession and/or sale of alcohol and/or drugs (narcotics drugs, look-a-like substances and illegal chemical substances)
- possession of look-a-like weapons
- Possession of dangerous weapons as defined by state law and dangerous weapons or instruments not otherwise enumerated herein
- Possession of personal protection devices (such as tasers, mace, pepper-spray, etc.)
- Fighting, assault and/or battery on another person
- Gang related activity
- Violation of Technology Use and Internet Safety Practices and Procedures
- Persistent disobedience
- Verbal assault
- Malicious or willful types of behavior that endanger the safety of others
- Extreme acts of defiance and/or threats toward teachers/other adults/fellow students
- Criminal acts other than enumerated herein
- Excessive tardiness or absences as defined in the Attendance Policy

Parents or students who are unsure of what conduct is prohibited by each act should consult with the Principal.

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Bullying or harassing Behavior:

The school prohibits any types of bullying or harassing by students. Bullying or harassing behavior is defined as any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications or any physical act or any threatening communication, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function on a school bus, or that causes a substantial disruption to school operations and/or interferes with the rights of other students and that:

- Places a student in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. "Hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Procedure:

1. Any school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall report the incident to the principal. A student, volunteer, or visitor who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any of bullying or harassing behavior should, and are strongly encouraged to, report the incident to a teacher, other staff member or the principal.
2. A report of bullying or harassing behavior should be done in written form, providing as much information as possible. The report may be done anonymously.
3. Any staff member who receives a report of bullying or harassing behavior shall immediately forward the report to the Principal who will ensure that a prompt investigation is completed. The investigation is to be complete within three (3) school days after a report or complaint is made.
4. Within two (2) days of receiving a report of an act of bullying, the Principal or his/her designee shall notify the parent of the alleged victim of bullying and the parent of the alleged perpetrator of bullying. Upon completion of the investigation report, the Principal or his/her designee shall notify the parent of both the victim and perpetrator of the result of the investigation.
5. There will be no reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment. Such reprisal or retaliation by a student is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.
6. Any student who is found to have falsely accused another of bullying or harassment is subject to remedial action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Bullying or harassing behavior is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

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Disciplinary Procedures:

A student may be disciplined at any level depending upon the frequency and/or severity of the act of misconduct. A Discipline Report will be completed for each violation of the Code of Conduct and copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. Discipline records will be included in any student file properly requested by the parent to be transferred to a subsequent school. Corporal punishment is prohibited as a means of discipline.

1. **LEVEL 1, EARLY INTERVENTION:** The behavior may be a violation of the Code of Conduct or a disruption of the orderly operation of the classroom or a school activity, the inappropriate behavior with the student is addressed.
2. **LEVEL 2, PARENT NOTIFICATION:** The parent is notified by mail or a note home of the misbehavior.
3. **LEVEL 3, PARENT CONTACT:** A conference with the parent is held in order to discuss the incident and appropriate disciplinary action.
4. **LEVEL 4, BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLAN (BSP):** When the behavior(s) has reached a level of persistent disobedience or a student accumulates more than ten (1) suspension days in a semester, the teacher and/or Principal shall schedule a meeting with the parents in order to implement a Behavior Support Plan or BSP. A BSP will take into consideration the cause of the inappropriate behavior, positive interventions that might be utilized to diminish the inappropriate behavior
5. and necessary consequences that will take place if the behavior continues. The BSP shall be signed by all parties and copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. If the disciplinary action is related to an unexcused tardy or absences, an Attendance Corrective Action Plan (A-CAP) will be implemented.
6. **LEVEL 5, SUSPENSION OF TEN (10) SCHOOL DAYS OR FEWER OR OTHER DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS:** When the act of misconduct disrupts the school environment, the resulting consequence issued by the school administration may include suspension of up to 10 school days, or other disciplinary interventions such as in-school suspension, restitution, counseling and exclusion from school activities. The school administration may convene a meeting with the student, parents and others to develop or update an existing Behavior Contract that outlines the expected behavior and disciplinary action. The Behavior Contract shall be signed by all parties and copies are made for the parent and kept in the student's file. The student will be granted a right to due process as described in the Due Process Procedures of this Code of Conduct.
7. **LEVEL 6, LONG TERM SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION:** When the act of misconduct is considered a crime under state law, constitutes extreme non-compliance with school rules resulting in aggravating circumstances, or is so extreme that it threatens the safety of others, the student may serve a long term suspension or, if age fourteen (14) or older, be expelled from the school. The student will be granted a right to due process hearing. A 365- day suspension is a denial to a student of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for a full 365 days. The Board must suspend a student for 365 days for possession of a firearm or destructive device on school property or a school sponsored event. If a teacher is assaulted or injured by a student and as a result the student is long-term suspended or reassigned to alternative

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education services, the student shall not be returned to that teacher's classroom unless the teacher consents. No student shall be long-term suspended or expelled from school solely for truancy or tardiness offenses.

Students who are served under IDEA (Special Education/Exceptional Children) or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are entitled to certain additional rights in the area of discipline based upon their qualification for services under these federal laws.

Due Process Procedures:

The following due process procedures govern only the suspension or the expulsion of a student from the school's regular educational program. If a student charged with violation of this Code of Conduct has been returned to the regular school program pending a decision, then such action of reinstatement shall not limit or prejudice the school's right to suspend or expel the student following that decision.

1. Suspension of Ten (10) School Days or Fewer:

- (1) As a general rule, prior to any suspension of the student, the Principal and/or AP/Dean shall provide the student with the following due process:
 - a. The student will be informed of the charge against him/her, and if the student denies the charges, the Principal and/or AP/Dean shall provide the student with an explanation of the evidence.
 - b. The student shall be provided an opportunity to explain his/her version

Of the incident

- (2) If a student's presence in school poses an immediate danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process, the Principal and /or AP/Dean may immediately suspend the student, and as soon thereafter as reasonable, provide the student with his/her due process rights as set forth in this section.
- (3) If after providing the student with his/her due process rights, the Principal and/or AP/Dean determine that the student has engaged in a prohibited act under the Student Code of Conduct, then he/she may impose a disciplinary penalty of a suspension not to exceed ten (10) school days. The Principal and /or AP/Dean, or his/her designee, shall inform (in person or by phone) the student's parent (in English and in the parent's primary language when readily available) of the suspension and of the reasons and conditions of the suspension. The student shall be provided the right to take home textbooks, complete homework assignments and an opportunity to make-up exams. A decision to suspend a student for ten (10) or fewer school days is final and not subject to further review or appeal.

2. Suspension for Eleven (11) or More School Days and Expulsion

The Board of Directors will hear all long-term suspensions and expulsions.

- (1) The Principal and/or AP/Dean may recommend to the Board of Directors the long-term suspension of any students who willfully engages in conduct that violates a provision of the Student Code of Conduct that authorizes long-term suspension or expulsion.
- (2) The Board of Directors shall provide the student an opportunity for a hearing before imposing a long-term suspension. If the student declines a hearing or if no hearing is

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requested in a time allowed, the Board of Directors shall review the circumstances of the recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion and may:

- a. Impose and/or decline to impose the recommended suspension or expulsion; or
- b. Modify and impose the recommended suspension or expulsion

A parent shall be notified by the Principal in writing (in English and in the parent's primary language when readily available) of the Principal's recommendation to suspend or expel. The written notice shall:

- a. State the nature of the violation with reference to the provision of the Code of Conduct the student is alleged to have violated and the proposed consequence.
- b. If a hearing is desired, the student or parent must notify the Principal in writing within four (4) days of receiving the notice. If a hearing is timely requested, it will be held, and a decision issued before a long-term

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- c. suspension is imposed. If the student or parent request a postponement of the hearing or if the hearing is requested beyond the time set for such request, the hearing is requested beyond the time set for such request, the hearing shall be scheduled, but the student shall not have the right to return to school pending the hearing.. If neither the student nor the parent appears for the hearing, the parent and student are deemed to have waived the right to a hearing and the Board of Directors shall conduct the review set out in Section B2 above.
- d. Should a hearing be requested in the time frame allowed, the hearing will be conducted by the Board of Directors. For the hearing, the student will be provided procedural due process pursuant to state law including, but not limited to, the following:
 - (1) The right to be represented at the hearing by counsel or a non-attorney advocate.
 - (2) The right to be present at the hearing, accompanied by his or her parents.
 - (3) The right of the student, parent, and the student's representative to review before the hearing any audio or video recording of the incident and, consistent with federal and state student record laws and regulations, the information supporting the suspension that may be presented as evidence at the hearing, including statement made by witnesses related to the charges.
 - (4) The right of the student, parent, or the student's representative to question witnesses appearing at the hearing.
 - (5) The right to present evidence on his/her behalf, which may include written statements or oral testimony, relating to the incident leading to the suspension.
 - (6) The right to have a record made of the hearing.
 - (7) The right to make his or her own audio recording of the hearing
 - (8) The right to a written decision, based on evidence presented at the hearing, either upholding, modifying, or rejecting to Principal's recommendation of suspension and containing at least the following information.
 - (aa) The basis for the decision, including a reference to any policy or rule that the student is determined to have violated.
 - (bb) Notice of what information will be included in the student's official record.
 - (cc)The student's right to appeal the decision and notice of the procedures for such appeal.

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- e. Advise of the right to retain an attorney of their choice and at their expense to represent the student in the hearing, right to review and obtain copies of the student's educational records prior to the hearing.
- f. Include what information will be included in the student's official record and the procedure for expungement of this information.

3. Students who receive a long-term suspension may be offered alternative education services during the long-term suspension period. All discipline decisions made by the Board of Directors are final.

Miscellaneous Provisions:

1. Request for Readmission:
All students suspended for 365 days or expelled may, after 180 days from the date of the beginning of the student's suspension or expulsion, request in writing readmission to the school.
2. Voluntary Agreements:
At any time, the principal or his/her designee may enter into a written contract with the student and his/her parent(s) setting forth the parties' agreement in settlement of disciplinary charges or restitution related to damage to or loss of school property. In such cases, the written agreement shall be final and binding and may not be later challenged by the Principal or his/her designee or the student or his/her parents.
3. Suspended /Expelled Students on School Property or Attending School Functions: A suspended or expelled student who enters onto school property or appears at a school activity, event or function without the permission of a building administrator shall be deemed to be trespassing.
4. Maintenance of Class Progress
When practical in the judgement of the Principal, a student may be permitted to maintain progress during the disciplinary period.

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Parent Responsibility: Attendance

General Expectations and N.C. Law:

The Compulsory Attendance Law (NC General Statute 115C-378) states that students under sixteen must attend school regularly while school is in session. The school reports unlawful absences to proper authorities. When a student misses class or parts of class, he or she does not have the benefit of discussions, demonstrations, experiments, or instruction, all of which have a tremendous bearing on learning and grades.

Repeated absences and/or early dismissals defeats the purpose of school and jeopardizes the student's progress and chances of promotion. If an absence is due to illness and lasts five (5) days or more, then a note from a doctor may be requested. It is the responsibility of the family (parent and child) to make sure the student attends school unless the child must be absent for one of the reasons listed below:

- Illness or injury, which prevents the student from physically attending school.
- Quarantine when ordered by the local health officer or by the State Board of Health.
- Death in the immediate family.
- Medical or Dental Appointment though we strongly encourage parents to minimize the impact on student learning by scheduling such appointments before or after school.
- Court or Administrative Proceedings when the absence results from the attendance of a student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
- Parent deployment activities when a student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting for the purpose of visiting said parent or legal guardian (G.S. 115c407.5Article V (E)).
- Religious Observance when the tenets of a religion to which a student or his/her parent adheres require or suggest observance of a religious event.

The approval of such absences is within the discretion of the Principal, but approval should be granted unless the cumulative effect is of such duration as to interfere with the education of the student.

To receive an excused absence or tardy for one of the circumstances listed above, the student must submit to his or her teacher either a signed doctor or dentist note or a signed, written note from his or her parent or guardian. In the absence of these forms of notification, the absence/tardy is reported as unexcused. Students are responsible for checking in with teachers and making up any missed work after an absence.

Abuse of excused absences may be investigated by the Principal and could result in a referral to the Department of Social Services, County Juvenile Court or other disciplinary action. Factor considered I grade promotion. No student shall be long-term suspended or expelled from school solely for truancy or tardiness offenses.

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Truancy:

A student is truant if unexcused absences total ten (10) or more school days in a school year. If truant, the student is referred the Department of Social Services, County Juvenile Court or other appropriate entities.

Family Death or terminal Illness:

If there is a death, terminal illness or similar traumatic situation in a student’s family that may affect his/her attendance, emotional well-being, and/or level of concentration, the office staff members must be notified.

Illness During the School Day:

If a student becomes ill during the school day, appropriate arrangements will be made for the student’s care while waiting for parent pick up. Students with a fever or vomiting must be symptom free for 24 hrs. before returning to school,

Family Vacations:

Absences due to family vacations must be approved by the Principal, otherwise the days will be unexcused. Parents planning a vacation must notify the office or Principal two weeks in advance. Parents must assist students with contacting each teacher for missed assignments and a schedule for completion of assignments. Student is to complete all assignments within the same number of days as the length of the vacation. In complete assignments will not receive credit. Students who miss an announced test during their absence will take the test when all missed work is complete and within the same number of days missed due to vacation.

Voluntary Withdrawal:

To withdraw a student, a parent must complete a Student Withdrawal form available in the office

Parent Partnership: Dress Code

Students should be clean and neat when at school.

Uniform:

All students must adhere to the school uniform requirements. Generally, students will wear navy, yellow or white button-down shirts with a collar and khaki bottoms. Sweaters and hoodies must be navy, white or yellow.

	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Pants	x	x
Shorts		x
Capri pants		x
Skorts		x
Jumper dress		x

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Skirts				x
	Short sleeved collar shirt		x	
	Long sleeved collar shirt	x		x

- Shoes: Students may wear closed toe shoes, with a conservative color. No wheels, no lights or any other distracting qualities. No sandals, flip flops or heels above 1”.
- Socks and tights may be plain or decorative; no inappropriate pictures or words on tights or socks.
- Hair must be neat and clean. No hats or head scarves allowed.
- Good personal hygiene must be practiced.
- No leggings

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- Jewelry: ear rings must be “post/button” size. No large (larger than a nickel) ear rings allowed.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times.
- No face or body jewelry

In all cases, the Principal or designee makes the final decision on dress code violations.

The dress code may be altered on special days as approved by the Principal. If further clarification of the dress code is needed, please contact the school office for assistance.

Parent Responsibility: Grievance Policy:

RCS encourages communication within the school community between teachers, families, and every member of the school team. If a concern arises, parents, students, and team members should address the appropriate team member. If the concern persists, an administrator will mediate a discussion involving all parties to resolve a concern.

Grievance Procedures:

The Grievance Procedures is a process that RCS parents and students may follow in order to resolve identified problems. The following procedures outline the way in which a complaint will be handled:

Confidential: Only the individuals directly involved in the grievance or those reviewing the circumstances surrounding the issue shall have access to information about the grievance.

Impartial: All parties involved will have the opportunity to present the facts regarding the situation. Before the complaint is reviewed, all relevant information shall be collected and considered.

Free of Repercussions: RCS is committed to maintaining a school environment in which parents and students are free to raise good faith concerns and to take necessary steps to make certain that the individuals involved in a grievance will not suffer repercussions.

Time Sensitive: RCS strives to deal with all grievances in a timely manner. There are time limitations for each step of the grievance process, and those limitations are outlined in the steps below.

Grievance Steps: A grievance may have up to six steps outlined below:

1. Initial Action.
2. Grievance Statement.
3. Qualification for Formal Meeting.
4. Formal Meeting.
5. Appeal Process.
6. Appeal Decision.

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These steps are not intended to discourage a parent or student from reporting to the appropriate individual a violation committed by a team member or another student; instead, they are intended to provide guidance in pursuing the resolution of a grievance.

The Principal will have the discretion to refer the grievance to the Board of Directors, as he or she deems appropriate, during any step of the grievance process.

Step 1: Initial Action:

Parents and students should always aim to raise any concerns or complaints with their assigned teacher in the informal context of their day-to-day environment. Should the grievance be about discrimination, harassment, or bullying, this may involve the Principal during which time the nature of the complaint will be explained to the alleged discriminator/harasser and parents. If the matter concerns the actions of the Principal, contact the Chairperson of the RCS Board of Directors.

Step 2: Grievance Statement

When it is not possible to resolve a conflict informally, a Grievance Notification Form that includes a Grievance Statement may be submitted. If the Principal is an involved party to the grievance, he or she will be precluded from listening to the grievance and participating in the decision. In this instance, the steps will remain the same with the Board of Directors conducting the proceedings.

Step 3: Qualification for Formal Meeting

Within fourteen calendar days of receipt of the written Grievance Notification Form, the Principal will decide regarding whether a formal meeting will be scheduled. If a formal meeting is scheduled, it will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time and place for discussion of the complaint with all parties involved, but it will not occur later than twenty days after receipt of the written grievance and after notification to the parent.

Step 4: Formal Meeting

The Principal will hold the meeting and render a decision; all decisions will be communicated in writing. The decision shall be made within seven calendar days of the completion of the formal meeting unless participating members agree to set an alternative deadline or there are exceptional circumstances, which prevent a decision being made within this time frame. In this occurrence, additional meetings may be held, and the final decision shall be provided within seven calendar days of the last consultation.

Step 5: Appeal Process

If the decision made is to dismiss the grievance and the parent continues to feel dissatisfied, he or she may request an individual meeting with the Principal to appeal the decision. A request for any appeal must be submitted in writing to the Principal within seven calendar days of the decision. After receiving an appeal request, the Principal shall schedule a meeting with the involved team member and the parent no later than four weeks from the date of the written request from the parent to have the grievance heard in an appeal. Any such discussions shall be conducted in a closed session, unless requested otherwise by the parent. Written notes of the result of the review shall be sent to the

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team member and the parent within seven calendar days. If the Principal cannot resolve the grievance during the appeal process, he or she will refer the appeal to the Board of Directors for their review. In this instance, the steps will remain the same with the Board of Directors conducting the appeal proceedings and making a final decision.

Step 6: Appeal Decision

The three possible options at the end of the appeal process are as follows:

1. The grievance is agreed, and a resolution is decided upon.
2. The grievance is agreed in part and a resolution is determined in respect of that part of the grievance, whilst the remaining part is not considered any further.
3. The grievance is not agreed. The Board Chairperson will, within five business days of the appeals meeting, unless there is an agreement to set an alternative deadline, notify the parent of the decision, as well as the rationale, in writing. Decisions at this stage will be considered final.

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GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Transportation:

Bus rules are extremely simple and easy to understand. These rules keep our children safe and secure. Please review these rules early and often with your child and encourage your child to seek adult assistance if any problem arises. Bus Rules for Students

- Always sit in your assigned seat. Only the bus driver or a school administrator can change a seat assignment.
- Be safety minded at all times, including at the stop and on the bus.
- Be 10 minutes early at the bus stop and wait in an orderly manner to prevent injury to yourself and others.
- Obey the bus driver and cooperate with him/her.
- Always enter or leave through the front door, except in an emergency.
- Stay in your seat until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Keep your voice low while riding.
- Let the driver know if you are ill and need to stop.
- Leave the bus only with the driver's permission.
- Cross the street in FRONT of the bus and in full view of the driver.
- Remain seated in your assigned seat with head, hands, and feet, inside the bus.
- No touching other students or their belongings.
- No eating or drinking on the school bus.
- No hitting, spitting, or fighting on the school bus.
- No throwing of objects on or from the school bus.

Consequences for Infractions Against Bus Rules

Step 1 - First Offense: Student will receive a referral notice to be signed by the parent and returned the following day.

Step 2 - Second Offense: Students who receive a second referral will be removed from the bus for a specific number of days, and parents will be notified.

Meals:

For grades K-5, the school schedule allows for a 20-minute lunch period and a 15 minute outside recess period. Students in grades 6-8 have a 30-minute lunch period. A nutritious lunch, including milk, may be purchased at school, or students may bring sack lunches from home. We ask parents to avoid overly processed foods high in high fructose corn syrup.

Parents should complete a Free/Reduced Application available from the school office. Students not qualifying for subsidized meals must repay. Lack of repayment will result in discontinued meal service. Parents are encouraged to pay for meals using the free online service.

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Snacks:

A working snack period may be offered at the direction of the teacher. Students must bring their own snacks from home as they are not provided by the school. Snacks should be nutritional e.g. fruit, vegetables, cheese and crackers. Please refrain from snacks with high fructose corn syrup.

Recess:

Students typically need and want time to engage in self-directed activity. Recess offers this break for students providing fresh air, solitude, conversation or a game. The supervising adult is the authority during recess. Students are encouraged to include all willing participants in a game. Games that are abusive or demeaning are not permitted. All students must remain in the designated recess area. The playground is not available while waiting for school to begin, waiting for rides or following dismissal.

Birthdays:

Parents and guardians are welcome to arrange with classroom teachers to send in a healthy treat or a short (15 min) classroom activity as part of a child's birthday celebration. Healthy options include fruit, vegetables, or granola bars. Cookies, cupcakes, or cake are not permitted. If students wish to pass out invitations to birthday parties or other special events out of school, they may do so only if they have invitations for every member of the class.

Holidays:

1. Halloween is not celebrated, therefore no costumes worn at school
2. St. Valentine's Day may be observed, however, students who bring valentines must bring one for each child in their classroom.
3. Christmas/Winter Holidays. Classes may have a small celebration at the end of the last day before the Christmas/Winter holiday. Field Trips:

Students participating in school trips are subject to the same school rules, regulations and appropriate politeness demonstrated in the school. Teachers will judge behavior and misbehavior could result in denial of field trip privileges. Signed permission trips must be on file with the teacher for each student on each field trip.

Lost and Found:

Lost and found is located near the office, Unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of each month.

Personal Items:

The school will not accept responsibility for the personal items of students. We expect students to leave belongings that are not necessary for their education, at home. Any personal items that staff deem to be unsafe, inappropriate for school, or interfering with students' education will be confiscated and held in the office or remain in the possession of a staff member until the parents receive them. The school shall not be responsible for any items lost or damaged while in its possession.

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Students shall not possess cell phones, PDAs, iPods, MP3 players, video equipment, cameras, gaming, devices and electronic devices during the instructional day at the school or school-related events. Subject to the Search and Seizure Practices and Procedures, the possession such electronic devices during those restricted times constitutes the consent to search for and confiscate the device(s) be school personnel. Confiscated devices may be returned at the end of the school day.

Coaches and personnel in charge of extracurricular activities may make exceptions to his rule upon obtaining the Principal's permission

Health and Safety

Emergency Contact Information:

All parents should ensure that the contact information on file is correct and complete so that RCS staff can reach you in the event your child is hurt or becomes ill. Please include cell phone and alternate emergency contact numbers. Notify the office and your student's teacher when your home, work, or cell phone numbers change.

Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication: Families are encouraged to give medicines at home before or after school. If a student must take medication during the school day, parents must submit a signed Medication Form by the child's physician. Parents or guardians must send medications to school in a sealed, original container labeled with the following information:

- The student's name and grade.
- The name of the medication.
- The amount of the medication to be taken.
- The time the child is to take the medication.

Authorized school staff must administer ALL medication.

Allergies: RCS is committed to cooperate with students, families, staff, and medical personnel to minimize allergenic reactions and provide a safe and healthy learning environment for all students. If a student has allergies, it is the family's responsibility to inform the school in writing. Appropriate paperwork indicating the specific safety measures their child needs based on their medical record. RCS takes extreme precautions to create an allergen-free environment; however, in the case that a reaction does occur, RCS offers the following:

- Parents of a student with a life-threatening allergy must provide the school documentation from a licensed healthcare provider describing the specific allergenic condition.
- Once notification is received, the authorized school staff will collaborate with the family to create an emergency healthcare plan that will be implemented if the identified student experiences an allergic reaction.
- Healthcare plans shall be implemented with fidelity and in a manner that protects student confidentiality. Healthcare plans should address the various ways to limit exposure to food(s) and products containing the specific allergy.
- Should an identified student indicate (verbally or non-verbally) that he or she needs assistance, trained staff will perform first aid, or a lifesaving technique as authorized according to the student's emergency healthcare plan. RCS will then call 911 and the student's parent/guardian.

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- RCS' administration will provide prevention and management materials available to staff, students, and families.

Immunizations: North Carolina law requires that parents or guardians submit a record of their student's current immunizations (Public School Law 130A-152 Immunizations Required) prior to the first day of school. All records must have the following information:

- Five DPT doses (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis). If fourth dose (booster) is given on or after the fourth birthday, the fifth dose is not required.
- Four oral polio vaccines (OPV), one of which must be a booster given on or after the fourth birthday. If the third dose is given on or after the fourth birthday, the fourth dose is not required.
- Two MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) doses with the first dose on or after the first birthday and a second dose given before entering school.
- At least one dose of Hemophilus Influenzae Type b (HBOC or PRP--OMP), given on or after the first birthday and before five years of age. (Second dose is not required if first does was given after 15 months of age.)
- Three Hepatitis B doses.
- One Varicella dose on or after age 12 months and before age of 19 months.

RCS staff will review the record, and if the student is in full compliance, the record will be copied and filed. Students who are exempt from immunizations and who provide State approved exemption will be considered in compliance. If the student is in partial compliance, RCS will give the parent or guardian a checklist of necessary immunizations that the student must complete prior to attending class. If noncompliance persists, RCS will send a follow-up letter to the student's parent or guardian. If proof of immunization or exemption from vaccinations is not presented to the school within 30 days, the child will be not be allowed to attend school until the immunization requirement is met For more information regarding N.C. Immunization Laws, visit:

<http://www.immunize.nc.gov/schools/resourcesforschools.htm>

Garrett's Law, enacted in 2004, mandates NC schools provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis and influenza and the vaccines that protect against these diseases. The law was expanded I 2007 to mandate information also be provided about human papillomavirus (HPV) and the vaccines available to protect against HPV.

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Illness:

If a student is ill, he or she should not attend school. Please keep a student at home if any of the symptoms below are present. Keep an ill student at home until he or she has been symptom free for 24 hours, and/or if they any of the following symptoms:

1. Have a fever of 100 degrees or higher; are vomiting or have diarrhea; or have evidence of a severe head cold, persistent cough, sore throat, a suspicious rash, or other contagious condition (pink eye, head lice, etc.).
2. If these symptoms develop during the school day, a school team member will call you to pick up your child. When your child returns to school, please send in a hand-written note or an email to the front office that clearly explains the reason for the absence.
3. Special note: If a student has a contagious condition such as, but not limited to, chicken pox, head lice, or pink eye, parents or guardians must notify the school. Meningococcal Meningitis and Influenza.
4. Their Vaccines: RCS will provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis and influenza and their vaccines at the beginning of every school year, including information pertaining to the causes, symptoms, and how meningococcal meningitis and influenza are spread and the places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children. (N.C. G.S. 200522, s. 4(a), (b) § 115C375.5).

Security Measures:

Doors remain locked throughout the day and can only be accessed by authorized personnel. All visitors must begin their visit to the school in the front office.

Visitors: The following rules apply to all persons other than teachers, other team members, and pupils enrolled in the school who may come to the school for any reason during the school day. RCS must ensure the safety of all students and staff.

We strongly encourage all our visitors to register as a volunteer on our school website. This registration and subsequent approval are the first step to opening the door to becoming a member of our RCS volunteer family. If you have any questions, please see the front office.

1. All visitors must report to the front office, sign in, and receive approval to proceed from office staff.
2. ALL PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS MUST REPORT TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE AND SIGN IN.
3. Any person on school property who has not signed in during school hours is illegally on school grounds and will be asked to identify himself or herself properly or leave the premises. If the visitor refuses to leave the school grounds or creates any disturbance, the Principal has the authority to request assistance from the police.
4. Parents are reminded that other than scheduled volunteer duties in the classroom or special events, classrooms can only be visited with permission from the Principal or designee. We

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protect instructional time so that all our children can focus on learning rather than on visitors to the classroom.

5. Playgrounds are always off-limits for anyone other than RCS students. Again, we appreciate your adherence to this guideline.
6. Visitors are asked not to bring pets into the school or on school grounds unless special permission has been granted by the office.
7. Parents are reminded that younger siblings are not invited to classroom functions or on school field trips. Our focus at all school activities is always the students in the classroom.

Emergency Closures, Delays, and Early Dismissal Notices:

1. If Gaston Public Schools close due to inclement weather, RCS will also be closed. Parents will be notified by local news stations.
2. Fire Drills: The administration will conduct a fire drill within the first twenty days of school and thereafter at least once a month. Students and school employees must participate in fire drills to ensure that everyone knows how to exit school buildings safely and efficiently. Students must be silent during a fire drill so that everyone can hear emergency instructions. A copy of the regulations prescribed by the Commissioner of Insurance, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the State Board of Education will be posted on the bulletin board in each building (G.S.115C288,-525).
3. Tobacco Prohibition: RCS believes that health and wellness is a means to academic success, and tobacco use has been consistently proven to be a barrier to wellness; therefore, tobacco use is prohibited on school grounds and within 500 feet of the school property.
4. Weapons: RCS places student and team safety as a top priority and works diligently to provide a school environment where students and staff are free from the fear and danger presented by firearms and other weapons. Therefore, RCS prohibits any person other than authorized law enforcement or security personnel from possessing weapons, imitation firearms, or dangerous

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instruments of any kind in school buildings, on school grounds or buses, or at a school-related or school-sponsored activity away from school.

5. Asbestos: In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which mandated the Asbestos-Containing Materials in School Rule, 40 CFR Part 763. It requires all primary and secondary school buildings to be inspected by AHERA accredited inspectors and to identify all asbestos-containing building materials. The rule further requires the development of a management plan by an AHERA accredited management planner that is based on the findings of the inspection. The management plan outlines our intent in controlling the potential for exposure to asbestos fibers in our school.

Our State has adopted N.C. General Statute §130A-444 through 452 - Asbestos Hazard Management, and these rules essentially mirror the requirements of the AHERA regulations. In both cases, the rules require our school to notify parents, teachers, and employees of the presence and status of asbestos-containing material in our school buildings. Asbestos-containing materials have been identified in our building, and we conduct periodic surveillance, necessary maintenance, and re-inspections to ensure that the asbestos-containing materials remain in good condition and do not pose a hazard to our students and staff.

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FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL POLICIES

Advocacy:

As a parent, you are your child's best education advocate. You know your child's strengths and challenges, and you can help identify the resources your child needs to succeed. Parent-Teacher communication is essential in monitoring student progress and providing necessary supports. Please contact your child's teacher if you have concerns about academic and/or social emotional progress throughout the year.

Email tends to be the most convenient way of contacting teachers and parents are encouraged to check email regularly when used as a tool for communication. Please remember to update the RCS office and your child's teacher if your email address has changed. Parents who do not have home computers or Internet access are strongly encouraged to use free computers at the public library.

Directly calling or visiting a teacher during instructional time is not permitted, but a message will be taken in the office and then passed on to the teacher. Please give 24 hours for teachers to respond to your call.

Student Records:

Parents have the right to review their student's education records at any time by requesting an appointment with the administrator. Through a written request, parents may seek an amendment of the student's records that they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.

Parents may consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records except to the extent that the Act authorizes disclosure without consent. Parents may file a complaint with the Department of Public Instruction concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of this Act.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies. Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent

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or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

1. School officials with legitimate educational interest.
2. Other schools to which a student is transferring.
3. Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
4. Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student.
5. Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
6. Accrediting organizations.
7. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
8. Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.
9. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

10. Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may call 1-800- 437-0833. Or you may contact us at the following address: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 202028520

Freedom From Harassment: If an unauthorized individual, whether or not he is affiliated with the school, approaches a staff member for personal information concerning another staff member or student, the request will be denied, the individual will be informed that he/she is seeking private information, the person receiving the request will record the details of the incident and submit a copy of the information to the Principal. Likewise, if a student or staff member feels threatened by another individual concerning demands that are not duty-related, he should record the incident and immediately submit the concern to the Principal, who will take appropriate action. If it occurs again, the Principal will investigate it, and determine if harassment charges should be pursued against the individual. Parents, of course, have every right to seek and obtain private information concerning their own child/children, but not the private information concerning others.

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Nondiscriminatory Policy and Equal Educational Opportunity for All Students:

RCS does not discriminate against students based on race, sex, religion, creed, ability, disability, or national origin. RCS will provide equal opportunity for school admissions, academics, and extracurricular activities. If a student or his or her parent or guardian believes that RCS has violated this policy by denying equal treatment, he or she may notify the Board of Directors or designee who is authorized to investigate and, where appropriate, resolve such concerns.

Services for Exceptional Children under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):

RCS will provide a free and appropriate publicly supported education, in the least restrictive, appropriate environment, to every disabled child with special needs. RCS will comply with the State Board of Education's Procedures Governing Programs and Services for Children with Special Needs, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and its implementing regulations.

Any child suspected of having a disability can be referred by either the school, RCS, or the parent for an evaluation. This referral must be in writing and must state the reason for the referral, including specific presenting concerns, and the child's strengths and needs. This referral shall be given to the Principal, the child's teacher or other school professional. RCS will conduct a full and individual initial evaluation in accordance with NC 1503-2.4 through NC 1503-2.7 and only with written parental consent for the evaluation.

Evaluations will be conducted, eligibility determined, and for an eligible child, the IEP developed, and placement completed within 90 days of receipt of a written referral. Eligibility determination and development of the IEP is the responsibility of the IEP Team of which the child's parent(s) are members.

Mandatory Reporting: All RCS personnel are mandated to report suspected abuse and/or neglect. Once any personnel have reasonable belief that a student may be a victim, they must: Notify the administration of the suspect abuse and/or neglect. Or Call Gaston County DSS (330) 336-3000. Complete an incident report