

# MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Parent-Student Handbook



2021-2022



## **MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT - STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2021-2022**

**Middle School  
(914) 925-4571 (Office)  
(914) 921-2360 (Fax)**

**[www.ryecountryday.org](http://www.ryecountryday.org)**

*The Rye Country Day School ("RCDS" or the "School") Parent-Student Handbook (the "Handbook") is published and distributed to members of the RCDS community for the purpose of providing information on aspects of student and campus life to help students gain as much as possible from their experience at the School. Students, parents, faculty, administration, and staff should all read and be familiar with the contents of the Handbook so that each member of the community knows and understands our community expectations. While policies in this Handbook will generally apply, the School may take actions that it determines to be in the best interests of the School, its employees, and its students. This Handbook does not limit the authority of the School to alter, interpret, and implement its rules, policies, and procedures before, during, and after the school year. This Handbook is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to create, nor does it create, a contract or part of a contract in any way, including, but not limited to, between RCDS and any parent, guardian, or student affiliated with or attending the School. RCDS may add, revise, and/or delete School policies before, during, and after the school year.*

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**RYE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL  
2021-2022 GOVERNING STRUCTURE**

**Board of Trustees**

Ms. Leigh Dyson Geller – President  
Ms. Elizabeth Shah-Hosseini – Vice President  
Mr. Fernando Rivas – Treasurer  
Ms. Blanca Hirani – Secretary

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Ms. Patty Perez  
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Mr. Andrew Wallach  
Mr Jinhua Yan

**Alumni Board President**

Scott Weiss '96 (2017) 2021-2023

**Parents Association President**

Victoria Maggard (2021) 2021-2023

*Trustees Emeriti*

Frederick A. Klingenstein\* (1968-1981) (TE 1990)  
Carmen Ribera-Thain '75 (1998-2004) (TE 2004)  
Edward B. Dunn (1979-1993) (TE 2014)  
Michael C. Murr (1989-1997) (TE 2014)  
Edgar Wachenheim III (1983-1993) (TE 2014)  
\*Deceased

**RCDS PARENTS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS**

Victoria Maggard, President  
Rebecca Brown, President-Elect  
Susan Cohen, Vice President  
Vera Merrill, Treasurer  
Kelly Mulderry, Secretary

## **LIAISON DIVISION COORDINATORS**

Lynelle Chang, Lower School  
Ellen-Jane Moss, Middle School  
Allyson Kim, Upper School

## **SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

### **Head of School**

Scott A. Nelson, M.S., 1993

### **Assistant Head of School for Academic Programs**

Meredith deChabert, Ph.D., 2005

### **Assistant Head of School for Finance and Operations**

Pamela Goldman MacAffer '82, M.B.A., 2021

### **Interim Upper School Principal**

Meredith deChabert, Ph.D., 2005

### **Middle School Principal**

Ryan Song, M.S., 2020

### **Lower School Principal**

Stacey Sotirhos, Ph.D., 2021

### **Director of Academic Technology**

Katie O'Shaughnessey, M.A., 2016

### **Interim Director of Admissions and Enrollment Management**

Courtney Doucette, M.A., 2012

### **Director of Advancement**

Lynette Gioffre, M.A., 2014

### **Director of Athletics and Physical Education**

Wendy Jo Haft, M.S., 1998

### **Director of Counseling Support Services**

Kamauru Johnson, Ph.D., 2021

### **Director of College Counseling**

Jeffrey Bates, M.A., 2007

### **Director of Diversity and Inclusion**

Alikhan Morgan, M.S.Ed., 2013

### **Editorial Director**

Dania Abu-Shaheen, M.Ed., 2019

### **Dean of Faculty and Employees**



Jessica Flaxman, M.Ed., 2021

**Director of Information Technology**

Andrew Gillies, B.A., 2000

**Director of Learning Support Services**

Libby Jelliffe, M.Ed., 2013

**Director of Marketing and Communications**

Vanessa Odenbach, B.S., 2018

**Director of Public Purpose**

Rebecca Drago, M.Ed., 2018

**Director of Sustainability**

Kerry Lindereth, M.A., 2012

**Coordinator of Global Studies**

Daniel Murray, M.A., 2013

**Coordinator of STEAM**

Catherine Bischoff, M.S., 2001

**MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

**Middle School Principal**

Ryan Song, M.S.Ed., 2020

**Assistant Middle School Principal; Grade 6 Dean**

Betsy Stedman, M.A.T., 1996

**Grade 7 and 8 Dean**

Carla España, Ph.D., 2021

**Grade 7 and 8 Dean**

Matt Rosolen, M.A., 2000

**Grade 5 Dean**

Brian O'Callaghan, M.A., 2004

**MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

Lorraine Brimat-Smith, B.A., 1999, Administrative Assistant

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

### **Art**

Eric Drotch, M.F.A., 2017, Department Chair  
Casey Hallen, M.A.T., 2012  
Chris Kaye, B.F.A., 2014  
Susan Keown, M.A., 2011  
Stephen Tofano, M.S., 1998

### **Classics**

Sarah Danziger, Ph.D., 2008, Department Chair  
Beatrice DeSabatino, M.A., 2012

### **Computer Science**

Darien Cruté, M.S., 2020, Department Chair  
Don Fitz-Roy, B.S., 2019  
Gail Sestito, M.A.T., 2018

### **Drama & Dance**

Rachel Schulte, B.F.A., Department Chair, 2021  
Danielle Bensky, 2021  
Kate Henerey, M.A., 2018  
Jac-que Robinson, 2006, PAC Technical Director

### **English**

Iain Pollock, M.F.A., 2015, Department Chair  
Virginia M. Black, M.A., 1978  
Carla España, Ph.D., 2021  
Ryan Horton, M.P.S., 2010  
Erin McDonald, M.S., 2007  
Nadia Padilla, M.A., 2020

### **Humanities**

John D. Flynn, M.A., 1993, Department Chair  
William Colombo, M.S., 2018  
Amy Man, M.A., 2021  
Kyle R. Mitschele, M.A.T., 2001  
Julie Nuñez, M.S.Ed., 2019  
Brian O'Callaghan, M.A., 2004

### **Library**

Maegen Rose, M.L.I.S., 2018, Middle School Librarian

### **Mathematics**

Susan L. Peck, M.A.T., 2008, Middle School Department Chair  
Dallice Lazarus, B.A., 1998  
Melissa Hansen, M.S., 2020  
Matthew J. Rosolen, M.A., 2000  
Heather Russell, B.A., 2008  
Betsy Stedman, M.A.T., 1996

### **Modern Languages**

Margaret Parker, Ph.D., 2012, Department Chair  
Pilar Bustamante, M.A., 2021  
Esther Camacho, M.A., 2013, Spanish  
Dong Dong Huang, M.D., 2007, Mandarin Chinese  
Sarah Istwany, M.A.T., 2003, French  
Lizanne Rosenzweig, M.B.A., 2004, Spanish  
Lyvia Sage, 2011, French

### **Music**

Mary L. Marcell, M.M., 1992, Department Chair  
Peter Coulianos, B.F.A., 2002  
John Hager, B.M.Ed., 2000  
John Ragusa, B.S., 2016  
Keith Burton, M.M., 2011

### **Science**

Tameka Farrell, Ed.M., 2015, Department Chair  
Mark Bortner, M.A., 2005  
Holly Hutcheson, M.S., 2021  
Marcia Mignon, M.S., 2001  
Amanda Sackey, B.A., 2013  
Gail Sestito, M.A.T., 2018  
Ryan Song, M.S. Ed., 2020

### **Physical Education/Athletics**

Wendy Jo Haft, M.S., 1998, Director of Athletics and PE  
Georgette Summers, B.S., 2000, Assistant Athletic Director  
Jenny Smith, M.A. Ed., 2012, Coordinator of Physical Education, K-12  
Heidi Southard, M.S., 2011, Head Athletic Trainer  
Giovanni D'Onza, M.S., 2019, Assistant Athletic Trainer  
Alin Andre, M.A., 2011  
Danielle Bensky, 2021  
John Calandros, M.S., 2007  
Gil Castagna, B.S., 1979  
Richard Knazik, M.A., 2003  
Theodore J. Lawrence, M.S., 1996  
Alex Langorhorst, B.S., 2011  
Ray McGhee, M.S., 2000  
Uchechi Charles Ogbonna, M.A., 2011  
Amanda Popoli, M.A., 2019  
Ashley Zanon, B.A., 2013  
Jessica Zimmerman, M.A., 2020

## **ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL**

### **Director of Counseling Support Services**

Kamauru Johnson, Ph.D., 2021, Director of Counseling Support Services

### **Middle School Counselor**

Tim Silverman, M.S., 2010

### **Director of Diversity & Inclusion**

Alikhan Morgan, M.S.Ed., 2013

### **Director of the Makerspace**

Gail Sestito, M.A.T., 2018

### **Director of Public Purpose**

Rebecca Drago, M.A. 2018

### **Director of Learning Support Services**

Elizabeth Jelliffe, M.A., 2013

### **Study Skills Program Coordinator, Learning Specialist**

Tamara McKenna, M.A., 2011

### **Director of Academic Technology**

Katie O'Shaughnessey, M.A., 2016

### **Director of Technology**

Andrew Gillies, B.A., 2000

### **Technical Support**

Stephanie Melgar, 2011

Jay Solis, B.A., 2020

### **Nurses**

Nancy Gordon, M.S.N., 2001

Erielle DeJesus, R.N., 2021

Nicole Regan, R.N., 2020

Rebecca Tenney, R.N., 2019

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

### Switchboard

All divisions of the School can be reached through the RCDS switchboard at (914) 967-1417, which is open from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Head of School's Office	(914) 921-4250
Assistant Head of School	(914) 925-4613
Middle School Principal	(914) 925-4698
Middle School Assistant Principal	(914) 925-4561
Dean, Grade 7/8 (A-L)	(914) 925-4410
Dean, Grade 7/8 (M-Z)	(914) 925-4557
Dean, Grade 6	(914) 925-4561
Dean, Grade 5	(914) 925-4416
Middle School Counselor	(914) 925-4791
Health Office	(914) 925-4552
Director of Diversity and Inclusion	(914) 925-4595
Director of Financial Aid	(914) 925-4569
Director of Public Purpose	(914) 925-4792
Director of Student Support Services	(914) 925-4568
Lower School Office	(914) 925-4572
Middle School Office	(914) 925-4571
Upper School Office	(914) 925-4596
Development Office	(914) 925-4524
Business Office	(914) 925-4522
Admissions Office	(914) 925-4513
Athletic Department Office	(914) 925-4545
Summer School	(914) 925-4511

## **WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

Dear Middle School Students and Families,

It is with great excitement and anticipation that I welcome you to the Middle School and the 2021-22 academic school year!

Although rich in tradition and experts of the traditional, RCDS also has a history of preparing its students for the ever-changing world. This summer the School continued to similarly prepare and adapt to meet the rapidly changing world so we remain positioned to thrive in this evolving environment. This handbook serves as an overall guide to the protocols and processes of the Middle School and contains a wealth of information regarding student life at RCDS. Even those who have read previous versions of the Middle School Handbook should dedicate some time to read through this document carefully as there have been a significant number of updates.

Before you dive deeply into the reading, I'd like to take a moment to help craft a lens for you as a reader.

Middle School is a journey. It is a time for students to explore and engage with a larger world as they acquire more independence and freedom. It is our hope that we engage each student with experiences that challenge them academically and shape them into persons of character, all while creating many joyous memories. Although we journey together, I know Middle School students walk their own path and at their own pace. Their path may wind and their pace may vary, but ultimately the handbook will help them by providing guidance and expectations so that they explore our world safely while simultaneously helping build healthy bonds that further strengthen our community.

This Handbook sets forth policies and procedures that are specifically applicable to RCDS students and families. In the event that the School must continue to manage the COVID-19 environment or pandemic, there are also policies that are unique to and apply throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic (the "COVID-19 Protocols"), which are included as Appendix A to this Handbook. If any other policy in the Handbook conflicts with the COVID-19 Protocols, the policies and procedures set forth in the COVID-19 Protocols shall control.

Should any questions arise while reading the handbook, or if you have questions about anything related to the Middle School, please feel free to contact us. I look forward to connecting and working with each of you.

Sincerely,

Ryan Song  
*Middle School Principal*

## I. INTRODUCTION TO RYE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

### **Mission**

Rye Country Day School is a coeducational, college preparatory school dedicated to providing students from Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 with an excellent education using both traditional and innovative approaches. In a nurturing and supportive environment, we offer a challenging program that stimulates individuals to achieve their maximum potential through academic, athletic, creative, and social endeavors. We are actively committed to diversity. We expect and promote moral responsibility and strive to develop strength of character within a respectful school community. Our goal is to foster a lifelong passion for learning, understanding, and service in an ever-changing world.

### **Public Purpose Mission Statement**

Since 1869, RCDS's motto, *Not for Self, but for Service*, has been integral to the culture of the School. The School's philosophy states, "A superior education embraces the concept that to educate is to do more than to teach." Through service learning, we will provide transformative educational opportunities that prepare our students to be responsible citizens with an ethic of service and empathy for our shared human experience. We believe that meaningful and mutually beneficial partnerships emanate from a curriculum enhanced by community engagement. The School's sustained commitment to making a positive impact on the community and contributing to the common good defines our public purpose.

### **Sustainability Mission Statement**

The RCDS community, in conjunction with the expressed mission of the School, exists to foster understanding of our world around us, to act in accord with our school motto, *Not for Self, but for Service*, and to promote moral responsibility as citizens of the planet. The long-term goals of the sustainability committee are to create a climate of environmental awareness and to help students understand that they can effect positive and lasting change in the world by becoming lifelong stewards of our planet.

### **RCDS Statement of Philosophy**

A superior education embraces the concept that to educate is to do more than to teach. We regard the student as a whole person and seek to assist students in fulfilling their potential for personal growth. We do so by providing an environment that nourishes cultural, social, and physical needs, as well as moral and ethical sensitivities, thus helping our students to define an image of themselves that they can accept and respect.

Academically, the School offers a comprehensive program enabling our students to think independently, to write and speak with clarity, and to appreciate the values and joys of the humanities, the arts, and the sciences. We hope that our students will graduate from RCDS with a feeling of self-confidence and pride in their particular talents, capable of succeeding/thriving in the colleges of their choosing, and well prepared for what lies ahead.

It is our belief that the education of young people should encompass cultural, athletic, and communal experiences that stress the responsibility of each individual for the life and spirit of the whole community, promoting a graduate able to face the world with confidence, to compete effectively, and to contribute meaningfully to society.

RCDS's objectives are pursued by dealing with students as individuals, nurturing their abilities, challenging each to do their best, and offering a multitude of opportunities for academic, cultural, and personal growth.

RCDS strives to celebrate the individual and to provide a substantive, stimulating college preparatory education for a diverse group of intelligent young men and women in an atmosphere that cultivates and challenges the varied potential of all students.

### **Middle School Philosophy**

The Middle School offers a challenging and joyful experience that supports students along their journey from dependent to independent learners. Our multifaceted and evolving program fosters perseverance and promotes balance for healthy development. By modeling empathy and cultivating responsibility, we encourage our students to be good citizens and advocates, engaged in the world around them and ever mindful of the experiences and needs of others.

### **Core Values**

**R – RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY**

**C – COMMITMENT TO PERSONAL & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

**D – DIVERSITY WITHIN AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY**

**S – SERVICE**

### **History of School**

RCDS's steadfast commitments to learning, understanding, and service have existed since its start in 1869, and each generation that has passed through RCDS has added its own distinct mark.

Wishing to improve the quality of education available for their daughters, a group of local parents contacted Mrs. Susan J. Life and her husband, the Reverend William Life, who ran a small school in Pennsylvania. The Lifes came to Rye and established The Rye Female Seminary under the direction of Mrs. Life. During its first year, 1869, 60 students (25 boarders and 35 day students) enrolled in The Seminary, which was located on the present school property on Grandview Avenue.

The Seminary was purchased by sisters Harriet and Mary Stowe, two members of the faculty. Upon assuming leadership, the Stowe sisters initiated significant changes in the curriculum. During this period, The Seminary was at the forefront of a national trend, namely the introduction of college preparatory programs for women. Conscious of the potential financial risk for a strictly proprietary institution, a group of parents bought The Seminary in 1917 and established it as a nonprofit day school under the direction of a board of trustees.

The Seminary merged with a boys' school from nearby Harrison, The Rye Country School, and together they became known as The Rye Country Day Schools. In 1928, the "s" was dropped from the word "Schools," signifying unification into a single, well-integrated institution. To accommodate the increased student population, the campus experienced a period of growth and development. At this time, the School offered a program for girls from kindergarten through grade twelve, and a program for boys from kindergarten through grade nine. In 1964, the Board of Trustees extended the enrollment for boys through grade twelve.



Additional property was acquired, buildings were constructed, and roads moved, all with the help of many generous friends, families, and alumni. The appearance of the campus today is not one that the Lifes or the Stowe sisters would have recognized. Each generation that has passed through has added its mark and improved the facility to meet its particular needs. From the construction of the Main Building in 1924, to the additions of the Pinkham Building and the La Grange Field House in the sixties; the Dunn Performing Arts Center in the eighties; the new Lower School classrooms, new dining center, and the Athletic Center in the early two-thousands; the turf athletic fields in 2006; the expansion of the Pinkham building to include Memorial Hall in 2010; and the most recent addition of the Cohen Center of the Creative Arts, the Rye Country Day campus has kept pace with the needs of its community.

Today, students in Pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 enjoy a state-of-the-art facility while remaining fully conversant with the traditions, values, and expectations of the School's founders.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

RCDS seeks diversity in all aspects of school life. The School admits qualified students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or any other status protected by applicable law, and extends to them all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. The School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or any other status protected by applicable law in the administration of its admissions, financial aid, and loans, and its educational, athletic, and other programs.

### **Diversity Mission Statement**

RCDS seeks diversity in all aspects of school life. We believe that diversity is the existence of human variety and that each one of us is diverse in multiple ways and in a variety of contexts. We recognize diversity as including, but not limited to, differences in ability/disability, age, ethnicity, family structures, gender, geographic origin, life experiences, physical appearance, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

We are proactive about teaching our students the importance of diversity and inclusion in an increasingly interconnected, multicultural, and ever-changing world. As we prepare our students for leadership in the world beyond RCDS, we are responsible for teaching them how to communicate with, and be respectful of, others -- beginning with those in our school community and extending to those who live beyond our nation's borders. Every global citizen should be able to thrive in a diverse and interconnected society.

As educators, we are committed to creating and sustaining a school community that is diverse and inclusive, one in which all members can participate fully and maximize their potential. Our commitment to inclusion enriches our community with diverse ideas and perspectives. Students grow and flourish in this type of environment, where they can safely explore their individual identity while developing and exercising strength of character, healthy self-esteem, and confidence.

Through our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we strive to be good role models for the individuals in our care so that their present and future actions and choices may positively impact the world.

## **Accreditation**

The School is accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS) and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS).

## **Governance**

The School is a membership corporation of approximately 1,200 current parents, and it is governed by an elected Board of Trustees. It is the responsibility of this body to plan, develop, and establish policy and to assess the performance of the School consistent with the School's mission and philosophy. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the selection of the Head of School and works in close collaboration with the Head of School, though the Head of School is responsible for the implementation of policy and the day-to-day operations of the School.

## **Middle School Administrators**

THE PRINCIPAL is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the daily operation of the Middle School and for establishing policies that will enhance students' educational opportunities. Areas of responsibility include, but are not limited to, monitoring the curriculum, employee evaluation, advisor/advisee placement, the calendar, and providing assistance to students, employees, and parents. The Principal will follow the progress of students, handle all major disciplinary issues, and, when necessary, arrange for additional parent/teacher conferences.

THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL will work with the Principal to oversee all aspects of the daily operation of the Middle School. The Assistant Principal will assume the duties of the Principal in the event of her absence. The Principal and the Assistant Principal will monitor all areas of the curriculum, including coordination with the Upper and Lower School curricula. Along with the Deans, the Assistant Principal will oversee disciplinary issues and the organization of special Middle School events.

THE DEANS are available to provide personal support and guidance to students during the school day. Along with the Principal, Assistant Principal, and the student's Advisor, the Deans will monitor a student's progress, review reports, and handle disciplinary problems. The Deans will organize class events and activities that will build cohesion in the grade and help students to have an enjoyable and productive year.

THE DIRECTOR OF COUNSELING SUPPORT SERVICES provides leadership and coordination of the school's counseling support services through the supervision and support of the counselors in all three divisions.

THE DEAN OF FINANCIAL AID supports students and families who participate in the Financial Aid Program, including ensuring policies and procedures that are proactive and responsive, tailoring communications, and training employees.

## **II. DAILY LIFE**

### **School Day Schedule**

See appendix B.

### **Homeroom Teachers and Advisors**

The Advisor is the student's advocate and the person on whom the student relies for support. The student should go first to his or her Advisor with any academic, social, or personal problems. In Grade 5, the homeroom teacher acts as the Advisor to all students in that homeroom. In Grades 6 through 8, each Advisor is assigned multiple advisees; two or three Advisors and their advisees form a homeroom. Students meet with their Advisors each morning during homeroom and during Advisor periods. Advisors meet with parents on Conference Day to review each student's progress.

### **School Meetings and Assemblies**

All-School assemblies are held frequently. Many of these are devoted to the opportunity to watch other members of our community perform. On occasion, we are also fortunate to be able to welcome visiting speakers and performers. Every student is expected to arrive at assembly promptly and to exemplify mature, supportive and appropriate audience behavior throughout the lecture or performance. Students who do not have classes before assembly are expected to arrive in time to attend assembly.

### **Religious and Cultural Observances**

If a family celebrates a holiday for which a student will miss school for religious observance and worship, the family/student is asked to contact the teachers at least one week in advance to coordinate appropriate support for the student. As a general practice, teachers try to avoid scheduling major activities, assignments, or assessments on religious holidays. Long-term assignments (assignments scheduled before the day immediately preceding a holiday and due on a day other than the day immediately following a holiday) may be assigned.

### **Homework Center**

The Middle School Homework Center begins in mid-September and is open Monday through Friday from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. The supervisor of the Center maintains a quiet work environment and answers general homework questions, although the Center is not designed to be a tutorial program. Students must have written permission from a parent or guardian to work in the Homework Center. Whenever necessary, students who are remiss in completing assignments will be required to stay at the Homework Center for several afternoons in order to complete their work. The Dean will notify parents of this requirement.

If school needs to close early due to inclement weather or other conditions, Homework Center will be canceled for that day. During the school year, it may be necessary to cancel Homework Center in order for all teachers to attend a full employee meeting. Parents will be notified of this through E-Notes.

## **School Delays/Cancellations**

When circumstances such as snow, ice, or other emergencies make it necessary to cancel a school session or to shift to remote learning, families will be informed by an automated telephone call and text message. In addition, there will be a message posted on the RCDS website by 6:30 a.m. if school is closed or opening is delayed. Emergency information, and in particular inclement weather/school closings or delays, is also disseminated through the following local radio, television, and websites:

- WFAS Radio in White Plains (1230 AM and 103.9 FM)
- Cable News 12
- [www.ryecountryday.org](http://www.ryecountryday.org)
- [www.WHUD.com](http://www.WHUD.com)
- [www.News12.com](http://www.News12.com)

Please do not call the Head of School or the Rye Police Department. If in doubt, parents/guardians should check the RCDS website for information. In the event that individual local public school districts are closed because of inclement weather, bus service from those districts to RCDS will not be available.

For a one-hour delayed opening of school, the Middle School homeroom period will begin at 9:30 a.m. For a two-hour delayed opening of school, the Middle School homeroom period will begin at 10:30 a.m.

## **Early Dismissal**

For an early dismissal, a parent or legal guardian must request permission via a note, phone call, voicemail, or email to the Attendance Office. The request should state the date, time, and reason for the early dismissal. Students are not to miss school commitments. This request should be communicated to the Attendance Office by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the early dismissal.

Before leaving for any early dismissal, students who are missing a class must make arrangements to take all quizzes and tests and must turn in assignments. A student failing to make these arrangements may not receive credit for the work missed.

In case of illness during the school day, a student may not leave school without permission from the School Nurse. If the School Nurse is not available, students should see a member of the Middle School administration. Under no circumstances should a student leave without permission from the School.

Please Note: Students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. and miss a class are expected to take all quizzes and tests (or make arrangements to do so) and hand in all assignments that were due on that day before they leave school.

## **Arrival**

All students are expected to be in Homeroom by 8:30 a.m., when attendance is taken. In order to ensure this timely arrival, students who are scheduled to be on campus should aim to be in school by 8:25 a.m.

## **COVID-19 Daily Screening Procedure**

In the event that the School needs to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, daily screenings may be necessary. (See Appendix A)

## **Transportation To/From School**

The School does not provide transportation for students to and from school, nor can it assume any responsibility for this function. Parents/guardians who use buses, carpools, or taxis in transporting their children to and from school are responsible for all arrangements and should exercise such supervision of the details as is necessary.

Parents/guardians who intend to use public school transportation for their children should remember that applications for such transportation must be filed in most cases with the local school districts no later than April 1 for the next school year. Because the School does not have a contractual relationship with bus companies, should a problem develop relating to bus transportation, the parent should contact the local Board of Education or the private transportation company directly. Only students registered in a district can avail themselves of the bus service. Students having plans with friends who take a bus cannot ride the bus if they are not a registered bus rider in that district.

It is expected that all students will conduct themselves in a safe and proper manner while riding on school buses to and from school, as well as on school trips. The School will cooperate with bus companies and local school districts to ensure safe conduct on these vehicles. A student who engages in inappropriate behavior may be suspended from riding the school bus for a period of time.

We urge all parents/guardians whose children ride bicycles to and from school to discuss carefully with their children the rules of traffic and the safe operation of bicycles. They should stress the fact that bicycle riders must obey the same rules and respect the same signs which apply to automobile drivers. When bicycles are at school, they should be securely locked.

## **Drop-Off/Pick-Up Procedures**

Parents may drop off and pick up students in designated areas on school property only. There will be no drop-off or pick-up on Grandview Avenue. With our students' safety in mind, and because of fire laws and safety procedures, please park in designated parking spaces and along the Main Circle and Upper School Circle.

Fifth and sixth grade will arrive through the Main Circle. Seventh and eighth grade will arrive through the Upper Circle.

When there are one or more Middle School siblings, please use the arrival location of the youngest sibling as the designated drop-off point.

When there are one or more Lower School siblings, please use the arrival location and time assigned to the youngest sibling as described in the *Lower School Parent-Student Handbook*.

Please do not park in areas designated as No Parking Zones. For safety, and in consideration of the School's neighbors, please drive slowly on School grounds and in the surrounding neighborhood and refrain from using cell phones while driving on campus. In accordance with the Rye City Code, RCDS has a policy of "No Idling" for more than three minutes.

Departure locations will be the same as the assigned arrival location. The dismissal process will begin at 3:15 p.m. for fifth and sixth grade and will begin at 3:20 p.m. for seventh and eighth grade. To develop a natural stagger and a smoother experience, families who can pick up at 3:25 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. respectively are encouraged to do so.

When there are one or more Middle School siblings, the older Middle School sibling will be dismissed from the youngest sibling's grade level location.

Middle School students with siblings in the Lower School will pick-up their sibling(s) from the Blackbox Theater. Students must then proceed *directly* to their pick-up location.

At dismissal please use the Middle School family name cards provided at the beginning of the year. They should be attached to the visors and will help teachers recognize vehicles and prepare students for pick up. Please do not exit your vehicle. All vehicles at the curb must have drivers inside and must exit the loading area as soon as all riders are loaded. This will enable us to keep our dismissal procedure flowing smoothly.

*Teachers have an important role at dismissal supervising all their students' safe departures. Therefore, parents are asked to refrain from informal conversations at the dismissal locations.*

### **Students Who Walk to School**

Parents and guardians must provide written permission to the Middle School Office if they wish for their child(ren) to walk to and from school. The Middle School does not allow students to walk into the town of Rye at dismissal from Monday through Thursday unless a parent or guardian has given that student written permission to do so. All Middle School parents and guardians are asked to please inform the Middle School Office if there is a need for their child(ren) to walk into town on a day other than Friday.

### **Transportation by Train**

Regardless of whether students arrive from the North or South, they are expected to exit the station area from the School side, not the town side of the station. They are expected to walk through the underpass (of I-95), and immediately turn right on the sidewalk up the Cedar Street hill and cross Cedar Street at the crosswalk. Students should not climb the hills around the train station or walk along the Boston Post Road. All students are expected to travel directly from the train station to the School.

### **Rideshare Services**

Parents should be aware that many rideshare companies, such as Uber, have policies that prohibit transporting unaccompanied minors. The School prohibits the use of these services by students without adult supervision, and will not take responsibility for calling car services for students.

### **School Supplies and Books**

During the first few days of school, classroom teachers will distribute the supplies that they have ordered for their classes, including all necessary textbooks and workbooks. Students should take their textbooks home and leave them at home to use for homework and study. Students only need to bring workbooks and notebooks to and from school. We provide classroom sets of textbooks in each classroom, in addition to a number of copies of all textbooks that can be found in the bookcase located in the Middle School Office and on the carts upstairs in the 5/6 locker area and in the 7/8 hallway. Students may use the books in the bookcase and on the carts during Flex time, study halls, and Homework Center. Textbooks are heavy, so with this policy we aim to reduce the physical loads that students must carry back and forth to school in their backpacks on a daily basis. The faculty will remind students often to leave their textbooks at home.

## **Bring Your Own Device (“BYOD”)**

The School provides access to mobile devices for students’ use during the school day. When necessary, students will be asked to transport these devices back and forth from home to school. These mobile devices serve as valuable tools for students, providing structured, monitored, and equitable access to resources that students will need to complete assigned work. All mobile devices are expected to be used for academic purposes only.

In the event that some students have a particular learning need not adequately supported by the School’s computer resources, accommodations may be made to allow students to bring their own personal device to School. Accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis, and will be informed by documented assessments of the individual student’s learning needs. The School will not be held responsible for computer loss, theft, or damage that may occur. Mobile devices will be used to support learning needs, and must be stored securely when not in use.

## **Email**

The School provides students with an email account which should be used only for School-related communication (e.g., contacting and receiving information from teachers, submitting homework and assignments, transferring files to and from School, etc.). Students are expected to comply with the policies outlined in the School’s Acceptable Use Policy when using their School-issued email account.

## **Food at School**

The School’s food service program is directly related to the mission of the School. For members of our community to learn, grow, work and play, they must be provided with healthy, nutritious snacks and lunch. The School recognizes that there are different points of view about issues of nutrition and a range of eating habits in our student population. Our goal is to provide balance, nutrition and variety for snacks and lunch, minimizing the use of foods that are high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, and preservatives. The School seeks to serve meals and snacks that are both appealing and nutritious.

It is imperative that the RCDS community be aware of and sensitive to various food allergies that are life-threatening to some students and employees. Community members must pay special attention to cleaning up after themselves after eating on campus. Students, parents/guardians, and employees should not bring nut or nut-containing products on campus. The School’s food service program aims to ensure the safety of students with serious food allergies. The School strives to be a nut-aware institution, and we expect all members of our community to support this policy. Please see the handbook section on “Food Allergies” for more information.

During the pandemic, community members will be eating breakfast, lunch, and snack in various locations around campus. It is imperative that everyone cleans up after themselves thoroughly. Because masks are removed for eating and drinking, special attention to social distancing when eating and drinking is also imperative. Post-pandemic, outside food is restricted in the Main Building and in the Upper/Middle School Dining Room.

Food and drink should not be consumed during class.

Chewing gum is prohibited everywhere on campus and at all times.



## **Special Events and Birthdays**

Baked goods for a student's birthday in school can be ordered from the School's food service, Flik, by submitting an order form, which will be available online, to the Middle School Office. This baked goods order form must be submitted one week in advance of the birthday celebration. No home-baked or store-bought baked goods are allowed to be brought in.

## **Student Lockers**

Students are provided with individual lockers. All lockers are the property of the School and are subject to search and inspection. Personal materials are to be stored in lockers. All books and notebooks should be properly identified with the labels provided. A student should never open another student's locker. Decorations must be in the spirit of good taste and judgment (at the discretion of the School) and need to be taken down within two weeks of the end of the academic year. Lockers should be kept neat and organized. The area around lockers is students' responsibility and should be kept clean. With the exception of bottled water, food may not be kept in lockers.

## **Lost and Found**

Please be sure to mark students' clothes with the student's name in indelible ink or with sewn-on labels. All unmarked clothing will be put into the lost and found box. Anything left unclaimed past a two-month period will be donated to charity or used at the staff's discretion.

## **Gift Giving**

It is the School's policy that NO individual or group gifts from parents/guardians and/or students to employees, coaches, or administrators are allowed at any time.

Cards and notes from students or families are welcome and encouraged. In addition, the Board of Trustees and the RCDS Parents Association have established several venues for thanking all school employees each year for their dedicated service.

We ask for everyone's understanding and cooperation with these guidelines, which help to make our community a comfortable, warm, and welcoming one for everyone.

Gift giving among students at school can lead to both awkwardness and hurt feelings. We discourage students from exchanging gifts at school, and if students choose to do so, it should be done as privately as is possible.

## **Party Invitations and Party Favors**

In maintaining a welcoming and respectful school environment, we ask parents to follow these guidelines:

- As a safety precaution, party invitations may not be distributed at school even when the entire grade is being invited. Similar to other safety measures, students should not be sharing physical items, which includes the distribution of party invitations. Party invitations must be mailed home.
- When a family does not invite the entire grade to a party or event, and party favors such as sweatshirts or t-shirts are distributed to students, these articles of clothing may not be worn to school.



### III. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

#### Curriculum

The Middle School Curriculum Guide, which can be found on the school's website, contains a complete description of the academic program of the Middle School, Grades 5-8. All students in the Middle School take courses in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, History/Social Studies, Science, and Classic/Modern Language.

#### Study Habits

It is important that students develop a responsible approach toward their schoolwork, planning their time outside of school so that they complete their assignments to the best of their ability. The faculty ask that parents help in developing students' healthy study habits by encouraging students to study in a quiet room and by discouraging television viewing, recreational computer use, and telephone calls during the school week.

In the event of a student's absence from class, classroom teachers will coordinate with students to help them manage homework and classroom assignments.

#### Homework

Homework Philosophy: The RCDS Middle School believes that homework is essential to fostering students' independent learning. In all grades, homework is assigned for a number of reasons: to reinforce classroom content, to check for students' understanding of the material, and/or to afford students an opportunity to practice skills learned in class. Homework may also be assigned so that students can preview material before a lesson (for example, a reading assignment that will be the basis of the next day's lesson). In all cases, students are encouraged to work through the homework independently and to the best of their ability using the strategies that they have been taught. Given the purposes for which homework is assigned, all homework is either checked and/or incorporated into classroom lessons each day.

Homework Completion Times: We understand that our Middle School students lead busy lives outside of school, but we ask that parents help students achieve balance in their lives by ensuring students have the time available in their schedules to complete their homework. The time expectations for homework completion differ at each grade level and in each course. In Grades 5 and 6, the completion of homework assignments averages about 60 to 80 minutes. The time commitment increases to approximately 120 to 150 minutes in Grades 7 and 8. At any grade level the time that it takes for a student to complete homework will vary depending on the individual child.

2/3/4 Policy: A student may have no more than two assessments in one day, no more than three assessments over two consecutive days, and no more than four assessments in one week (Monday through Friday).

Assignment Sheets: Assignment sheets for the week will be posted by class time on Monday of each week. Changes to assignment sheets must be posted by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the change, and changes are limited to one change per week.

Assigned Reading: Any reading assigned should be able to be completed within the recommended amount of time *for the average student* in the class.

Homework Adjustments: Teachers will consult the test calendars when planning assignment sheets, and they will lighten their homework, as much as possible, when assessments are scheduled.

No Homework Days: Teachers may opt to assign no homework approximately once per week, if possible, given the demands of the curriculum. Homework is not assigned before holidays.

No Friday Homework: Students in grade 5 will have no homework on Fridays and no Monday assessments. Students in grade 6 will have no homework on Fridays and no Monday assessments until after winter break (except reading in LA and drop days for science and social studies).

## **Grading And Assessment Philosophy**

Why We Assess: Assessment serves a number of important functions in the Middle School, the most valuable of which inform instruction. Assessments help teachers and students gauge whether they are meeting curricular goals by providing a framework for students to demonstrate and apply what they have learned and for teachers to assess whether students are learning what teachers are teaching. Assessments also help teachers gauge what students know before, during, and after learning specific material. They allow teachers to measure student progress over the course of the academic year, as well as provide feedback for teachers to target topics for re-teaching or extra help. By informing instruction in these ways, assessment helps prepare our students for the next level of learning.

Assessment, as an extrinsic motivator in the Middle School, also serves as an incentive for students to study, develop, and improve. Different kinds of assessments hold students accountable for their learning until their motivation for learning becomes intrinsic. Assessment also provides a venue for students to develop a sense of accomplishment and gain confidence as learners.

How We Assess: A wide variety of types of assessment help teachers and students to achieve specific learning goals. It is important to note that teachers use both formative and summative assessment in gauging student progress. Formative assessments are low stakes, ongoing types of assessment that can be used to monitor student progress at any given point. Summative assessments are medium to high stakes tools that evaluate student learning at a natural mid- or end point of an instructional unit. In the Middle School, we aim to strike a balance between formative and summative assessment. Our goal is to offer enough formative assessments so that evaluation is not unhealthily stress inducing.

<b>Formative</b>	<b>Both Formative and Summative</b>	<b>Summative</b>
Diagnostic tests/quizzes Pop quizzes Short writing Class discussion Oral interviews Q&A Observations Games, puzzles Surveys Homework checks Binder checks Exit passes/slips; entry slips	Short quizzes Creative writing Presentations Projects – individual and group Science labs Problem sets Class work Demonstrations Student self-evaluation Debates Artistic creations Performances – skits, scenes, rehearsals, plays, concerts	Tests Quizzes Analytical writing – essays, research papers, etc. March Exams (grades 7 and 8)

There is no ideal range of weight for each type of assessment, except for the general rule that summative assessments often weigh more than formative assessments. Each academic department is encouraged to engage in annual, ongoing discussion about learning benchmarks for each grade level in the Middle School and how each should be weighed. Department-based grading exercises (e.g. reflection on how one grades and what it shows one values versus what the department values) help to ensure that teachers are using comparable grading methods in order to balance teacher autonomy and equity for students. Middle schoolers perform best when they know what is expected of them, so departmental conversations about what is being evaluated through assessment are key.

**Assessment Frequency:** All grades in the Middle School follow the 2-3-4 rule when it comes to summative assessment. The policy states that a student may have no more than two assessments in one day, no more than three assessments over two consecutive days, and no more than four assessments in one week (Monday through Friday). The types of assessment that fall under the 2-3-4 rule include tests, quizzes, essays/reports/papers, projects, and presentations, all of which require advanced preparation outside of class.

Formative assessment in the Middle School happens frequently, if not daily. Because each grade level in the Middle School is developmentally unique, each grade level team has a particular approach to summative assessment that is appropriate for the students in that grade. In terms of frequency, summative assessment happens every two to three weeks in all grades.

**Assessment Design:** Independent school teachers benefit from a healthy sense of autonomy in curriculum and pedagogy, and assessment design is no exception. In the Middle School, grade level teams are encouraged to engage in annual, ongoing discussion about assessment design, similarities, and differences across subjects. The amount of information covered, the types of questions/problems, the length of responses, point values, partial credit, directions, and age-appropriate academic press are all topics that are discussed. For courses that have multiple teachers in a given grade level, teachers coordinate on assessment design so that the expectations for students in a given grade are comparable. Departments are also encouraged to help teachers within each department with types of questions, progression of level of difficulty, and use of common language.

## **Class Placement**

In arranging class placement each year, administrators create class lists with careful consideration given to students' academic and behavioral strengths. We work to create class lists that are balanced in terms of gender, diversity, new/returning students, and academic and behavioral strengths.

It is School policy that the faculty and administration will make all class placement decisions and that we will not be able to accept parents' requests for class placement. All class placement decisions will be made with interest, care, and concern.

## **Foreign Language**

Students in Grade 5 continue the language studied in Lower School. In Grade 6, students must choose either French, Latin, Mandarin Chinese, or Spanish and must continue the study of their language of choice through the completion of Grade 8. Successful completion of the Foreign Language studied in Grades 6, 7, and 8 will satisfy, in most cases, the first level Foreign Language requirement in the Upper School.

## **Electives**

In Grades 5 and 6, students take a variety of non-academic courses, including chorus, band, shop, art, library, drama, and computer. In Grades 7 and 8, students choose from various elective offerings in the following departments: Music, Drama and Dance, Computer Science, and Art.

## **SEEK**

All students in the Middle School are involved in SEEK programs that deal with social and human development issues pertinent to their age group and that help to build character, self-esteem, and concern for others. The SEEK program is coordinated by the School's counselors. Units are taught by the Counselors, Deans, and guest speakers.

## **Study Skills**

Middle School students are instructed to develop, practice, and implement healthy and effective study skills habits. An emphasis will be placed on executive function skills including but not limited to organizing, planning and prioritizing, time management, metacognition, and self-regulation. The goal is to help students become independent learners, as well as to help them make efficient and effective use of their study time when by themselves or when part of a group.

## **Grading and Reporting System**

In each academic class, grades are primarily based on student comprehension of course content as demonstrated through tests, quizzes, written and oral exercises, projects, and presentations. A student is expected to participate in a positive and cooperative manner and to be punctual and prepared for each class.

The Middle School report card provides two different grades for students in their academic classes: an achievement grade and a homework grade. The achievement grade is based on formal assessments, projects, and essays, and it is the grade that is entered onto the student's official Middle School transcript. The homework grade is based on the student's completion of homework. For specials classes (e.g. band/chorus, shop, art, computer, etc.), the achievement grade reflects a student's level of effort and participation, and homework grades are reported only when appropriate.

A checklist and a narrative comment for all classes accompany each set of grades. The checklist reports on "behaviors that promote learning," with the aim of providing a clear presentation of how a student approaches his or her class work each day. Listening respectfully to teachers, managing materials, remaining on task, working well within groups, and seeking help when necessary are valued student behaviors that serve our students well when they become everyday practices. The responses used in the checklist are Frequently, Sometimes, Rarely, and Not Applicable.

The letter grades below represent the following:

- **E = EXCELLENT** (90% - 100%) The student's performance in all areas of the course is outstanding.
- **G = GOOD** (80% - 89%) The student's achievement is of substantial quality in relation to the course standards.
- **HP = HIGH PASS** (70% - 79%) The student has displayed competency in the course.
- **P = PASS** (60% - 69%) The student has met the minimum requirements of the course.

- **U = UNSATISFACTORY** (below 60%) The Student has failed to meet the minimum requirements of the course.
- These grades are for nonacademic subjects and physical education.
  - **S = Satisfactory**    **U = Unsatisfactory**

Progress reports are written three times a year: late November (first trimester), early March (second trimester), and June (third trimester and year). In between these reporting times, a student's progress is closely monitored. If a student is having difficulty, parents can expect to be contacted by the teacher, the Advisor, or the Dean.

If, at the midpoint of a grading period a student is averaging a low HP or any grade in the P or U range, the student's parents will be notified via email by the student's teacher.

## **Learning Support**

Students who need additional learning support beyond what they receive in the classroom are evaluated by the Principal, Grade Deans, Counselors, and Learning Specialists and may be assigned to a Learning Specialist during a study hall or a free period. If a student is seen by a Learning Specialist, communication will be ongoing between the Learning Specialist, the student's grade-level team, and the student's parents/guardians. The goal of learning support services is to efficiently help a student with relatively minor learning issues to master the skills needed to function independently throughout Middle School. Students with more involved difficulties may be referred for an outside evaluation and/or more intensive remediation.

In support of students who have diagnosed learning differences, Middle School Learning Specialists are available to work on an individual and collective basis. The goal of this work will be to develop strategies to manage the learning differences, assure appropriate curricular choices, and maintain communication among teachers, administrators, and advisor concerning the academic progress of the student.

## **Accommodations**

RCDS aims to support students with disabilities while maintaining the School's high standards. The School offers reasonable accommodations to students with learning and other disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (the "ADA") and New York State. While certain accommodations are possible, the School has limited capacities and resources. All requests for accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Accommodations Team (the "Team"). The Team generally consists of the Director of Learning Support Services, the Division Learning Specialist, and the Division Principal.

### *What is a Disability?*

This Policy does not apply unless a student has a limitation that is defined as a "disability" in accordance with the ADA. Disabilities are physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more life activities of the student. The student must be qualified to meet school standards with or without reasonable accommodation.

Physical impairments include physiological disorders and conditions, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss. The physical impairment must affect one or more body systems such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs (e.g., vocal cords, soft palate, or tongue), respiratory, cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, hematic, immune, circulatory, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine systems. Simple physical characteristics, such as left-handedness or the color of one's eyes,

hair, or skin, are not physical impairments. Mental impairments include mental or psychological disorders, such as emotional or mental illness and organic brain syndrome. Specific learning differences or disorders, such as attention deficit disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, only sometimes meet the definition of disability under this Policy. Disadvantages attributable to environmental, cultural, or economic disabilities that do not otherwise meet the definition of disability are not disabilities, nor are common personality traits such as poor judgment and quick temper.

A disability also must substantially limit a major life activity. Major life activities include such activities as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and working. A determination regarding the existence of a "substantial limitation" is made by comparing the person contended to be disabled to most people in the general population. Disabilities are assessed by comparing to most people in the general population the condition under which the individual performs the major life activity; the manner in which the individual performs the major life activity; and/or the duration of time it takes the individual to perform the major life activity or for which the individual can perform the major life activity.

There are certain times in a child's development when learning disabilities tend to appear: when students are learning to read, when students are reading to learn, and in early adolescence when students encounter new challenges. It is less common for a learning disability to be diagnosed for the first time in high school. Also, please keep in mind that long-range studies reveal that extra time can work against some students who do not demonstrate a need for it.

#### *How is an Accommodation Requested?*

Students and parents or guardians may initiate the accommodations process by making an accommodation request to the Team. Requests made to teachers or administrators will be directed to the Team. No one except for the Team is authorized by the School to grant accommodation requests.

#### *What is the Data Needed for an Accommodation?*

To be entitled to an accommodation for a disability that is not readily apparent, the student, parent, or caregiver requesting the accommodation must provide the Team with medically certified proof of the disability and medically certified proof of the need for the accommodation. For learning disabilities, a complete psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluation is required. The evaluation should include a diagnosis of a specific disability and demonstrate the need for any requested accommodation.

If parents are concerned about their child's learning and are considering having their child evaluated, we encourage the parents to set up a meeting with the Director of Learning Support Services to discuss the concerns and to learn about the process for determining accommodations. The School has a list of evaluators who understand the criteria that must be met, who are familiar with our School's curriculum, and who have been effective in investigating a student's learning difficulties. If a parent does not have a meeting with the Director of Learning Support Services ahead of time, in order to work together and best support the students, it would be helpful for the evaluator to speak to the Director of Learning Support Services before completing the evaluation to make sure that the evaluation will meet the criteria before any recommendations or accommodations are suggested.

#### *What is the Process for Determining Appropriate Accommodations?*

Once the School receives the required documentation and, as applicable, a completed evaluation, generally within two weeks, a meeting of the Accommodations Team will be scheduled to discuss the report. The Team may require additional information if necessary. Deciding what accommodations are reasonable and necessary is an interactive, collaborative process among the School, the student, and the student's parents/guardians. After the Team reviews the data and the recommendations, a meeting is set



up with the Team, the parents/guardians, and often the evaluator to discuss the recommendations and accommodations. An educational plan is then created.

The Team considers many factors when deciding whether, and to what extent, the School can accommodate a disability. These considerations may include the appropriateness of the requested accommodation, available alternatives, whether the requested accommodation unduly burdens the School, whether the requested accommodation fundamentally alters the School's mission or program, and whether the requested accommodation presents a direct threat to the health and safety of the student or others in the school community.

Once a student receives an accommodation for a disability, it is the student and the student's parents/guardians' responsibility to follow up with the Accommodations Team about changes to the student's disability status or need for additional or different accommodations. The Team reviews accommodations during the transition years from lower to middle and middle to upper schools and yearly, as needed and appropriate. The Team will notify parents/guardians if the accommodations remain appropriate and/or need to be updated.

Even after supportive services and accommodations have been put in place, a student may still not be able to satisfactorily fulfill the School's academic requirements. In such instances, the Team, the Head of School, and/or other support personnel may decide that the accommodations put into place may not suffice to ensure the student's success at the School. At that time, the Head of School and/or Division Principal will decide whether it is appropriate for the student to remain at the School.

Any questions regarding this Policy should be directed to the Director of Student Support Services.

### **Tutoring Philosophy and Policy Statement**

The School endeavors to provide as much individual help for students during the regular school day as circumstances will permit and wishes to limit as much as possible tutoring or special help for which a fee is charged. Tutors should be encouraged to make initial contact with the classroom teacher and maintain communications for effective results. Tutoring will be recommended by the School only when it is clearly needed. The Principal or Grade Level Dean should be made aware of the establishment of tutoring or other out-of-school academic work.

RCDS employees are expected to provide a reasonable amount of extra help for their students; however, they are not allowed to tutor their own students in their subject areas for financial compensation during the school year. In addition, RCDS employees cannot tutor RCDS students whom they might teach during the next school year. Full-time employees who tutor RCDS students whom they do not teach may do so outside of normal school hours. If an employee is tutoring an RCDS student, he or she should inform the student's teacher, Department Chair, and Division Principal.

## **Library**

The Klingenstein Library serves students, employees, and parents at RCDS. Community members should speak with the Librarians about checking out materials from the Library. The Klingenstein Library is typically open from 8:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. There are two rooms for study, available on a first-come, first-served basis. Students must sign in (in the library office) to use one of these rooms. Because there are several other areas on campus available for meeting socially, the main part of the library maintains a quiet work atmosphere. Anyone who does not maintain that environment may be asked to leave, and students may be subject to additional disciplinary action. Please do not bring food or drink into the library unless granted specific permission from the Librarian. It is expected that all library users will clean up after themselves.

### Circulation Policies

Books and back issues of magazines may be checked out for a period of 10 school days. After that, they may be renewed for an additional 10 school days if no one else is waiting for the material. Magazines should be returned in the plastic envelope in which they were placed at checkout. All materials should be returned to the return slot in the Circulation kiosks marked "Book Return." Reference books and books placed on Reserve do not circulate. Copies may be made from those books (see below, "Copier Policies").

Overdue fines are not assessed. It is expected that all materials will be returned or renewed promptly. Overdue notices are processed twice a month and emailed to students in Grades 7-12, as well as to a parent. If materials are still not returned after 3 notices, the student account is billed for the price of the book, plus a non-refundable service charge. Material returned after billing may, at the discretion of the librarian, generate a refund of the book price.

### Copier Policies

Copies may be made from reference and reserve books without charge. All other copies cost \$.05 each. Payment is expected at the time of copying. The library staff reserves the right to limit copying. The Copyright Law (Title 17, U. S. Code) will be enforced. If you are not sure if what you are copying is legal, ask a Librarian.

### Supplies

In general, students are expected to have their own basic supplies. Tools such as a stapler, hole puncher, and a pencil sharpener are available for student use in the Library.



## IV. COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

Truthfulness and honesty in all personal and academic matters are fundamental expectations of the School. Courtesy is expected at all times. Respect for the rights and property of others is essential for the well-being of the community. Participation in formal occasions such as competitions, performances, dances, field trips, etc. requires that students maintain the School standard and that they be aware that their actions reflect on the reputation of their School community.

### **Honesty**

Individuals are expected to be truthful in dealing with themselves, each other, and the School. Dishonesty of any sort will be treated very seriously by the School.

### **Academic Integrity**

RCDS is dedicated to creating a community that fosters character development and intellectual growth. While it expects students and employees to support independent thought and the free exchange of ideas in order to develop and maintain a climate of inquiry, a lack of integrity, whether in academic or non-academic situations, erodes the trust so necessary for a fruitful and supportive learning environment.

### Definitions

In all of the definitions listed below, *it is the action, not the intent of the student*, that will be considered.

#### *Cheating*

The act of wrongfully using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, ideas, or work of another in order to gain an unfair advantage. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Giving aid to another student on tests, quizzes, assignments, or examinations that is not permitted;
- Using or consulting materials that are not permitted (such as cheat sheets/crib notes);
- Using equipment or devices on tests, quizzes, assignments, or examinations that are not permitted (such as information stored in calculators);
- Failing to adhere to a teacher's specific directions with respect to the terms of academic integrity or academic honesty; and
- Collaborating with other students on assignments, tests, or essays outside the specific boundaries set by the teacher.

\*The RCDS Academic Integrity Committee wishes to thank Duke University for allowing it to use sections of Duke's statement on cheating and related offenses in creating the Definitions Section above.

### *Plagiarism*

Copying work in any medium and submitting it as one's own. (For example, handing in another student's work or purchasing/taking papers from the Internet.) Students must show appropriate documentation for:

- Any direct quotation from another source, including, but not limited to, the written or spoken word;
- Any statement of fact that is not common knowledge available to any reader;
- Any developed idea or plan of organization or concept derived from any other person or taken from another author or source; and
- Any diagram, image, data, equation, illustration, or audio/video clip copied from another source.

All students must acknowledge sources and references in their academic work. Their teachers will give clear instructions as to the proper method to acknowledge sources and references.

### *Inappropriate Tutorial Assistance*

While at times it is part of the learning process for students to receive assistance outside of school, either from education professionals or other more experienced individuals, such help is inappropriate and an academic integrity violation when the student cannot explain the terms, ideas, and concepts used and/or the writing is sufficiently different from other work by that student that the student could not possibly duplicate it.

### **Respect for Property**

As community members, we are expected to respect our own property, the property of others, and the buildings and grounds we share. All property, including coats and other outer garments worn to school, should be clearly marked with the student's name. The School cannot accept responsibility for the personal belongings of the students. Students are encouraged not to bring valuables to school with the exception of laptop computers, mobile phones, and mathematical calculators. Personal property of students cannot be insured by the School and is covered only through the family's household insurance policy, typically as "Items off the Premises." Students are expected to take care of their own possessions. The School endeavors to help students develop such responsibility. Students demonstrating a lack of respect for the personal property of others or the property of the School will not be tolerated.

### **Behavior and Safety**

Every RCDS community member has the right to feel safe, valued, and respected while at school. We believe that an effective learning environment requires daily behavior rooted in kindness and empathy. Words and actions that demean or threaten the emotional or physical welfare of any individual or group will not be tolerated—this includes all slurs and epithets.

Any student whose behavior on or off campus jeopardizes the health, welfare, or safety of any individual at the School or the reputation of the School may be subject to immediate disciplinary action, which could include expulsion.

## **Speech and Respect for Community Members**

The School seeks cultural competency for all community members and expects all community members to respect others, especially around race, gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, ability, and other aspects of people's identity. We strive to combat prejudice in all forms, including in speech. We recognize that words have the power to negatively impact others, and we prohibit speech that discriminates, attacks, disparages, demeans, intimidates, or deliberately mischaracterizes an individual or group based on their identity. Offensive speech can take many forms, including, but not limited to, negatively biased categorical statements, stereotypes, and epithets.

The School invites sincere discussion and questions, and recognizes that there will be moments when insufficient information, erroneous belief, or faulty presentation will create opportunities to review statements and clarify impact. We encourage students to address those incidents directly when they occur, but we recognize that not all students may feel comfortable doing so. Students who have concerns about another's speech, whether in person or online, should contact the Dean of Students, the Principal, or the Head of School so that the School can respond appropriately.

## **Dress Code and Appearance**

The intent of the RCDS dress code is to reinforce the principles that uphold an enthusiastic learning environment while fostering and supporting student growth, individuality, and expression that conveys an eagerness, readiness, and inclination to learn.

This dress code is written to acknowledge and support the identities and circumstances of all students, creating an equitable community that does not discriminate against, reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, ability, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, body type/size, religion, cultural observance, or nationality.

RCDS expects that all students will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or for any school sponsored event. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). RCDS is responsible for ensuring that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group. The dress code principles below shall apply to all school days, as well as any school-related events and activities.

### Rules

- Clothing and appearance must be neat and clean.
- Students may not wear clothing that is ripped or torn, aside from jeans with small tears.
- Tube tops are not permitted. All shirts, including T-shirts, sweaters, and sweatshirts, must go below the belly button. Necklines must not be overly revealing.
- Students may not wear clothing with inappropriate sayings or slogans, including references to race, religion, or ethnicity or promoting the use of sex, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. References to rock bands must be appropriate for school.
- Pants must completely cover underwear, including when the student is sitting down.
- Pajama pants and other sleeping attire are not permitted.
- Hats and sunglasses may not be worn in the school building.

- The student's toes must be completely covered, and the footwear must be securely fastened to the foot. Shoes of excessive height may be deemed unsafe.

If a student is unsure of the appropriateness of a piece of clothing, they should ask the Dean *before* wearing it to school.

### Enforcement

If during the course of a grading period a student is not in compliance with the Dress Code, the following will happen:

- If a student is dressed inappropriately, the student may be asked to change into more suitable clothing. Alternatively, a parent may be called and asked to bring in appropriate clothing.
- A second violation will result in a Flex time detention.
- A third violation will result in either a 8:00 a.m. or 3:30 p.m. detention.
- A fourth violation will result in a Saturday detention.

### **Physical Environment**

It is expected that students will help assume responsibility for maintaining a clean and attractive environment. Students will be expected to help keep the classrooms, halls, student lounges, dining room, etc., in order by performing tasks that will achieve this goal. Towards this end, all community members must take special care to clean up after themselves at all times.

### **Attendance and Absences**

For their own welfare as well as that of the group, it is very important that students meet all obligations promptly. Lateness, absences, and early dismissals are recorded.

#### **Absence**

Parents should call the Middle School Office or email [MiddleSchoolOffice@ryecountryday.org](mailto:MiddleSchoolOffice@ryecountryday.org) by 8:45 a.m. each day their child is absent. Absence caused by a communicable disease must be reported to the Health Office as soon as a diagnosis is made. In the event of an emergency, an explanation of the emergency must be given to the Principal by phone or in writing at the earliest convenience. Extensions of vacation periods for family convenience or family trips are not considered emergencies; resulting absences will be treated as unauthorized absences.

In the case of unauthorized absences, teachers are under no obligation to allow students to make up missed work or to give extra help. At the discretion of the teacher, unauthorized absences may result in a zero on all class work and tests. Unauthorized absences include extending the vacation period by leaving early or returning late from a vacation.

A student who misses more than ten percent of the class meetings in one course during a trimester may meet, at the request of the teacher, with the Principal, the Advisor, and the teacher to determine whether credit may be given for the course and whether the lack of attendance warrants a "U" grade or an incomplete.

## **Assignments When Absent**

Homework assignments are distributed to students in advance on assignment sheets and posted to the RCDS learning management system. If a student is absent, it is preferable that they check for a posted assignment or call a classmate to get specific assignments. If a student is absent for more than one day, parents or guardians may call the Middle School Office or the Dean by 10:00 a.m. to request homework and to make arrangements to pick up material that is not available online. Students will be given time to make up homework and tests when they return from their absence. At no time will teachers accept homework that has been faxed into the School.

## **Class Attendance**

The academic day begins from the time the student arrives at school and continues until the student is dismissed from his or her last school commitment.. It is very important that Middle School students meet all obligations promptly, and all students are expected to arrive on time. Lateness and early dismissals should be avoided. Continued lateness will result in disciplinary action, which will include detention. The School assumes responsibility for the supervision of students only during regular school hours on scheduled school days. Students should not be in the buildings at any other time except by arrangement or for scheduled activities. The School provides as careful supervision of access to and exit from the buildings and school property as circumstances will permit.

## **Lateness**

Parents or guardians should call or email the Middle School Office by 8:45 a.m. if their child will be late for school. Upon arrival, the child must sign in at the Middle School Office.

## **Late Arrival after 9:30 a.m.**

Students arriving after 9:30 a.m. may not participate in extra-curricular activities such as rehearsals, games, concerts, or plays during or after school on that day. Any exceptions to this policy must be cleared by the Principal well in advance.

## **Early Dismissal**

If a student must leave school because of an illness, the Health Office will call a parent or guardian and ask that someone pick up the child. If a student must leave for a medical, dental, or other appointment, an email, phone call, or note from a parent or guardian must be given to the homeroom teacher or to the Middle School Office. All students leaving early must be signed out by a parent or guardian at the Middle School Office.

When there is a 12:00 p.m. Lower School and a 12:30 p.m. Middle School dismissal, Middle School students with Lower School siblings may pick-up their Lower School siblings from the Black Box Theater so as to necessitate only one pick-up time for both students.

## **Early Dismissal from Sports for Students in Grades 7 and 8**

Students who are leaving school between 2:10 and 2:30 p.m. must go to the Sports Exempt study hall. Students who are leaving school between 2:30 and 3:15 p.m. must go to sports, but they do not have to change into P.E. clothing. All students leaving early must be signed out by a parent or guardian at the Middle School Office.

## **Late Dismissal**

If it is necessary for a student to wait at school after the regular dismissal time, an email, a note, or a phone call from a parent or guardian must be made to the Middle School Office. The student must report that day to the Homework Center on Mondays - Fridays until 6:00 p.m.. Requests for such arrangements should be kept to a minimum. After 6:00 p.m., students whose rides pick them up late will be directed to the Athletic Center foyer, and they should be collected there. Students are not allowed to sit in the Middle School hallways to wait for their rides after 3:30 p.m.

## **Presence on Campus**

**Middle School students are not permitted to leave the campus without permission during the school day for any reason.** The school day is defined as the time of arrival on campus until the end of the student's final commitment that day. For example, if a student has a 3:30 p.m. athletic competition, then the school day is extended until the end of that competition, and all school rules apply. Similarly, a student who arrives at school at 8:00 a.m. becomes subject to the rules and regulations at that time. If a Middle School student must leave campus, he or she must have the written permission of a parent or guardian and must be signed out at the Middle School Office by an accompanying adult.

## **Policy for Participation in Dances and Other School Social Events**

1. All students who come to a dance or school-sponsored social event will remain at the event for its duration. If a student leaves, under no circumstances will that student be readmitted. If a student wishes to retrieve something from his or her car, a chaperone at the event will escort that student to the car and then back to the dance or event.
2. If a student appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the dance or school-sponsored social event, parents will be called, and the student will be required to leave the dance or event immediately accompanied by his or her parent. Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol is against the law. Students may be subject to search and/or breathalyzer. In addition, school rules will apply, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action.
3. Middle School dances and school-sponsored social events are only for current Rye Country Day School Middle School students. Guests are not allowed.
4. Any student caught smoking or in possession of tobacco or tobacco products on school grounds or at school-sponsored events, on or off campus, will be subject to the School's disciplinary process.
5. Students must be present at school by 9:30 a.m. on the day of the dance or school-sponsored event in order to attend. Any student not present by 9:30 a.m. may be excluded from the dance or school-sponsored social event unless arrangements have been made with the Middle School Principal.

## **Responsible Use Policy**

RCDS students utilize a wide range of technology. As stated in the RCDS Mission Statement, "We expect and promote moral responsibility and strive to develop strength of character within a respectful school community." All use of technology by RCDS students must be carried out with this in mind. The use of these technologies is a privilege, not a right. Students are responsible for using them legally, appropriately, responsibly, and kindly and in compliance with this Responsible Use Policy ("RUP") and any other applicable policies and procedures or instructions from faculty or staff.

## Personal Devices

Students in Grades 7 - 12 are required to have their own laptop computers. These students are able to access the Internet via the RCDS wireless network. Students in Grades 5 and 6 may be given access to use community devices, including laptop carts and computer facilities throughout campus. All students are given a Google account in order to access the Google Suite for Education.

In addition, the School prohibits students, parents, and School community members from using cell phones or other electronic devices to record (video, audio, or otherwise) the School environment without express permission from the School. This policy generally does not apply to recordings at School performances and events.

## Digital Citizenship: In the World –On and Off Campus

All students are responsible for practicing positive digital citizenship on and off campus, as long as they are enrolled in the School. This includes engaging in appropriate behavior on websites, social media, discussion boards, media sharing sites, learning management systems, and all other electronic communications, including technology not specifically identified here. These expectations apply regardless of whether students are linked to the School's network from in school or a remote location, or not at all, or using their own personal computer or communication device. Students should remember that they are always representing the RCDS community.

## Purpose of a Responsible Use Policy

This RUP outlines the appropriate use of the internet, computers, connected devices, and other school or personal technology and devices not listed here, on and off-campus. This RUP extends to all RCDS-associated email accounts, websites, platforms, and resources used by students.

Parents/Guardians grants permission for students to use Google Apps for Education, PowerSchool Learning, Adobe Creative Cloud, Microsoft Office 365, and all other technology services provided by RCDS. Students must be aware that all technology resources on campus are the School's property. RCDS recognizes its legal and ethical obligation to protect the well-being of its students. To this end, RCDS retains the following rights and recognizes the following obligations:

- To log Network use and to monitor fileserver space utilization by users, and assume no responsibility or liability for files deleted due to violation of fileserver space allotments.
- To remove a user account on the Network.
- To monitor the use of online activities. This may include real-time monitoring of Network activity and/or maintaining a log of Internet activity for later review.
- To provide internal and external controls as appropriate and feasible. Such controls shall include the right to determine who will have access to RCDS-technology and, specifically, to exclude those who do not abide by the RUP or any other policy in the Handbook. RCDS may restrict online destinations through software or other means.
- To use commercially reasonable efforts to secure the Network.
- To provide guidelines and make reasonable efforts to train students in acceptable use governing online communications.



## Student Expectations

### *Class/School Use:*

- I will stay on task in class when using RCDS-technology or a personal device, and will not use my device in class for anything other than for an academic purpose, such as messaging, social media, browsing the Internet, playing games, or entertainment.
- I will bring my laptop, charger, headphones, and any other required device(s) to class as instructed by my teacher.
- I will only use my headphones and earbuds at appropriate times when instructed by my teacher or a faculty member.
- I understand that teachers and faculty members have the right to see the screen of or access my laptop or device when requested.
- I understand that I may be asked to put my laptop or device away.
- I understand that cell phone use is not appropriate in class.
- I understand that Middle School students must keep their phones and other electronic devices in their backpacks or lockers from 8:15 am - 3:15 pm, unless the student is given permission by an administrator or teacher.
- I understand that Middle School students may only make phone calls outside of school hours. If students need someone from the School to make a phone call on their behalf, they should ask one of the Deans, the Principal, or the Middle School Administrative Assistant.
- I understand that students are prohibited from using cell phones in restrooms or in the Athletic Center locker rooms.
- I understand that cell phones may be confiscated if seen being used without permission during school hours. Upon the third confiscation, the student will receive a Saturday detention.
- I understand that if students listen to music during a free period, they must use headphones or earbuds. I also understand that students in Grades 5, 6, and 7 may not listen to music on their personal devices.
- Students who bring cell phones or other electronic devices to school, with the exception of their laptop computers, must store these devices in their backpacks and refrain from using them until they leave school.
- I will only project my laptop or device to the classroom screen when approved by a faculty member.
- I will not use, touch, or in any way disrupt the technology equipment in the classroom without approval from a faculty member.

### *Cybersecurity & Privacy:*

- I will only access content that belongs to me or that I am certain I have permission to use. I understand that any student caught accessing, or attempting to access, computer files belonging to other people will be treated in the same way as a student caught trying to break into or looking through a filing cabinet, desk, or locked room with private or confidential information.
- I will be aware of the privacy settings on the websites I visit.
- I will not use proxy servers or other tactics to circumvent the security filters in place at school and am aware that taking this action is also a cyber security risk and breach of the RUP.
- I will not take part in cyber attacks.
- I will not use my RCDS email account for personal use, to create online accounts, or to send chain letters, spam, anonymous emails, or solicitations.



- I understand I am responsible for keeping my password, access credentials, and personal information (e.g., home addresses, phone numbers, credit card numbers) private.
- I will not access or use another person's accounts under any circumstances.
- I will not access computer files, folders, or any data on the Network without proper authorization.
- I will log out of any personal accounts when I am finished using community devices.

*Data Management and Backup:*

- I understand that I am responsible for maintaining and backing up my data.
- I should seek help from the Technology Department or a faculty member if I do not know how to back up my data.
- I understand that RCDS is not responsible for lost student work.

*Content, Communication, and Citizenship:*

- I understand that I am a part of the greater RCDS community and my actions, including online and offline communications, can affect the rest of the School.
- I understand that certain websites or online services directed to children under the age of 13, and websites or online services that collect personal information online from children under 13, including social media platforms, are regulated by federal law, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).
- I understand that any form of bullying or harassment – online or offline – is inappropriate and will not be tolerated by the School.
- I will be an upstander and report any inappropriate or questionable behavior I see online that may be perceived as damaging to the RCDS community or any individual to a faculty member or parent.
- I will not create, access, or store inappropriate or questionable content (including, but not limited to, anything with hateful, discriminatory, sexually explicit, violent, or harassing language). Inappropriate or questionable content also includes slogans and images involving references, subtle or otherwise, to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and sex. If I encounter such content, I will report it to a faculty member or parent.
- I understand that my words have power and live forever when posted online.
- I understand that online behavior has offline consequences.
- I will not provide personal information about myself or other members of the RCDS community in any electronic format.
- I will always exercise caution about the identity of any unknown individuals and remember that unknown individuals involved in email and/or social media communications may not always be who they claim to be.
- I will take care to follow all copyright laws, including using only legally purchased or licensed software on computers, and be thoughtful about citations when using online references. If I am not sure about copyright restrictions, I understand that I am expected to ask a teacher or librarian for assistance.
- I will not download, copy, duplicate, and/or distribute copyrighted materials without the specific written permission of the copyright owner, unless the duplication and/or distribution of materials is for educational purposes and is permitted under the Fair Use Doctrine of copyright law.
- I understand that plagiarizing is prohibited in all circumstances and agree to properly cite electronic sources in my school work.
- I understand that I contribute to the health of the Network. I understand that the websites I visit, the applications I use, the links I click on, the emails I open, and the files I download

can adversely affect the Network and others' ability to use it. I will only use the Network for legitimate academic purposes, and will not download large files, updates, or applications on the Network. I will not use the Network for entertainment, gaming, commercial, product advertisement, political lobbying or for-profit purposes.

- I will keep my notifications turned off for any apps installed on my laptop or device(s) during the school day.
- I will only use Airdrop and other file sharing apps with the permission of a faculty member.
- I will check my email frequently and regularly, albeit not in class, unless instructed by a teacher. I will respond to all email with an educational purpose in a timely and appropriate manner.
- I understand that any communication that is shared or viewed by others is treated as an extension of the classroom; therefore, all RCDS rules and regulations apply. Any violation of RCDS rules and regulations may be referred to an administrator. I acknowledge that I am responsible for periodically reviewing the Handbook to ensure I understand the behavioral guidelines.

#### *Photo, Video, and Audio Recording:*

- I will use the camera and microphone recording features on my laptop or device(s) appropriately.
- I will only take photos or make audio or visual recordings during School and School-sponsored activities with the permission of a RCDS faculty member or administrator and that such photos or recordings will only for a specific educational purpose or assignment.
- I will ask for others' permission before taking a picture or recording of them (both audio and video).
- I will ask others' permission before posting or sharing any digital media that incorporates their image, voice, or likeness.
- I will not alter the images or videos of others without their consent, including adding filters or text.
- I will delete a picture or recording of someone else when requested (both audio and video).
- I understand that I am not permitted to have photos or recordings of individuals without their permission and consent.

#### *Distance Learning:*

- I will abide by the same rules and guidelines that apply to the physical classroom in the virtual classroom, and agree to approach distance learning as if I am attending class in-person (appear presentable, wear appropriate attire, do not interrupt others, etc.).
- I understand that I must follow the video conferencing guidelines outlined by my teacher, the Deans, and the Principal, with regard to virtual backgrounds, naming, logging in, etc. Backgrounds and physical spaces captured in online and remote learning should not have vulgar or profane words or images. Backgrounds should be appropriate. For example, students should not be sitting in a bed, but should be setup at a desk or table.
- I will use any chat functions in an appropriate and respectful manner.
- I understand that any behavior that would not be tolerated in the physical classroom will not be tolerated in the virtual classroom.
- I understand that under certain circumstances, distance learning sessions may be recorded. As a result, my image, likeness and/or voice may be recorded and shared within the RCDS community for educational purposes.

## Enforcement

Any student who is aware of any problem with the Network or RCDS-technology or who knows of any misuse of the Network or RCDS-technology is expected to immediately report such information to the Technology Department, a Dean, or the Principal.

Access to the Network and RCDS-technology is a privilege, not a right. Violating the letter or spirit of the Handbook or this RUP may be cause to limit or deny a student's access to the Network and RCDS-technology, and may result, even on a first offense, in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion. In addition, students must understand that use of the Network or RCDS-technology involving illegal activity will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. For more information about disciplinary actions, please refer to the applicable section of the Handbook.

## Disclaimer

Pursuant to the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986, notice is hereby given that there are no facilities provided by the Network for sending or receiving private or confidential electronic communications. Network administrators have access to and the ability to monitor all communications.

Communications relating to, or in support of, illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

- RCDS cannot guarantee that all controversial information will be inaccessible to students, and is not responsible for materials acquired from the Network, RCDS-technology, personal devices, and the Internet.
- RCDS is not responsible for supervising students' use of RCDS-technology and the Internet outside of school.
- RCDS may access students' correspondence, files or other information stored on the Network or RCDS-technology.
- RCDS may revise this RUP at any time, and will endeavor to promptly notify students and parents/guardians of any such revisions.

In summary, by signing the Student Handbook, I am acknowledging that:

- I read and understand the requirements of this RUP.
- I will be considerate and kind – on and offline.
- I will be aware that my digital footprint stays with me.
- I will be responsible for my own technology and data.

## **E-Safety Policy**

The School incorporates online and remote learning programs in its curriculum and program. Online and remote learning sessions and communications should not be considered confidential and **may** be recorded. Recordings are made for the benefit of absent students and will be made available when appropriate to other members of the RCDS Community. Students are prohibited from (a) recording any part of any online and remote learning program, and (b) sharing, broadcasting, and/or making public any materials created or recorded by the School, its employees, or anyone else in relation to the School's online and remote learning programs.

School faculty, advisors, counselors, coaches, private lesson instructors, and administrators may provide virtual one-on-one meetings with students as appropriate. The School may seek to limit one-on-one interactions to those necessary to support the academic and social well-being of students and families.

All members of the School community are responsible for maintaining a safe online and remote learning environment. In that spirit, while the School will strive to support and ensure students' safety in the online and remote learning environment, students and their families are also expected to employ appropriate safeguards and manage risks appropriately.

### **Sexting and Sexually Explicit Material**

The School prohibits students from creating, requesting, sending, or possessing any written message, image, or video that contains explicit representations or references to sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or nudity. New York law prohibits anyone (regardless of age) from disseminating obscene or pornographic images of minors, as well as disclosing an intimate image of another person with the intent to cause harm. The School may contact law enforcement should any student violate this policy.

### **Social Media**

The School understands the desire of students to use social networking websites, Internet bulletin boards, blogs, chat rooms, and other online resources or websites (e.g., TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat) (collectively referred to as "Social Media"). Whether or not a student chooses to use Social Media is a decision the student should make in consultation with the student's parents. However, to the extent that students, parents, or members of the School community represent the School to each other and to the wider community, participation in such Social Media should be done responsibly with a mind toward how both the forum where one chooses to participate and the content posted reflect on that person individually and on the School. Moreover, issues concerning respect for the privacy of students, copyrights, trademarks, and confidentiality of sensitive information are all important to understand *before* participating in Social Media. With the foregoing in mind, the School encourages students and parents to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability when accessing Social Media and the School's network. Students are expected to comply with the policies outlined in the School's Responsible Use Policy regardless of whether they are using School-provided equipment or their own personal devices.

### **Gambling**

The School prohibits gambling of any kind, including online gambling. Such conduct will not be tolerated in the School's buildings, on School grounds, and on School-related trips.

### **Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco**

Alcohol and other drugs of any kind, except those drugs prescribed by a doctor and administered by the School Nurse, are prohibited in the buildings, on the grounds, or in the immediate vicinity of the School, including downtown Rye. These expectations remain in full effect at all School activities and on all School trips, including those that occur over a vacation.

Any student who is discovered to be involved with alcohol or other drugs of any kind during the school day or while engaged in a school activity, on or off campus, or at any point when the student is enrolled in the School, may be subject to serious disciplinary action. Students found in violation of this policy may also be required to participate in substance abuse counseling as a condition of remaining in the community.

In addition, the School reminds families about the following laws that may be applicable to our community.

#### New York State Civil Law

1. Under General Obligation Civil Law Section 11–100, any person who is injured by an intoxicated or impaired minor may sue whoever knowingly provided the alcohol to the minor for whatever damages may have occurred.
2. It is a Class B Misdemeanor in New York State for a person to serve or allow to be served alcohol to persons under 21 years of age. See Penal Law Section 260.20. Penalties may include up to three months imprisonment or a \$500.00 fine.
3. Although it is legal for a parent or guardian to serve alcohol at home to his or her child who is under 21, the parent or guardian may still be sued under the Social Host Law if the child inflicts injury that may be linked to such alcoholic consumption.

#### New York State Criminal Law - Forged Identification

1. It is a Class D Felony in New York State for a person to possess a forged or altered driver's license. See Penal Law Section 170.25, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree. Penalties may include between 1-7 years in prison and a fine in excess of \$1,000.
2. It is a Class A Misdemeanor in New York State for a person to possess a forged or altered student identification card. See Penal Law Section 170.20, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Third Degree. Penalties may include between 15 days and up to 1 year in prison and a fine of up to \$1,000.

#### Connecticut Social-Host Law

Connecticut Liquor Control Act Sec. 30-89a. Permitting minor to illegally possess liquor in dwelling unit or on private property or failing to halt such illegal possession. Penalty.

(a) No person having possession of, or exercising dominion and control over, any dwelling unit or private property shall (1) knowingly, recklessly or with criminal negligence permit any minor to possess alcoholic liquor in violation of subsection (b) of section 30-89 in such dwelling unit or on such private property, or (2) knowing that any minor possesses alcoholic liquor in violation of subsection (b) of section 30-89 in such dwelling unit or on such private property, fail to make reasonable efforts to halt such possession. For the purposes of this subsection, "minor" means a person under twenty-one years of age.

(b) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this section shall be guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

Parents/guardians who choose to serve alcohol to students or who allow students to bring alcohol to their homes should understand that this is in direct violation of RCDS's strongly held values, the School's policies, and New York State and Connecticut State law. The School may not re-enroll the children of parents/guardians who serve alcohol to students.

Parents/guardians should be aware that they have a special responsibility with respect to hosting house parties. Under the New York Penal Law, any person who gives, sells or causes to be given or sold any alcoholic beverage to someone under the age of 21 faces potential prosecution (Unlawfully Dealing with a

Child, N.Y. Penal Law 260.20). This provision can apply not only to a host parent, but also to a teenager 16 and older.

If parents/guardians are hosting a house party, it is their responsibility to ensure that an appropriate adult is present to supervise and keep the party drug and alcohol free. If their child is attending a party at another home, for their safety, parents/guardians should inquire about appropriate adult supervision.

### **Smoke and Vape Free Campus**

Smoking and vaping are prohibited in the buildings, on the grounds, or in the immediate vicinity of the School, including downtown Rye. Students are not permitted to smoke or vape on school trips or at any school function including the Prom and Graduation, which are smoke-free events. Infractions will be met with serious disciplinary action. The same rule applies to e-cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and snuff.

A student may not buy, sell, possess, or use alcohol or other unauthorized drugs or substances, including tobacco and tobacco-related products (including e-cigarettes and vaping), and/or any paraphernalia associated with the use of illegal drugs and may not intentionally misuse products that can act as inhalants, while enrolled in the School. Such conduct is also prohibited by all community members while on campus and at School-sponsored events and activities. The School provides information to parents and students about the health and social impact of drug, substance, and alcohol use and abuse. Students are prohibited from using medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, in any manner other than as prescribed or intended by the manufacturer.

### **Parents' Role in Alcohol/Drug Prevention**

Parents are often concerned about the use of alcohol and drugs by students and the social acceptability of its use. The following goals have been developed for parents as a guide for discussion and as a foundation for community agreement.

*As parents, we will:*

1. Become informed about the facts of alcohol and drugs so that we can discuss these substances credibly with our children.
2. Develop and communicate to our children a clear position about alcohol and drug use.
3. Promote and encourage social activities without alcohol and drugs.
4. Not serve alcohol to other people's children who are under the legal drinking age or allow under-age people to bring alcohol or drugs into our homes.
5. Support School and law enforcement policies regarding the use of alcohol and drugs by young people.
6. Request and endorse the implementation of comprehensive and meaningful alcohol and drug abuse prevention programs.

*In addition, we will:*

1. Take responsibility for our own children and be concerned for the welfare of the children of others.
2. Set a responsible example for our children.
3. Attempt to resist peer pressure and encourage our children to do likewise.
4. Help our children develop healthy concepts of themselves and effective problem-solving, decision-making, and communication skills.



5. Not sponsor or condone activities our children or we are unable to control (such as parties with limited or no adult supervision).
6. Communicate openly with other parents to establish a sense of community and to provide support in giving consistent messages to our young people.

The School's Director of Counseling Support Services is available for consultation with parents and students on a variety of issues, including drugs and alcohol.

### **Sanctuary Policy**

The use and abuse of alcohol and drugs can lead to serious health consequences. As a way of letting students know that their health and safety are of paramount concern, the School encourages students to ask for help from adults should they find themselves or another student impaired, ill, or struggling with substance use or abuse. The School's Sanctuary Policy provides students with a way to access support around alcohol and substance abuse issues without concern that reaching out for help will trigger the disciplinary process.

The School believes that students should be guided by their obligation to, and respect for, other members of the community in seeking the best possible help for themselves and others. The School endeavors to foster an atmosphere of trust within the community and views student-School conversations as vital to that effort. Students should seek guidance from any adults whose judgment they trust and respect.

#### Invoking the Sanctuary Policy

Any student may invoke this policy on the student's own behalf, or on behalf of another student, simply by contacting anyone on the faculty, staff, or administration at the School in the following circumstances:

##### *For Medical Emergencies*

In any apparent medical emergency, even if drug- or alcohol-induced, it is imperative for a medical evaluation and attention to begin as soon as possible. To encourage students to seek medical help in an emergency situation, obtaining assistance from the School Nurse or asking a faculty member to obtain emergency medical assistance will initiate medical rather than disciplinary intervention.

##### *For Non-Emergencies*

Students also may bring sanctuary into effect in non-emergency situations for themselves or another student whose health is at risk because of alcohol or drug use; including, but not limited to, the ill-effects of recent ingestion of a banned substance, chronic substance use or abuse, or past use or abuse that may be impairing functioning at school.

In either scenario described above, the request for assistance must be student-initiated and occur prior to any School administrator or faculty or staff member learning of the impacted student's use or abuse of drugs or alcohol.

### **Rollerblading and Skateboarding**

Rollerblading and skateboarding are prohibited on campus.

**Inappropriate Items/Weapons**

Possession or use of explosive devices (including fireworks and firecrackers), a firearm, a pellet gun, a knife/pocketknife/penknife, or any other dangerous weapon (including any air or CO<sub>2</sub>-cartridge BB gun) is prohibited. Certain types of weapons and fireworks are illegal in New York. Propelling any projectile at a motor vehicle, an unwilling or unsuspecting person, or a building, so as to endanger another, is considered reckless behavior and is also prohibited by the School.

**Snowballs and Snow Throwing**

Students will refrain from throwing snow or snow balls on or near campus or during school trips. Students who throw snow will receive a Saturday detention.



## **V. EXPECTATIONS FOR INTERPERSONAL STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Commitment To Respectful and Healthy Relationships**

The School is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for all members of its community. Such an environment precludes behaviors that are disrespectful of, and physically and/or emotionally harmful to, others. All members of the School community play important roles in maintaining these standards and intervening, as appropriate, when they witness or otherwise become aware of behavior that conflicts with community standards.

Awareness and acceptance of individual identity are central tenets of the School. The School expects all members of the School community to treat others with civility, respect, and dignity and to interact (whether in person or electronically) politely and appropriately. Before acting, students should give careful consideration to how their communications – whether through words, appearances, actions, or otherwise – may negatively impact others.

All students are valued members of the School’s community, which presents unique opportunities to develop lasting partnerships with peers, faculty, and staff. The School strives to help students develop such close connections. However, the School expects these relationships to be appropriate and healthy. The School endeavors to promote this through education and intervention.

With these goals and interests in mind, as well as the legal requirements of the State of New York, the School has established policies to help students manage these interpersonal relationships safely and appropriately. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with the Principal, the Assistant Principal, the Middle School Counselor, or one of the Deans with any questions or concerns regarding these policies. The School believes that open communication about these sensitive topics is integral to preventing serious misconduct from occurring and essential to fostering a culture of personal responsibility, mutual accountability, and positive peer leadership.

### **Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Hazing, and Sexual Harassment**

The School does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment or discrimination, hazing, and sexual harassment (collectively referred to as “interpersonal misconduct”). The School is dedicated to preventing interpersonal misconduct by fostering a positive school culture and providing a curriculum that encourages social skills development. We work to enhance students’ abilities to develop healthy relationships and to take positive action when they witness or experience any form of interpersonal misconduct. The School is also committed to promptly addressing any behavior that impedes the learning of any student or interferes with the experience of any other member of the School community.

Interpersonal misconduct is prohibited on the School’s campus and the property immediately adjacent to School grounds, on School vehicles and at School-sponsored events, activities, athletic contests, and off-campus trips. School-owned technology may not be used to intimidate, harass, threaten, or bully another student. In addition, interpersonal misconduct is prohibited at a location, activity, function, or program that is not School-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the School, if such conduct: (a) creates a hostile environment at school for a student, (b) infringes on the rights of a student at school, or (c) substantially disrupts the educational process or the School’s orderly operations. Though interpersonal misconduct that occurs outside of the above locations may be outside of the School’s disciplinary reach, we still encourage families and

students to share potential incidents with a trusted staff member (as discussed in more detail below) if the School may need to have a heightened awareness of protecting students' safety while at school.

### Definitions

#### *Aggressor*

A student, faculty/staff member, or other member of the community who engages in bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or retaliation towards another person.

#### *Bullying*

Bullying is the creation of a hostile environment for a student at school by conduct or threats (whether verbal, written, or electronic expressions), intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, or emotional, or physical well-being. Bullying also includes conduct, verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for the student's physical safety or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operations of the School.

Bullying, may include, but is not limited to:

- Epithets, slurs, quips, or negative stereotyping that relate to any of the categories below;
- Physical threats such as hitting, shoving, spitting or punching;
- Verbal bullying such as name calling, put-downs, threats, spreading rumors or lies;
- Social shunning that purposely leaves someone out of school activities or team sports;
- Hazing;
- Cyberbullying, including electronic comments posted in emails or instant messages, or on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, or in blogs, etc.

The School recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, weight, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

#### *Bias*

A bias-related incident occurs when language or behavior conveys prejudice against a target because of a dimension of the target's identity (race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, gender, religion, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability, or any other applicable legally protected status).

#### *Cyber-Bullying*

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic communication. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to: (a) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, and (b) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation constitutes bullying conduct as defined above.

Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to, the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person, or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying.

### *Harassment or Discrimination*

Harassment or discrimination is behavior that is pervasive or severe and has the purpose or effect of: (a) creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; (b) interfering unreasonably with a student's academic performance; or (c) creating a situation where academic decisions of a student depend on the student submitting to and/or not objecting to the behavior.

Harassment and discrimination can take many forms. Examples include, but are not limited to, limiting opportunities to participate in certain clubs, teams, or activities based on certain characteristics, as well as slurs, jokes, statements, remarks, questions, gestures, pictures, emails, texts, or cartoons regarding a legally-protected status that are derogatory or demeaning to an individual's or group's characteristics or that promote stereotypes. Harassment also includes sexual harassment (as defined below).

### *Hazing*

Hazing means subjecting a student to a physical or mental health injury as part of an initiation, or as a prerequisite to membership, into any organized school group, including any society, athletic team, fraternity or sorority, or other similar group. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical or mental health or safety of a student or any other person, or which subjects the student or any other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

The following questions are intended to help students identify and understand what hazing is:

- Would you have any reservation describing the activity to your parents, a teacher, or a school administrator?
- Would you object to the activity being photographed for the School newspaper or local TV news?
- Is there a risk of injury or a question of safety?
- Is this a team or group activity in which members are encouraged or expected to attend and where minors are consuming alcohol?
- Will current members refuse to participate with the new members?
- Does the activity risk emotional or physical abuse?

### *Hostile Environment*

A hostile environment refers to a situation in which certain misconduct causes the School environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of a student's education.

### *Racial Discrimination*

Racial discrimination is a type of discrimination (as defined above). Racial discrimination involves treating a target unfavorably because the target is of a certain race or because of personal characteristics associated with race (such as hair texture, skin color, or certain facial features). Racial discrimination can occur when the target and the person who inflicted the discrimination are the same race or color.

### *Retaliation*

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports misconduct (including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, or sexual harassment), provides information during an investigation, or witnesses and/or has reliable information about such misconduct.

### *Sexual Harassment*

Sexual harassment is a type of harassment (as defined above). Sexual harassment includes unwilling and unwanted sexual attention, regardless of gender, from anyone with whom a person may interact in the course of attending the School or being present at School-sponsored activities.

Examples of behavior that may constitute sexual harassment include (regardless of whether the intent or consequence of such behavior is to make the target feel uncomfortable): (a) offensive body language (staring and/or leering at a person's body or standing/brushing too close); (b) offensive or unwanted sexual comments, abuse, jokes, or insults, delivered verbally or in writing; (c) derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons, or drawings; (d) pressure for sexual activity (such as hazing or threats, as well as repeated requests after rejections); (e) offering favors or benefits in exchange for sexual acts, or threatening mistreatment if one does not engage in sexual acts; and (f) offensive or unwelcome physical advances (including kissing, hugging, pinching, grabbing, groping, "playful" slapping, etc.).

### *Target*

Any student against whom interpersonal misconduct or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### Legal Definitions and School Policies

In accordance with the School's mission, values, and standards of conduct, the School has supplemented and/or provided broader protections against bullying, discrimination, harassment, and other inappropriate conduct than may be required under applicable laws. In essence, the School's standards may be stricter than the law, and the School may impose discipline accordingly. The School's efforts to enhance its protection of students in no way expand an individual's rights under applicable laws. Further, the School may modify and amplify the standards set forth above and use its discretion in the interpretative enforcement of all ideals and standards of conduct.

## Reporting Complaints

The School encourages members of the community to be upstanders and report any behavior that is perceived as inappropriate. A student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or who has witnessed such an incident or any incident of retaliation, or who otherwise has relevant information about conduct prohibited by the School, is expected to report the matter promptly. This applies to in-person conduct that occurs on and off of School grounds, including locations such as field trips, athletic activities, and events for School clubs, as well as conduct that occurs through electronic communications, including social media, email, texts, phone and video conference. Even misconduct that occurs outside of School, during “personal time,” could have continuing effects in the School, and therefore is covered by the school’s policies.

Parents/guardians of a student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about such conduct, are urged to immediately to report the matter. Furthermore, any parent/guardian who has witnessed interpersonal misconduct, or has relevant information concerning such an incident or any incident of retaliation, is strongly encouraged to report it.

A complaint may be reported in a number of ways:

- The Complaint Form on the School Website (under Quicklinks);
- To any member of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DEIAC) via email or telephone (names and contact information of DEIAC members are available from the Director of Diversity and Inclusion);
- To the Complaints Management Officer (CMO) via email or telephone; or
- To any School Employee via email or telephone.

Any individual who receives a complaint will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, prepare a written summary of the complaint and promptly submit it to the Complaints Management Officer, and record the complaint in the Complaint Tracking System. The CMO will refer it to a Complaint Lead for follow-up and, if needed, investigation.

For more information, please refer to the Complaints Management Process as outlined on the RCDS website.

### Protection from Retaliation

Individuals who bring complaints or concerns to the School’s attention in good faith should do so without fear of reprisal. RCDS strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who makes a complaint under the Policy, or who provides information or otherwise participates in an investigation relating to such complaints or reports. All individuals should promptly report any acts of perceived retaliation directly to their Division Principal, supervisor, supervising administrator, Assistant Heads of School, or the Head of School.

All complaints must be made in good faith (i.e., the complaint is a sincere and honest complaint of a suspected policy violation or misconduct). Complaints should never be filed in an attempt to harm or retaliate against others. If an investigation reveals that a student or parent/guardian knowingly or maliciously made a false complaint, the School will take all appropriate action, including disciplinary action.

### Anonymous Complaints

Complaints can be made anonymously via the online Complaint form. Individuals leaving an anonymous complaint should be aware that failure to disclose identifying information about the identities of the parties involved or the facts and circumstances regarding the complained of conduct, issue, or incident (including the names of any witnesses) severely limits the School's ability to respond and remedy the effects of the misconduct. Anonymous reports that provide enough information to constitute suspected ongoing abuse or neglect of a minor will still be reported to child protective services and/or local law enforcement.

### Requests for Confidentiality

Complainants may request that the School shield their identity from the individual they are accusing of misconduct. If an individual requests this type of confidentiality, the School will weigh the request against the School's obligation to provide a safe, non-discriminatory environment for all members of its community. The School will try to honor these requests, but it is not always possible to do so. Regardless of whether an individual requests confidentiality, the School will make every effort to prevent disclosure of the names of all the parties involved – the reporting individual, the Complainant, the witnesses, and the Respondent – except to the extent necessary to carry out an investigation.

### Mandatory Reporting and Law Enforcement Notification

All employees of the School are required to immediately report any complaints which allege incidents of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services in accordance with the School's mandatory reporting policy. Therefore, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed when an individual makes a complaint to a School employee, including school counselors and the school nurse. Employees must report suspected abuse of both current students and former students or employees, no matter when they become aware of such concerns or allegations.

The School strongly encourages all individuals to seek assistance from a medical provider and/or law enforcement immediately after an incident involving violence, including sexual assault. The procedures under this Policy may run concurrently with any criminal justice or child protection investigation, and will only be subject to temporary delays at the specific request of law enforcement. Criminal investigations or reports or determinations made by child protection officials are not determinative of whether a violation of School policy has occurred.

If the School receives a complaint involving students from another school, the School may notify the appropriate administrator of the other school so that both may take appropriate action.

## **V. DISCIPLINARY SITUATIONS**

### **Detention**

Detentions are warranted in a number of day-to-day situations, and they may be given by a member of the faculty, the Dean, the Assistant Principal, or the Principal. Detentions will be served the next school day during either Flex time or lunch. Saturday morning detention will be arranged between the Dean and parents.

### **Warning**

The Middle School Administration will monitor the disciplinary records of each student in the Middle School. A student in a disciplinary situation may be given a warning.

#### **Students on Warning**

1. may not be allowed to participate in overnight school trips.
2. may (at the Principal's discretion) not be permitted on day trips, including the seventh and eighth grade End of the Year Celebration.
3. may not run for elected office in the Student Government or serve as an elected member of the Student Government for the remainder of the academic year.

### **Day of Reflection**

In certain situations, the Middle School Principal may require a student to spend a day at home reflecting on specific behavior. Upon returning to school, the student will meet with the Principal and the Head of School to discuss this reflection and receive a warning for a specified period of time.

### **Required Counseling**

If the student engages in behavior or conduct that raises concerns about the student's ability to participate in the school environment in a healthy and/or appropriate way, the School may require the student to participate in counseling. This counseling requirement may apply to a student who has violated the School's policies regarding alcohol, drugs, tobacco; engages in conduct that harms or threatens to harm others; or engages in self-destructive behavior.

### **Consequences of Academic Dishonesty**

Cheating and plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary consequences, including, but not limited to, a zero on the assignment, a meeting with the Dean and Principal, and notification of the student's parents. Multiple offenses will have more serious consequences.



## ***More Serious Disciplinary Consequences***

### **Suspension**

When a student receives a suspension, the student may not come to school for classes or extracurricular activities or participate in school events during the period of suspension. A family will be notified by a phone call, followed up by a letter from the Principal regarding the reason for, and the terms of, the suspension. A sealed copy of this letter will be placed in the student's file and may be referenced, should future disciplinary issues occur. Upon return to school from the suspension, the student will meet with the Principal or Head of School. If asked in the future about a student's disciplinary record, the School will communicate when and why a student served a period of suspension. Students who have been suspended will return to RCDS and will serve a period of probation, the length of which will be determined by the Head of School and the Principal. The reporting of Middle School suspensions does not follow students into the RCDS Upper School.

Students who receive a suspension from School for any period of time are considered unexcused for the days they miss. However, they may be allowed to make up some portion of the work missed. It is the student's responsibility to discuss the particular circumstances with the student's teachers. The School recommends that any student serving an at-home suspension be given a particular task, possibly community service-related, to be performed while out of school.

### **Disciplinary Probation**

This carries all of the restrictions of Warning, but probation is a "reportable" category. A family will be notified by a phone call followed up by a letter from the Principal regarding the reason for, and the terms of, the probation. A sealed copy of this letter will be placed in the student's file and be referenced should future disciplinary issues occur. If asked in the future about a student's disciplinary record, the School will communicate when and why a student served a period of Disciplinary Probation.

### **Expulsion, Dismissal, and Withdrawal Following Disciplinary Action**

Students who have engaged in a serious act of misconduct may be expelled from the School, prohibited from attending all School-related activities, or dismissed from School. Such serious acts of misconduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs;
- Improper sexual conduct;
- Sexual or other harassment;
- Threat or use of physical violence;
- Possession or use of matches, lighters, fireworks, explosives, weapons, or other dangerous materials;
- Driving in an unsafe manner on campus or in the immediate vicinity of RCDS;
- Reprehensible conduct tending to reflect serious discredit to the School;
- Willful destruction of property;
- Stealing;
- Dishonesty;
- Bullying or malicious gossip;
- Repeated acts of unkindness or misconduct;
- Repeated classroom behavior that impedes other students' learning; and
- Refusal to cooperate with an ongoing investigation by the School.



If a student is expelled, the student may not return to the campus without the express permission of the Head of School (or the Head's designee).

When a student is dismissed from school or withdraws following a disciplinary situation, the student loses many of the privileges that are extended to members of that student's class. The student will not be allowed to attend class trips or extracurricular activities, including the prom (even as another student's guest), and in the case of a senior will not be allowed to attend the graduation of the student's class.

Students no longer enrolled at RCDS will continue to be able to attend sports or other school events and to drive siblings to and from school and will be able to attend other graduation ceremonies (if, for example, a sibling is graduating in another year or in another division). Any exception to the above policy will be decided by the Head of School.

### **Behavioral Expectations While Away from School**

Students should be aware that they represent the School community at all times, both on and off campus. While it is not the School's intention to monitor students in all of their off-campus activities, the School may take disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal, in response to inappropriate conduct occurring outside of campus.

### **Parental Involvement with Disciplinary Matters**

Disciplinary matters and student issues are handled directly by teachers, administrators, and appropriate staff. If a student is having an issue with another student, parents should not attempt to deal with the other student directly about that matter. Doing so may put a student in an intimidating situation and is best resolved, when appropriate, through a School administrator. Please speak to the appropriate School administrator for guidance with respect to any questions about contacting another student or parent about a School-related matter.

Just as every student manifests an agreement to abide by the School's rules by attending RCDS, so does every family express its commitment to these policies by enrolling a student at the school. Along with this commitment is the firm understanding by all parties that parents and guardians accept and support any disciplinary action taken by the school. It is not for any student or family to determine what is appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Disclosure to Community**

For purposes of providing an opportunity for the student body to learn and grow, information about disciplinary consequences or other corrective action will be shared with the School community as deemed appropriate by the Head of School. Such announcements may be made in person, by electronic communication, or otherwise.

### **Notification to Schools**

In general, Rye Country Day School reserves the right to treat disciplinary cases as in-house matters. However, there are circumstances when other educational institutions will be notified of a student's disciplinary status. When a Rye Country Day School student is applying for admission to another middle school or high school, and that educational institution asks about probation-level or higher offenses on a student's record, we expect our students to answer those questions honestly, even if that offense occurred early in the student's middle school career. If the information is asked of the School, we will answer those questions.

## **VII. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

### **Student Leadership Council**

The Student Leadership Council, composed of elected students in Grade 8, is a team-based committee that focuses on different aspects of life in the Middle School (examples of areas of involvement and interest may include SEEK, service learning, sustainability, spirit, sports, or fun day planners).

### **Student Clubs**

Students may participate in school clubs. The purpose of our clubs are to build relationships, build community, and find joy and meaning. An opportunity to join current clubs and express interest in starting a new club will be provided. Typically, clubs meet during Flex periods or after school. All clubs require a faculty advisor.

### **After School Activities**

In conjunction with the Lower School, a variety of after-school clubs are offered three times a year to students. A brochure and registration form will be sent home prior to each session listing the days, time, and fee for each activity.

### **Service Learning**

Students in all grade levels participate in service-learning activities that are age appropriate, meaningful, and in keeping with the RCDS motto, *Not for Self, but for Service*. Activities range from food and toy drives to volunteer work with community partner organizations.

### **School Trips**

In order for a student to participate in a School-sponsored trip, a parent must sign the permission and release forms provided by the School.

Parents/guardians should be aware that, on occasion, an employee may plan a trip for children that is not sponsored by the School but is a privately-run activity of the employee (e.g. by employees who are also parents and who are acting in that capacity). We cannot be responsible for activities that are not sponsored by the School. If there is any question about the School's responsibility for any particular trip, parents/guardians are invited to contact the Principal's Office or the Head of School's Office.

For some club or extracurricular trips, students either walk or take public transportation, and parents/guardians will be informed when this is the plan.

Students are eligible to attend overnight trips with RCDS faculty if the student's attendance is current and the student is in good standing academically; and if the student can meet the social-emotional demands of the trip through demonstration of the following abilities: self-regulating, following directions and rules, resolving conflicts appropriately, and cooperating with peers and adults.

Trip participation will be at the discretion of the administrative team.

Students on Disciplinary Warning may not be eligible for participation in any overnight, school-sponsored trips and may, at the Principal's discretion, not be allowed on a day trip. Students on Disciplinary Probation are not eligible for participation in any overnight, School-sponsored trips and may, at the Principal's discretion, not be allowed on a day trip.

### **School-Sponsored Social Events/Dances**

- All students who come to a dance or School-sponsored social event will remain at the event for its duration. If a student leaves, under no circumstances will that student be readmitted. If a student wishes to retrieve something from the student's car, a chaperone at the event will escort that student to the car and then back to the dance or event.
- If a student appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the dance or event, parents/guardians may be called, and the student may be required to leave the dance or social event immediately accompanied by the student's parent/guardian. Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol is against the law. Students and guests may be subject to search and/or breathalyzer. Students may be brought before the Disciplinary Committee or subject to other disciplinary action.
- Any student caught smoking or vaping, or in possession of tobacco or tobacco or vaping products on school grounds or at School-sponsored events, on or off campus, will be subject to the School's disciplinary process. This applies to all e-cigarettes.
- Any student who brings a guest to the dance or social event must sign up the guest prior to the day or night of the dance or event. A RCDS student is only allowed to sign up one guest to a dance or social event. If the guest misbehaves at the dance or social event, the RCDS student who invited the guest may be held responsible for the guest's behavior. No Middle School students are allowed at any Upper School dances or social events. No guests who have reached their twenty-first birthday will be allowed to attend dances or School-sponsored social events.
- Students must be present at school by 9:30 a.m. on the day of the dance or School-sponsored social event in order to attend. Any student not present by 9:30 a.m. may be excluded from the dance or School-sponsored social event, including the Prom.
- Promposals, defined as "an elaborately staged (and public) request to be someone's date to a prom," are not permitted on school property.

### **Private Music Lessons**

Private music lessons are offered in voice, piano, woodwinds, brass and percussion. Lessons will primarily be offered virtually and may be available in person for older students with strict adherence to appropriate social distancing guidelines and school safety guidelines. This year, lessons will primarily be scheduled outside of school hours but may be available during the day for older students who have schedules that will permit them to be excused for private music lessons. For more information, please contact John Ragusa, Private Lesson Coordinator at [John\\_Ragusa@ryecountryday.org](mailto:John_Ragusa@ryecountryday.org) or (914) 925-4580

## **VIII. ATHLETICS & PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

In Grades 5 and 6, students are exposed to a variety of team sports and other physical fitness activities during . In Grades 7 and 8, students may try out for a Middle School team sport or choose to be part of the physical education program. Team sports will be inclusive of all levels ensuring that all students have the opportunity to play on a team.

### **Fall Sports**

Field hockey, soccer, football, cross country, sports conditioning, dance

### **Winter Sports**

Basketball, ice hockey, squash, wrestling, fencing, sports conditioning, dance

### **Spring Sports**

Softball, lacrosse, baseball, tennis, sports conditioning, dance

Practice sessions for each team are held during the normal sports period for Grades 7 and 8 (2:20-3:20 p.m.), while games are generally played after school.

### **Transportation**

The School provides transportation for students to and from away contests. All students are expected to ride the bus to all away contests. Students may go home from a game with their parent/guardian after signing the coach's "sign-out log." Communication in writing with the Coach or Athletic Director is required at least 24 hours before the game for the student to be taken home from an away game by another adult. This adult will be expected to sign-out the student with the coach before leaving the gym/field/court.

### **Participation on Varsity Teams**

Student-athletes in Grade 8 may try out for a position on an Upper School varsity team. The student must pass the New York State classification fitness test before attending pre-season tryouts. Upon passing the fitness test, the student must attend all pre-season tryouts and must have the skills and tactical knowledge to take a starting position on the varsity team. Please contact the Athletic Office for details.

Seventh grade students may not try out for a position on an Upper School varsity team.

### **Late Arrival**

Students arriving after 9:30 a.m. may not participate in any after-school games that day. Any exception to this policy must be cleared by the Principal well in advance.

## **Sports Exemption**

Students in Grades 7 and 8 may be granted an exemption for participation in a sport or activity that is not offered at RCDS in that season. The student's participation must be at a high level. Students applying for an exemption must speak with the Director of Athletics and Physical Education in order to receive the application. For a sport such as tennis, the student is expected to participate in the RCDS interscholastic program during the appropriate season.

## **Fairchester Athletic Association – Sportsmanship Policy**

The Fairchester Athletic Association league promotes good sportsmanship by student-athletes, coaches, and fans. The League expects all spectators to respect the efforts of the players, coaches, and officials by positive cheering throughout the entire event. The use of inappropriate language, racial or ethnic slurs, or personal insults will not be tolerated and are grounds for removal from the athletic event. Spectators should not address the opposing coaches, players, or officials before, during, or after the athletic event. Noisemakers are not permitted. Spectators, coaches, and players are expected to respect the facility rules of the opposing school. Play Hard - Play Fair - Play with High Values.

## **NYSAIS Athletic Association Sportsmanship Code for Spectators**

The NYSAIS Athletic Association promotes standards of fair play and ethical behavior. We encourage all student-athletes, coaches, parents, and spectators to support teams and game personnel in a positive manner at all times. We ask that all spectators show support for everyone involved in the athletic competition by cheering for your respective teams, in a positive manner and by abiding by the following Sportsmanship Code:

- I understand that the ultimate goal of interscholastic athletics is to provide an enjoyable and positive experience for all.
- I will be a positive role model by encouraging good sportsmanship.
- I will respect the game officials by refraining from addressing them or questioning their decisions.
- I will support the coaches by trusting their judgment and integrity.
- I will respect the rules of the venue of the athletic contest.
- I understand that I may be asked to leave the athletic contest if I do not adhere to the Sportsmanship Code.

## **Head Injury/Concussion Policy**

A “concussion” is a complex disturbance in brain function, due to direct or indirect trauma to the head, related to neurometabolic dysfunction, rather than structural injury. Most individuals who experience a concussion can recover completely as long as they do not return to play or return to learn prematurely. The effects of repeated concussions can be cumulative, and after a concussion, there is a period in which the brain is particularly vulnerable to further injury. If the individual sustains a second concussion during this period, the risk of permanent brain injury increases significantly.

As such, the guidelines outlined below should be followed to ensure that student-athletes are identified, treated, and referred appropriately, receive appropriate follow-up care during the school day, and are recovered prior to returning to full activity.

### *Concussion Awareness*

Concussions and other brain injuries can be serious and potentially life threatening. If managed properly, most athletes can enjoy long careers in sports after a concussion. If not managed properly, research indicates that these injuries can also have serious consequences later in life.

A concussion occurs when there is a direct or indirect injury to the brain. As a result, transient impairment of mental functions such as memory, balance/equilibrium, and vision may occur. It is important to recognize that many sport-related concussions do not result in loss of consciousness and, therefore, all suspected head injuries should be taken seriously. Coaches, parents, and fellow teammates can be helpful in identifying those who may potentially have a concussion, because a concussed student-athlete may not be aware of the athlete's condition or may be trying to hide the injury to stay in the game or practice.

Second-Impact Syndrome (SIS) results from an acute brain swelling that occurs when a second concussion is sustained before complete recovery from a previous concussion. Student-athletes who have mild symptoms or symptoms that have cleared are still at risk for developing brain swelling after a second impact to the head.

The School strongly recommends that all student-athletes and their parents participate in the free online training provided by the CDC and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) prior to participation in athletics at the School.

### *Signs and Symptoms*

When a student-athlete sustains a concussion, the student-athlete may report one or more of the following symptoms: headache or "pressure" in head; double or fuzzy vision; dizziness; tinnitus (ringing in the ears); nausea; just doesn't "feel right;" sensitivity to light and/or noise; feeling sluggish, foggy, or groggy; concentration/memory problems; and/or confusion.

When a student-athlete sustains a concussion, one or more of the following symptoms may be observed in the athlete: loss of consciousness; appears dazed or stunned; moves clumsily; unsure of score, opponent, date, etc.; cannot recall events prior to incident; cannot recall events after incident; answers questions slowly; confused about what to do—assignments, position, etc.; forgets an instruction; and/or shows mood, behavior, or personality changes.

The School recommends that a student-athlete receive prompt medical attention for the following dangerous symptoms of a concussion:

- Loss of consciousness;
- Vomiting;
- Confusion;
- Convulsions or seizures;
- One pupil is larger than the other;
- Difficulty recognizing people or places;
- Extreme drowsiness or cannot be awakened;
- Any weakness or numbness; and
- Headache worsens or does not go away after 24 hours.

### *Management Procedures*

The School strongly recommends that student-athletes take a pre-season baseline assessment for concussion that will remain on hand in the event of a concussion. It is also strongly recommended that parents and student-athletes take an online course prior to the start of each school year.

When a student-athlete shows any signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion, the student-athlete is expected to be promptly removed from practice or competition and evaluated by the Certified Athletic Trainer and/or the student-athlete's healthcare provider. At away events, when there is no qualified medical professional available, the coaching staff will typically abide by, "When in doubt, sit them out," as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control. If any danger signs are exhibited as described above, the School will strive to contact a parent/guardian and will accompany the student-athlete to an Emergency Room by Emergency Medical Service.

### *Post-Concussion – Return To Play*

The student-athlete must meet all of the following criteria in order to progress to activity:

- Symptom-free at rest and with exertion (including mental exertion in school).
- Have written clearance from the appropriate physician.
- Once the above criteria are met, the student-athlete will be progressed back to full activity following a stepwise process that includes:
  - Light aerobic exercise (stationary bike, treadmill, etc. at <70% PMHR (predicted maximum heart rate)).
  - Sport-specific training (running, throwing, catching, body weight exercises).
  - Non-contact training drills; weight lifting (full non-contact practice).
  - Full-contact practice (controlled contact drills).
  - Game play (no activity restrictions).

### **Medical and Other Excuses**

Any student who is to be excused from physical education or athletics must bring in a medical excuse signed by a doctor and present it to the School Nurse. For the first day of an excused absence from physical education, a parent note is acceptable. For excused absences from physical education for more than one day, a doctor's note is necessary. Doctor's notes also must specify the date when the student can return to physical activity; otherwise, a new doctor's note will be required.



## **IX. STUDENT HEALTH AND SUPPORT**

### **School Nurses and Illness**

There are two full-time School Nurses on campus. The School Nurses evaluate students who become ill during the school day and contact their parents as appropriate. Nursing services are provided during the school day from 7:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The School Nurses are responsible for ensuring that all student medical forms are current and on file.

Diagnosis or treatment of health conditions is not the School's responsibility. If a student is injured during a school program, first aid will be administered, and if necessary, the student will be taken to the emergency room at a local hospital. Following emergency first aid, the student will be placed under the parents'/guardians' care, and the responsibility for subsequent treatment rests with them.

If a student becomes ill during the day, the School Nurse will call the student's parents to have the student picked up. If the student is exhibiting any symptoms which may be related to COVID-19, the student must be picked up promptly within one (1) hour from the call. If a student is ill at home with COVID-19, parents and guardians should expect routine phone calls from the Health Office to assess the student's level of wellness and to plan for a safe return to school. The School Nurse will also inform parents as to any required quarantine or isolation period. The School Nurse will review what documentation is needed for a safe return and what the projected date of return will be.

If a student is absent for more than a week for other non-COVID-19 related illnesses, such as a surgery, the student will need a doctor's note to return to school. A doctor's note is also required for a student to participate in athletics and physical education, if that student has sustained an injury or if the student's physical education program is to be restricted for more than several days. Physicians' notes should be forwarded to the Health Office.  
be forwarded to the Health Office.

### **Health Records and Forms**

An Authorization To Treat And Share Health Information must be on file for every student. The School also requires proof of an annual physical examination from a licensed physician and proof of up-to-date immunizations for every student (please see below for a more detailed policy on immunizations).

Families are asked to provide the School with information about the student's physical and emotional health. In part, this information is obtained to comply with state law; it is also needed to keep the School well-informed of the health of all students. The School is sensitive to the privacy of this information. Please refer to the "Confidentiality" policy in this Handbook for more information about how this information is used.

- Before the start of the school year, parents are responsible for checking their child's Magnus account to confirm whether any health forms are due. All health forms are submitted to Magnus annually by parents/guardians. Each form may be printed by clicking on the "form icon" in each section. Please note that students' Magnus account also contains forms that are completed electronically once a year by the parent/guardian.
- Families may access Magnus either through a link on the Family Portal or via the MagnusMobileV2 phone app.
- All students in Grades PreK through 12 must have an up-to-date and completed Health Report and vaccine record. Students must also have an updated Health Report and vaccine record in



order to try out for the interscholastic sports program and to participate in PreSeason. Students may not participate in physical education or field trips without an updated Health Report and vaccine record on file.

- Parents/guardians of students in Grades 9 through 12 must submit Interval Health reports online, before the Fall, Winter, and Spring athletic season. Magnus will contact parents/guardians about the deadline concerning this New York State requirement.
- During the pandemic and for the 2021-2022 school year, New York State has suspended the testing of vision and hearing in schools. The responsibility for being informed as to the condition of students' vision and hearing will rest with parents/guardians and students' health care providers. Screening for scoliosis students' pediatrician is required for girls in Grades 5 and 7 and for boys in Grade 9, as noted on the RCDS health form.

## **Immunizations**

In accordance with New York State law, the School requires all students to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or a certificate of exemption before attending school. Proof of immunization should be recorded on a vaccine record or on the health forms submitted annually and signed by a medical professional. A student with a qualified medical exemption must provide the School with a Medical Immunization Exemption Certification signed by a medical professional, attesting that the student is exempt from a specific vaccine(s) because of medical reasons. Students who do not provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or qualify for an exemption will not be permitted to attend the School or participate in any School activities.

If there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease impacting campus or the School community, the School may exclude non-immunized students, including those with valid religious or medical exemptions, from school and all School activities. Excluded students will not be permitted to return until (1) the danger of the outbreak has passed; (2) the student becomes ill with the disease and completely recovers; or (3) the student is immunized. In determining whether there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease, the School may consult with appropriate medical professionals and/or the New York State Department of Health.

## **Communicable Illnesses**

All contagious diseases must be reported to the Health Office by the parent/guardian as soon as a diagnosis is made. Please see the School's COVID-19 policy for additional requirements for suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 and exposures. If a student develops a strep or staph infection, conjunctivitis, fifth's disease, mono, coxsackie, or other infectious illnesses, please notify the School Nurse immediately. Please be aware that students must be on medication for 24 hours for conjunctivitis or a strep or staph infection and must also be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. A doctor's note will be required before the student returns to school.

For COVID-19, a PCR based COVID-19 negative test and a medical provider's note may be required for the student's to return to school, depending on the student's symptoms. If your child has a non-COVID-19-related illness, your child will need to stay home for 24 hours after any episodes of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting. The school nurse will call you to discuss your child's illness and a return-to-school date.

The School may exclude any student who (a) has a communicable illness, (b) has been exposed to an infected person, and/or (c) has traveled to an area impacted by a communicable illness, if the School determines, in its sole discretion, that such exclusion is appropriate for the welfare of the student or the School community. The School may also screen students or require students to be screened by appropriate medical professionals to determine whether they pose a risk to the community. The School's decisions

shall be based on current and well-informed medical judgments concerning the illness, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable illness, and an analysis of the identified risks and available alternatives for responding to an individual with a communicable illness.

If and when appropriate, the School will disseminate information to students and families regarding campus health and safety issues through regular internal communication channels. For example, the School may provide families with information about the nature and spread of communicable illnesses, including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an epidemic or outbreak. We encourage all parents and guardians to contact medical professionals with any questions or concerns about communicable illnesses or immunization issues.

## **COVID-19 Symptom Management Procedures**

### Illness at Home

Students exhibiting any of the following symptoms at home will require absence from school.

- Fever of 100.0°F or above via oral thermometer/temporal scanner at home or school
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell

### Illness at School

If a student presents to the Health Office with COVID-19 symptoms (listed above), the student's parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to promptly pick up the student and their siblings. Parents/guardians are expected to make arrangements to have their students picked up within one (1) hour or as soon as possible.

The students will be separated from the rest of the student body in the School's isolation room until parent/guardian pick-up. Other household contacts attending RCDS will also be required to be picked up. The parent/guardian will pick up the student at the exterior door of the isolation room in the Lower School/PAC parking lot.

The parent/guardian will be advised by the Health Office to follow-up with a medical provider for evaluation and guidance and the need for COVID-19 testing (the same Health Office follow-up described in this section will take place in the case of a student staying home from school sick with COVID-19 symptoms).

The parent/guardian must inform the RCDS Health Office of any positive COVID-19 diagnosis. The Health Office is mandated to report diagnosed cases of COVID-19 to the Westchester County Department of Health. The Health Office will follow NYSDOH guidelines and inform the parent/guardian of a projected date of the student's return.

#### For Return-to-School

The Health Office will advise the parent on an appropriate return-to-school plan. Depending on the clinical circumstances, the Health Office will require that parents/students submit various required documents. If your student has any symptoms which may be related to COVID-19, your student will be required to be evaluated by their health care provider. If they are determined not to have COVID-19, the parent/student will need to submit documentation of this visit, a PCR-based negative COVID-19 test result and be asymptomatic for 24 hours before returning to school. If your student tests COVID-19 positive, they may return to school once released from isolation per CDC and NYSDOH guidelines (this is generally a 10 day period, if your student's symptoms resolve) AND once approved by the Health Office. The Health Office will remain in close contact via phone/email with the student's parents/guardians to coordinate the student's date of return.

#### Exposure

If a student has had close or proximate contact with someone who has COVID-19 symptoms or who tests positive for COVID-19, the student will be required to quarantine for 10-14 days. The New York State Department of Health defines "close contact" as being within six feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes during the period beginning 48 hours before the individual's onset of illness or positive COVID-19 test. The RCDS nurses will contact you to assess your student's level of wellness while they are quarantining and inform you of a projected date of return to school. Generally, the School follows the CDC and NYS travel testing and quarantining guidelines. The CDC and NYS travel guidelines are often subject to change. Please check with the Health Office regarding questions about these travel guidelines.

#### **Medications at School**

The School Nurse must be informed whenever a student is on medication. Parents are expected to attend to students' medication needs outside of school whenever possible; however, if a student must take a daily prescription medication, parents are expected to provide the School with a Permission to Medicate Form signed by the student's doctor and parent(s). The School Nurse, in collaboration with the parent/guardian and the student's physician, will establish an individualized medication administration plan for any students who must take medications at school.

Students may not bring, and will not be permitted to maintain, medicine of any kind (including cough drops) with their personal belongings. Students who use an inhaler and have written permission by the parent/guardian, physician, and School Nurse to self-administer it, may carry and use their inhaler independently at school. All other medications are administered to students by the Health Office. Students in Middle school and Upper School with severe allergies are required to carry an epinephrine device while on school sponsored trips or athletic events.

All medications, including nonprescription drugs, given in school shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber and given to the School Nurse in a properly-labeled original container accompanied by a doctor's note. A responsible adult should deliver medications to the School in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container. The pharmacy should provide separate bottles for School and home. Medications should be picked up at the end of the school year. A duplicate dose of life-saving medication provided by the parent/guardian will be stored in the Health Office.

It is the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the School Nurse in order to update the student's medication administration plan with respect to any medication(s), dosing revisions, and health status changes. The School will not assume any responsibility for students not in compliance with this medication policy.

### **Counseling Support Services**

The School has a counseling office dedicated to supporting students' educational, social, and emotional needs while at school. This office includes the Director of Counseling Support Services and the School Psychologists and Counselors (collectively referred to as the School Counselors). The School Counselors are available to speak with students to help facilitate their educational, social, and emotional support, on an as-needed basis. In certain situations, the School may require a student to see a School Counselor.

The goal of the counseling office is to fully support the community and to create a space where students can share their thoughts and feelings in a safe environment. The Middle School Counselor is focused on the social, emotional, and educational development of all RCDS Middle School students. The Middle School Counselor is responsible for short-term counseling and support of the Middle School student body and faculty on an as-needed basis. The School Counselors provide resource information and referrals to students who require additional support outside of school. Additionally, the Middle School Counselor teaches SEEK to all Middle School students.

School Counselors are part of a team of faculty members and administrators who collaborate with respect to students' educational experience at the School. As part of this collaborative effort, School Counselors may share information obtained from parents and students on a "need-to-know" basis with other employees of the School and a student's parents. The School Counselors are not engaged as any student's private therapist. The Counselors also work closely with the Learning Specialists, Grade Deans, and the Director of Diversity and Inclusion to make sure that all students' needs are being met. Please refer to the Confidentiality policy in this Handbook for more information.

Should the School determine, in its sole discretion, that it is in the best interest of a student to obtain services of a psychologist or other mental health professional not employed by the School, a School Counselor may assist in a referral for such services.

The School Counselors are also available to talk with parents on issues regarding their children and hold monthly parent discussion groups on various topics.

### **Other Counseling**

The School maintains a list of referrals for educational, intellectual, psychological, or speech and language evaluations, should parents/guardians wish to consult with the School regarding such an evaluation. Parents who need guidance in this area are encouraged to consult the Head of School or the Director of Counseling Support Services. It is recommended that the results of such evaluations be shared with School personnel so that appropriate recommendations can be implemented.

### **Medical Leave**

A medical leave from school may be appropriate in case of serious illness, bodily injury, or mental health condition, as determined in accordance with this policy. Decisions about granting or requiring a medical leave, or reinstating a student who has been on leave, rest with the senior administrators, the School Nurse, the Director of Health & Wellness, and the School Counselor. They will be guided by the principal

goal of a medical leave: to give the student the opportunity to regain health and thereby function consistently, productively, and safely at school. In the absence of a treatment plan that, in the School's opinion, meets these needs, the School may decline to grant a medical leave request, and instead require the student to withdraw.

A student's family may request medical leave. The School requires that any request for medical leave be accompanied by sufficient supporting documentation (as determined by the School) to allow the School to evaluate the leave request, including, but not limited to, at least the following information: (a) a recommendation from the student's treating medical professionals that the student would benefit from taking a medical leave; (b) a description of how the student's medical condition limits the student's ability to participate in required academic or extracurricular activities; (c) the plan for treatment of the student's medical condition; and (d) an anticipated date for the student's return.

Additionally, in certain situations, the School may require that the student be evaluated and subsequently placed on medical leave. The School may initiate a discussion of a leave of absence in circumstances including, but not limited to:

- When mental health or physical symptoms are or may be impeding a student from functioning appropriately academically;
- When a physical or mental health condition interferes with a student's attendance at school;
- When a student behaves in ways that may be self-destructive or dangerous to others;
- When a student is not engaged in treatment that the School has made a condition of attendance, after the student has been evaluated by medical and/or mental health professionals, who have deemed such treatment appropriate; or
- When a student exhibits symptoms or behavior that is of concern to the School.

This initial discussion may include, senior administrators, the School Nurse, the Director of Counseling Support Services, the School Counselor, the student's advisor, the parents, and the student, as deemed appropriate by the School. The purpose of this initial discussion is to establish the steps that the family is taking to ensure that the student is well enough to participate fully in life at school; and the further steps that the School may require if the situation does not improve.

The School may require the family (parents and student) to enter into a medical leave agreement detailing the parameters of any leave. The agreement may include conditions and requirements for the student's return to school. While a student on leave is excused from attending class, the student must make arrangements to make up missed work either while on leave (if possible) or upon return. While the School will strive to minimize academic disruption, the School may require that a student drop a course or courses if a prolonged absence will make it difficult for the student to satisfactorily complete the requirements of the course. To return to school from a medical leave, a student must provide a thorough, written professional evaluation of the student's current mental health and/or medical condition from the physician, psychiatrist, or other professional who treated the student during the medical leave. The School may require additional evaluation by a physician or mental health consultant of its choosing. The guiding principle of re-admission from a medical leave is the School's confidence that the student can return safely; and that the student's return will not compromise the student's continued recovery, interfere with the School's ability to serve other students' needs, or place an undue burden on the School. The decision regarding any student's return to the School from a medical leave rests with the School. As a corollary to this principle, a student whom the School determines can safely participate in the regular school day may nevertheless be restricted from participation in overnight field trips or other residential-style School activities.

## **Food Allergies**

RCDS is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for all students. In order to ensure that such an environment exists at school, it is imperative that the RCDS community be aware of and sensitive to various food allergies that are life-threatening to some students and employees. Parents of students who have severe allergies with the potential for developing anaphylaxis are encouraged to discuss their student's health needs with the School Nurse to develop an Action Plan *prior to the start of the school year*. Classroom management will be discussed at that time. This plan must be reviewed prior to the start of each school year.

In consideration of the number of students with food allergies, the School has the following guidelines for management of these allergies:

- Products containing nuts and peanuts may not be brought onto the School campus;
- Food prepared by the dining commons staff is nut and peanut free;
- Food prepared by the dining commons staff will be labeled regarding allergens;
- Sharing of food is prohibited;
- Frequent and appropriate hand washing will be encouraged;
- Surfaces will be cleaned to prevent cross-contamination;
- Snacks provided for the entire class will be prepackaged, commercially prepared, unopened, and have an ingredient label indicating there are no nuts or peanuts; and
- For students with severe allergies, the School will be provided with an Emergency Care Plan written by a primary care provider or allergist with parental input.

Successful management of food allergies is the jointly-held responsibility of the School, families, and students. Education encompasses the entire School community including employees, parents, and students. It focuses on preventive strategies, the symptoms of anaphylaxis in individual students, and emergency care. We recognize that the management of food allergies is a developmental process, and we strive to take reasonable measures to protect our youngest students, while recognizing that students should learn to assume increasing responsibility for their own health and safety as they mature.

## **Asthma Management**

Parents of students with asthma should contact the School Nurse prior to the start of school to discuss an asthma management plan.

## **Health Emergencies**

Diagnosis or treatment of health conditions and injuries that occur on non-school time is not the School's responsibility. If a student is injured during a school program, first aid will be administered, and if necessary, the student will be taken to the emergency room at a local hospital. Following emergency first aid, the student will be placed under the parents'/guardians' care, and the responsibility for subsequent treatment rests with them.

In the event of a serious emergency, an ambulance may be called and the student may be taken to the nearest hospital emergency room. Emergency situations arising on campus will generally be referred to White Plains Hospital or Greenwich Hospital.

Please remember, it is most important that the School have current home, work, and cell phone numbers for parents/guardians, day care providers, or others (relatives, friends, or neighbors) who routinely assume temporary care of the student if the student's parent(s) cannot be reached.



## **X. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **Student Records and Transcripts**

Students' records are kept on file at the School. Each student's record contains a transcript with grades, athletic involvement, commendations, test scores, formal academic, athletic and advisor comments, and advisor letters.

### **Student Media Information**

In order to portray its program accurately and vibrantly, the School makes a concerted effort to highlight the accomplishments of our students and faculty, as well as to publicize the strength of the entire program offered by the School, in a variety of media formats. Student Media Information—including student names, photographic images (for example, portrait, picture, video, or other reproductions), audio recordings of students' voices, video recordings of students, and/or reproductions of students' work and likenesses—may be used for educational and/or promotional purposes in print and electronic media. Outlets for publication of Student Media Information may include, but not be limited to, the School magazine, marketing materials, the School website, press releases, social media outlets (including, but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter), newsletters, and local newspapers.

While the School strives to abide by parent/guardian wishes, we do not guarantee use of a student's name or image will never occur. Parents are asked to contact the School if they would like to opt out of the use of Student Media Information.

### **School Directory**

The School has a directory of class lists and contact information for families, faculty and staff, and other members of the community. The Directory is updated each September and made available to families in print and online. The Directory may only be used for School purposes, and not for personal or commercial purposes. Failure to properly use the Directory may result in restricted use and other consequences, as determined appropriate by the School.

### **Confidentiality**

The School seeks to provide students with a safe environment in which they feel comfortable and to create an atmosphere of trust. Members of the School community commit themselves to maintaining appropriate professional tact and discretion with regard to confidential information they receive. However, confidential information may be disclosed to the Head of School; appropriate administrators, faculty, and staff; outside professionals; law enforcement officers; parents/guardians; and others when there is a compelling reason for doing so, including, without limitation, in cases of health and safety emergencies (when students or others are in imminent danger of harm); when there is concern about a student's ability to function academically, emotionally, physically, and/or mentally within the School environment; or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed.

## **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students**

The School strives to provide a safe and supportive environment that will help students succeed academically and socially. To that end, the School promotes respect for all people, and will not tolerate harassment or bullying based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This is the case whether the bullying or harassment takes place on or off campus, including cyber-bullying through the use of electronic technology (on or off the School's campus, and on or off the School's network). Particularly with respect to transgender and gender non-conforming students, the School will work closely with students and their families to strive to honor their wishes with respect to use of School facilities, participation in athletics, accuracy of student records, use of preferred name and pronouns, and privacy, in accordance with applicable law, and to the extent that the School's campus facilities reasonably permit.

## **Visitors to Campus**

For the safety of our students, our Visitor Pass policy includes parents, family members, alumni, and visitors from outside of the School community. Upon arrival, all visitors are requested to check in with the Main Office to obtain a Visitor's Pass. Special events for an entire class and all School meetings are exceptions to this policy.

## **Pets on Campus**

Family pets need to be left at home at all times for health and safety reasons. They should not be in attendance during the school day or at special occasions. No matter how gentle and beloved, we do not want a dog, cat, ferret, bird, or any other pet introduced into a classroom, hallway, or play area where a student may have severe allergies or fears that can be triggered by the presence of animals.

## **Background Checks**

With student safety as a priority at the School, the School conducts fingerprint-based state and national criminal history and sex offender registry checks on all current and prospective employees who may have direct and unmonitored access to children, including any individual who regularly provides school-related transportation to students.

The School requires any volunteers who will work independently/unsupervised with students to undergo a state and national criminal history and sex offender registry checks. It is also School policy to require that volunteers with direct and unmonitored access to students undergo a fingerprint-based check, which is run through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and provides access to national criminal history databases. Examples of the types of volunteer activities requiring a background check include, but are not limited to, field trips and tutoring students one-on-one. A background check is typically not necessary for parent volunteers involved with larger School functions at which many adults are typically present or in instances where there is only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with students in commonly used areas of the School grounds.

These background checks require the completion of a brief application form and verification of a government-issued photographic identification, and are only conducted with the consent of an individual employee or volunteer. A volunteer's service, and an individual's employment, is contingent upon successful completion of the checks, which may take several days or weeks to process.

Completed background check forms must be returned to the Business Office at least two weeks in advance of volunteering.



## **Appropriate Boundaries Between Students and Employees**

The following guidance is designed to ensure that appropriate boundaries between students and employees are maintained. This guidance supplements, and does not replace, other rules and policies set forth in the Employee Handbook. Because it is impossible to anticipate all potential situations, the information below is described as “guidance” rather than “rules” or “policies,” because there may be occasions in which exceptions are permissible, though any exceptions should truly be rare and easily justifiable.

In addition, the guidance below is intended to provide examples of the type of situations in which employees need to be conscious of maintaining boundaries with students. It is not an exhaustive list of such situations, and all employees need to exercise careful judgment in any situation involving students to ensure that proper boundaries are maintained.

### **Employees of the School:**

- Should not engage in any type of behavior that might have the appearance of impropriety if observed by others.
- Should avoid being alone with a student. For example, employees should not be alone with students in a non-public space or inside a room with a closed door. Coaches and other athletic employees should not be alone with a student when engaging in otherwise permitted physical contact such as when teaching a skill. It is understood that teachers may meet with their students for educational purposes outside of classroom time and that some of those meetings will involve one-on-one meetings. Such private meetings with a student should, whenever possible, occur in a public space or in a room or office with the door open or in a place where the meeting is visible from the outside.
- Should not discipline students in any physical manner.
- Should not lavish attention on a particular student, including giving inappropriate gifts.
- Should not converse with students about their sexual lives except for an educational, health, or safety-related purpose, nor should they reveal details of their own sexual lives or romantic relationships to students.
- Should not reveal other inappropriate details about their personal lives to students.
- Should not inappropriately “hang out” with students outside of school or spend an inordinate amount of time “hanging out” with students even inside school. Adults at the School should always remember they are not the students’ “friends” and therefore should not be engaging in peer-like behavior with the students.
- Should never provide alcohol or drugs to a student, nor permit a student to drink or use drugs in their presence. An employee should never drink or use drugs in the presence of a student, except on the rare occasion of a School-sponsored event at which the school provides alcohol to adults in attendance. Needless to say (but said here for emphasis) any such drinking should be in moderation.
- Should not have extended physical contact with a student. Any such contact should be limited to a supportive, congratulatory, or quick hug, arm squeeze, or pat on the back. If a student engages in repeated and/or prolonged physical contact with a School employee, the adult in question should clearly and firmly discourage such behavior, and if the student persists, the adult should involve a supervisor to assist the employee in handling the situation.
- Should not engage in physical horseplay, roughhousing, or other inappropriate physical games with a student.
- Should not direct a student to keep a secret from, or not share information with, the student’s parents/guardians or other School employees.

- Should not tutor a student in the student's home without the student's parent or guardian present. In addition, School employees should not tutor students in the employees' homes unless another adult is present and the student's parent/guardian has given permission.
- Should not allow students to ride in the employees' personal cars without written (email will suffice) permission from a parent/guardian and approval from the appropriate school principal. In addition, employees should not ride in students' cars.
- Should not be present at a student's home when a parent/guardian/caregiver/babysitter is not present, whether for a social gathering or otherwise. In addition, employees should not invite students to their homes without approval from the appropriate school principal and written parental/guardian consent (email can suffice). Employees should never have only one student alone at their home, nor should the employees have students to their home at all unless there is another adult present and the appropriate authorizations are obtained.
- During any and all overnight trips and sleepovers, should not be alone with a student in their room, should sleep in a separate room, should not invite a student to sleep in their room, and should not be inside a student's room when a student is sleeping or changing.

Anyone who believes a boundary has been crossed should bring such information to the appropriate school Principal, who will then be responsible for addressing it with the employee. Information that a boundary may have been crossed that comes to the attention of the School will be followed up on by others, including the Head of School and communicated with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). Oftentimes, boundaries are crossed inadvertently and require nothing more than a reminder to the employee to maintain a boundary in the future. Other times the crossing of a boundary is indicative of a more serious problem and may indicate an inappropriate relationship.

These boundary guidelines are not applicable if the employee is the parent, guardian, or sibling of the student in question.

### **Security, Emergencies, and Drills**

RCDS takes the safety of its students and the community very seriously. There are systems in place in the event of an emergency on campus, and regular drills are conducted to make all those on campus aware of the procedures.

#### **Emergency Preparation**

RCDS has a thorough Emergency Preparation Plan that includes procedures for mid-day emergency dismissals from school for snow, extended power outages, and other unexpected events. If there is the need to implement the emergency dismissal procedures, families will be contacted (parent/guardian or emergency contact) to inform them of the emergency dismissal and to confirm the plans for transportation from school. No student will be dismissed from school during an emergency dismissal without such contact and confirmation.

### **Surveillance Cameras on Campus**

The School has installed video cameras at certain open and public spaces on campus, such as all official entrances to the School's campus, as well as at key campus crossroads. The School seeks to balance the security, safety, and other benefits derived from the use of video surveillance with any privacy concerns of the School's employees, students, families, and guests. In all cases, security equipment is used in a manner that adheres to legal statutes and ethical standards where the right of privacy is concerned and is not used where there exists a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as in restrooms, locker rooms, etc. In addition, all entrances to the School's campus are posted with signs notifying School community

members and other visitors that there are video surveillance cameras actively in use on campus. These surveillance cameras record visual footage in each location, but do not record any sound or other audio.

### **Search and Seizure**

The School may conduct a search of a student and/or the student's belongings, including personal items, such as bags and backpacks, personal electronic devices, and other effects, if the School suspects a student may be violating the law or violating a School rule or code of conduct. Lockers are the property of the School. Students exercise control over their lockers from other students, but not from the School and its officials. As a result, the Head of School and the Head's designees, as well as law enforcement officials, may search lockers as the School determines may be appropriate, which may include random searches. The School and law enforcement officials may seize items that may jeopardize the safety of others or property, or constitute a health hazard.

Parking on School premises is a privilege, not a right. As such, any person who operates a vehicle on School property or in connection with any School-related activity is agreeing that the School may inspect and search the vehicle and its contents without notice and without further consent.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

RCDS is committed to the highest standards of care for our students and seeks to ensure that our students are protected from inappropriate or hurtful actions by adults responsible for their care, as well as by anyone else who may mistreat a student. In accordance with New York State law, all School employees are required to report suspected abuse or neglect of any student under age 18.

New York State law requires any person suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected to report such suspicion immediately to New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR), a division of Child Protective Services (CPS). Suspicion or belief may be based on factors including, but not limited to, observations, allegations, facts, or statements by a child, a victim, or a third party. Such suspicion does not require certainty or probable cause. The responsibility to report rests both on the School and also on all School employees. While a School employee may wish, and is indeed encouraged, to consult with the Head of School prior to making a report of suspected child abuse or neglect to SCR, all employees are required to report their reasonable suspicions to SCR, even if the Head of School may not agree with the employee's concerns.

### **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act**

This notification is required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act). Asbestos Management Plans have been developed for the School. These plans are available and accessible to the public at the School's Facilities Department.

This notification is required by law and should not be construed to indicate the existence of any hazardous conditions in our school buildings.

## **XI. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

### **Parental Comportment and Support for School Policies**

At RCDS, we believe that a positive relationship between the School and a student's parents or guardians is essential to the fulfillment of the School's mission. We recognize that effective relationships are characterized by clearly-defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be achieved.

The School understands and appreciates that parents and guardians may employ different means to meet the expectations and responsibilities expressed in this policy. Nevertheless, RCDS, at all times, may dismiss a student whose parent, guardian, family member, or other adult involved with the student, in the sole judgment of the School, fails to comply with this or any other policy or procedure of the School, engages in conduct either on or off the School's property that could undermine the authority of the School's administration, and/or otherwise behaves in a manner that is unbecoming of a member of the School community. The School may refuse re-enrollment of a student if the School believes the actions of a parent or guardian on or off the School's property make a positive, constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise may interfere with the School's accomplishment of its mission and/or educational goals.

To assist in creating the most effective relationship, the School expects that parents will observe the following guidelines:

#### **1. Share in the School's vision.**

- Support the mission of the School.
- Understand and support the School's philosophy, policies, and procedures.
- Support the School's disciplinary process, and understand that the School's authority in such matters is final.
- Be supportive of the School's commitment to a diverse and inclusive community.
- Acknowledge that the payment of tuition is an investment in the education of the student, not an investment of ownership in the School.
- Support the School's emphasis on sustainable practices.

#### **2. Provide a home environment that supports the intellectual, physical, and emotional growth of the student.**

- Create a schedule and structure that supports a student's study and completion of homework requirements.
- Be aware of the student's online activities and use of computers, television, and video games.
- Encourage integrity and civility in the student.
- Be a role model, especially when it comes to behavior at School and at athletic events.
- Encourage the student's participation in events that promote high standards; actively discourage participation in events that can lead to illegal or unwise behavior.

**3. Participate in the establishment of a home/School and School community relationship built on communication, collaboration, and mutual respect.**

- Provide a home environment that supports positive attitudes toward the School.
- Treat each member of the community with respect, assume good will, and maintain a collaborative approach when conflicts and challenges arise.
- Help build and maintain a positive School environment by not participating in or tolerating gossip.
- Maintain tact and discretion with regard to confidential information. In cases when students or others are in imminent danger of harm, when there is a compelling reason for doing so, or when legal requirements demand that confidential information must be revealed, information may be disclosed to the Head of School, administrators, outside professionals, or law enforcement officers.
- Respect the School's responsibility to do what is best for the entire community, while recognizing the needs of an individual student.
- Seek to resolve problems and secure information through appropriate channels (i.e., teacher/advisor/counselor, Head of School, in that order).
- Acknowledge the value of the educational experience at the School by making regular and timely School attendance a priority and scheduling non-emergency appointments outside the classroom day.
- Support the School through volunteerism and attendance at School events.
- Share with the School any religious, cultural, medical, or personal information that the School may need to best serve students and the School community.
- Understand and support the School's technology policies.

**Family-School Communication**

The School wishes to facilitate communication between parents/guardians and employees in every way possible. Some conferences will, of course, be initiated by teachers, advisors, or administrators.

If a parent has questions or concerns about an academic issue, the parent should try to contact the Grade-Level Dean first in terms of the appropriate sequence of action. As a matter of courtesy and consideration, parents/guardians are encouraged not to telephone members of the faculty at their homes. Most faculty maintain offices at school and their direct phone numbers. Faculty's School-provided email addresses are Firstname\_Lastname@ryecountryday.org. Individual email addresses and office telephone numbers are available on the School's website and in the RCDS directory.

Please recognize that faculty may not be able to listen to or read messages until the end of the school day. In general, faculty are expected to respond to phone calls and emails by the next business day.

Messages for students will be forwarded to the student's respective Dean. The Dean will do his or her best to make sure the student receives the message. This may be difficult for the Grade 7 and 8 Deans to do with messages delivered after 2:10 p.m., because students in these two grades are at Sports. Parents must call the Middle School Office by 1:00 p.m. to ensure receipt of all messages by all students.

## **Parent-Teacher Communication and Conferences**

At the beginning of the school year, every Middle School student's Advisor will contact the advisee's parents for the purpose of introductions, answering questions, setting goals, and helping with the beginning of school transition. At the end of the first trimester, parents, Advisors, and students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 will meet to review the first trimester reports. Because students in Grade 5 are new to the Middle School, they will not be present when parents and Advisors meet to discuss the first trimester reports. Appointments for Conference Day are scheduled by the School several weeks in advance. During the year, additional conferences may be arranged when necessary. Parents are encouraged to call their child's Advisor or Dean if they feel the need for such a conference.

## **Current Family Contact Information**

Parents are expected to keep the School informed of contact information for emergency situations. If a parent is going to be away from home for an extended length of time, please leave a forwarding address and telephone number where the parent can be reached, as well as information regarding who will be responsible for the student and how they may be reached in case of illness or other emergencies.

## **Multiple Households**

In order for the School to communicate most effectively with parents and support each student, teachers and administrators need to be aware of students who spend time in multiple households. Additionally, information regarding who the primary caregiver is should be communicated to the School, in the event of an emergency, and whether special co-parenting arrangements exist. If there are court-ordered guidelines regarding visitations, picking up a student from school, parent involvement in field trips, or other issues, the School should be informed.

The School expects separated or divorced parents to cooperate and partner with the School with respect to their child's education. For this reason, the School will not get involved in parental disputes or custody issues.

These situations can be stressful for parents and confusing for students, and assistance in minimizing the School's phone calls for clarification is very important. Unless otherwise specified, the School will generally communicate with any parent for whom the School has current contact information and may provide the parent with copies of the student's report card, as well as other informational mailings and electronic communications during the year.

## **School Gatherings Off Campus (Not Sponsored by the School)**

In the younger grades, party invitations should not be delivered or discussed at School unless all classmates are included. The misuse of party invitations in a school setting can be very hurtful to students. The invitations themselves can offer all parents an important teaching opportunity with students on considering the feelings of others. No one likes to be excluded, and often parties create these feelings in students who are not a part of the celebration.

It is important to remember, through their quest for acceptance from peers and their desire for greater independence, that students still need clear boundaries and guidance, and the following section provides some ideas to consider. They are designed to be practical and, more importantly, are based on the values that we, as a school, stand for as part of our mission. In this sense, we hope that all our parents will support these in spirit, if not in letter.



- 1. Always be at an event or party in your own home.**
  - The parents should be the greeters. During the party, parents should casually make their presence known.
  - Have the party in a part of the house where the guests will be comfortable and where you can maintain adequate supervision.
  - Be the ones to bring in the food and beverages. This will keep the party running smoothly, and it will allow you to meet your child's friends.
  - Occasionally walk around outside.
- 2. Clearly establish ground rules and expectations with your child before the party takes place (before your child goes to any social event).**
  - Let students know your expectations: they want guidelines, though you may hear something quite different.
  - Give students options, but with clear guidelines. Discuss their responsibilities and discuss what the consequences are for inappropriate behavior and what the rewards are for appropriate behavior.
  - Stress the concept of shared responsibility.
  - Parents should take the responsibility of "playing the heavy," if there is inappropriate behavior.
- 3. Make sure there is plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages and plan activities.**
- 4. If your child is invited to a party, you should contact the parent giving the party and:**
  - Verify the location.
  - Verify that parents will be present.
  - Verify the starting and ending time.
  - Offer assistance (e.g., chaperone, food, etc.).
  - If there is to be a sleepover, find out what the ground rules will be.

If parents must be away for any length of time, make arrangements for quality supervision in the home to ensure that parents, students, and the home are protected. Too many parties occur in homes when parents are away. Let the School and neighbors know if parents are away.

### **Parents Association**

The Rye Country Day School Parents Association (the "PA") is a parent-governed organization representing parents and guardians of Rye Country Day School students. The PA is headed by an Executive Committee and is organized into four areas: Community Building, Enrichment, Fundraising, and the Liaison and Host Family Network.

The PA's overall mission is to help foster a sense of community amongst our parents and guardians while encouraging engagement with the School and working in partnership with the School for the benefit of the whole community.

Specifically, the PA strives to:

- build a warm and welcoming community among parents;
- facilitate communication between parents and the School; and
- raise funds for scholarships, PA activities, and other vital programs at RCDS.



## **Annual Fund and Fundraising**

As with all independent schools, tuition revenue alone does not cover the full cost of Rye Country Day's annual operating budget. The Annual Fund helps to bridge this budget gap, and contributes vital funds to academic programs, need-based financial aid, teacher compensation, and other expenses. We ask all members of the School community, including families, alumni, parents of alumni, grandparents, faculty and staff, and friends to make a contribution each year.

## **XII. ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **Enrollment Contracts**

Enrollment contracts are typically sent to families in late January. Students may not attend classes unless a properly executed-enrollment contract is submitted to the School in a timely manner. Enrollment contracts will be sent to returning students only if the School is generally satisfied with the student's academic performance and behavior. Please see the Re-Enrollment Policy for additional information.

Unless Tuition Refund Insurance is purchased and the Insurance covers the tuition, once an enrollment contract has been signed and accepted by the School, as of June 1, parents are responsible for the full tuition for the academic year, regardless of the reason for withdrawal. Please see the Handbook's Tuition Refund Plan Policy for additional information.

### **Tuition Assistance**

Our School community is committed to helping families effectively meet the cost of the School education to the extent that the School's resources permit. Families who demonstrate that their financial resources are insufficient to pay the full cost of tuition are eligible to apply for financial assistance. To apply for financial assistance or receive additional information about financial aid, parents should visit the RCDS website. Hard copies of the financial assistance packet are also available from the Business Office. Additional information is available on the School's website.

### **Tuition Payment Policy**

Tuition for the first half of the school year is due on July 1. No pupil will be permitted to attend school unless either the entire tuition for the first half of the year is paid or a suitable arrangement for such payment has been established with the Business Office.

Tuition for the second half of the year is due on January 1. If tuition remains outstanding after that time, a student may not be allowed to continue to attend, at the discretion of the School.

Optional tuition insurance information is included with each student re-enrollment agreement.

### **Student Accident Insurance**

The School provides parents with an opportunity to participate in the required Student Accident Plan. Information about the plan is included with enrollment materials.

### **Sibling Enrollment**

Qualified children of faculty/staff and qualified sibling candidates may be given admission priority, but the School may give highest priority to motivated students demonstrating solid academic achievement or promise, and to those whose values and citizenship reflect their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to the School community. These applicants are expected to meet the same criteria as other students in terms of both readiness and behavior. To maintain balance at each grade level, the gender of the sibling may affect preference status.

Current families who are interested in applying for a sibling are urged to contact the Admissions Office in September. Applications for admission, from both current and new families, must be submitted by the

published due dates. Enrollment decisions, regardless of a family's prior or current relationship with the School, are always made in the School's sole discretion.

### **Continued Enrollment**

The School has the right to suspend or terminate the enrollment of a student at any time. Such a suspension or termination may result where: (i) a student fails to abide by the rules and regulations of the School; (ii) the School determines that a student's conduct or performance demonstrates an unwillingness or inability to be productive within the school community; or (iii) the School determines that the continued attendance of a student is not in the best interest of the student or the School.

The School may also terminate or refuse re-enrollment to a student whose parent or guardian fails to cooperate with the School or engages in conduct evidencing manifest disregard of school policies or rules, particularly where such conduct endangers the health, safety, or welfare of anyone in the school community on or off the school grounds.

### **Re-Enrollment**

The Head of School reviews the academic and behavioral records of students at the end of each school year. A decision to re-enroll a student and to subsequently forward a re-enrollment contract to the parents is based upon a student's academic record, effort, attitude, and behavior throughout the prior year, and upon the willingness of the parents to accept and exemplify their responsibility in the partnership of education. On occasion, re-enrollment contracts are held until later (usually April or May) when the School decides that an appropriate decision about placement can be made, or are not extended at all, if the School determines that such a recommendation is in the best interest of the student and/or the School community. The Head of School makes the final decision as to whether a student will be invited to return for another year.

This difficult conclusion is only reached after careful consideration. While parents are obviously involved in this process, the School will make the ultimate decision, and will assist, if possible, in the process of locating an appropriate alternative school.

### **Leave of Absence**

Should a student's extended absence from school be necessary or desired, a leave of absence may be appropriate. A leave for medical reasons will be handled in accordance with the School's Medical Leave policy. The School may recommend or grant a request for a voluntary leave of absence for other compelling reasons. The initial request for a voluntary leave of absence should be made to the Principal and Head of School. The School requires sufficient supporting documentation prior to the approval of any leave. The sufficiency of any supporting documentation will be determined by the School.

The School makes the final determination as to whether to grant a leave of absence, as well as the duration of the leave and the conditions necessary for a student's return (including, but not limited to, whether the student must reapply for admission). Whether the period of leave is counted towards academic requirements for promotion and graduation will be determined by the School.

Leaves of absence may be noted in the student's educational record, including on the student's transcript. A leave of absence will not be used in lieu of disciplinary action to address violations of the School's code of conduct, rules, or policies. Additionally, a student granted a leave of absence while on academic and/or disciplinary status may return on that same status.

Families remain financially responsible for tuition and other fees while the student is on a leave of absence.

**Family Leave**

Families who take a leave of absence from the School of a year or more must apply to the School for readmission. The student will be considered on a space-available basis, as well as within the context and competition of the applicant pool for the student's grade level. Strength of the applicant's file is important, including a strong finish to the student's last year at the School, as well as a strong record of academic performance and citizenship while the student is away. Ultimately, the School cannot predict the number of openings or competitiveness of applicant pools for specific grade levels, and given the School's high enrollment, there is never a guarantee of readmission for the following year. Applications for admission, from both current and new families, must be submitted by the due date set by the Office of Admissions. Enrollment decisions, regardless of a family's prior or current relationship with the School, are always made in the School's sole discretion.

## APPENDIX A: COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Policies and procedures that are specifically applicable to Rye Country Day School students and families throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic and related public health emergency (the “COVID-19 Protocols”) are posted on the School website at <https://www.ryecountryday.org/reopening>. If any other policy in the *Parent-Student Handbook* conflicts with the COVID-19 Protocols set forth on that page, the policies and procedures set forth on that page shall control. In other words, RCDS students and families should follow the COVID-19 Protocols described therein.

Government and public health guidelines and restrictions, as well as business and industry best practices regarding the COVID-19 virus, are changing rapidly. RCDS has developed the COVID-19 Protocols to promote a safe campus and culture, ranging from health and safety norms and social distancing and de-densification guidelines to detailed health policies and procedures specifically designed to limit the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. These protocols will be updated as appropriate in response to changed circumstances or in accordance with new government and public health guidance. RCDS may modify the protocols and by extension any of the policies in this *Parent-Student Handbook* at any time, with or without notice, to adapt to changing circumstances and community needs, consistent with its commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy school environment.

## APPENDIX B: MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHEDULES

## Grade 5

[illegible]

## Grade 6

Grade 6	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
8:05-8:35	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time
8:30-8:40	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom
8:40	D Block 8:40-9:30	B Block 8:40-9:30	C Block 8:40-9:30	D Block 8:40-9:30	B Block 8:40-9:30	F Block 8:40-9:30	A Block 8:40-9:50	B Block 8:40-9:50
8:45								
8:50								
8:55								
9:00								
9:05								
9:10								
9:15								
9:20								
9:25								
9:30	F Block 9:30-10:20	E Block 9:30-10:20	D Block 9:30-10:20	C Block 9:30-10:20	F Block 9:30-10:20	A Block 9:30-10:20	Snack	Snack
9:35								
9:40								
9:45								
9:50								
9:55								
10:00								
10:05								
10:10								
10:15								
10:20	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	D Block 10:00-11:10	E Block 10:00-11:10
10:25								
10:30								
10:35								
10:40								
10:45								
10:50								
10:55								
11:00								
11:05								
11:10	C Block 11:20-12:10	C Block 11:20-12:10	B Block 11:20-12:10	F Block 11:20-12:10	C Block 11:20-12:10	D Block 11:20-12:10	C Block 11:10-12:10	F Block 11:10-12:10
11:15								
11:20								
11:25								
11:30								
11:35								
11:40								
11:45								
11:50								
11:55								
12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:05								
12:10								
12:15								
12:20								
12:25								
12:30								
12:35								
12:40								
12:45								
12:50								
12:55								
1:00								
1:05								
1:10								
1:15								
1:20								
1:25								
1:30	A Block 1:30-2:20	A Block 1:30-2:20	E Block 1:30-2:20	B Block 1:30-2:20	E Block 1:30-2:20	E Block 1:30-2:20	Silent Reading	Silent Reading
1:35								
1:40								
1:45								
1:50								
1:55								
2:00								
2:05								
2:10								
2:15								
2:20-3:15	Flex	Flex	Flex	Flex	Flex	Flex	Flex	Flex



## Grades 7 and 8

Grade 7 and 8	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8						
8:05-8:35	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time	Potential Adult Collaboration, Prep, & Meeting time						
8:30-8:40	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom						
8:40	D Block 8:40-9:30	B Block 8:40-9:30	C Block 8:40-9:30	D Block 8:40-9:30	B Block 8:40-9:30	F Block 8:40-9:30	A Block 8:40-9:50	B Block 8:40-9:50						
8:45														
8:50														
8:55														
9:00														
9:05														
9:10														
9:15														
9:20														
9:25														
9:30	F Block 9:30-10:20	E Block 9:30-10:20	D Block 9:30-10:20	C Block 9:30-10:20	F Block 9:30-10:20	A Block 9:30-10:20	Snack	Snack						
9:35														
9:40														
9:45														
9:50														
9:55														
10:00														
10:05							D Block 10:00-11:10	E Block 10:00-11:10						
10:10														
10:15														
10:20														
10:25														
10:30														
10:35														
10:40														
10:45														
10:50	E Block 10:30-11:20	D Block 10:30-11:20	F Block 10:30-11:20	A Block 10:30-11:20	A Block 10:30-11:20	B Block 10:30-11:20								
10:55														
11:00														
11:05														
11:10														
11:15														
11:20														
11:25														
11:30														
11:35														
11:40	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch						
11:45														
11:50														
11:55														
12:00														
12:05														
12:10														
12:15														
12:20														
12:25									Flex 2	Flex 2	Flex 2	Flex 2	Flex 2	Flex 2
12:30														
12:35														
12:40														
12:45														
12:50														
12:55														
1:00	C Block 12:40-1:30	C Block 12:40-1:30	B Block 12:40-1:30	F Block 12:40-1:30	C Block 12:40-1:30	D Block 12:40-1:30								
1:05														
1:10														
1:15														
1:20														
1:25														
1:30							Flex 2	Flex 2						
1:35														
1:40														
1:45														
1:50	A Block 1:30-2:20	A Block 1:30-2:20	E Block 1:30-2:20	B Block 1:30-2:20	E Block 1:30-2:20	E Block 1:30-2:20								
1:55														
2:00														
2:05														
2:10														
2:15														
2:20-3:20							Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics