



**LOWER SCHOOL
PARENT - STUDENT HANDBOOK**

2019 - 2020

**Lower School
(914) 925-4572 (Office)
(914) 921-4200 (Fax)**

www.ryecountryday.org

Rye Country Day School seeks diversity in all aspects of school life. The School admits students of any race, color, religion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introductory Materials

Mission Statement	4
RCDS Core Values Statement	4
Diversity Mission Statement	5
Public Purpose Mission Statement	6
Sustainability Mission Statement	6
Statement of Philosophy	7
Lower School Philosophy	8
Governing Structure	8
Principal's Introduction	9
RCDS Administration	11
Lower School Administrative and Support Personnel	13
Lower School Faculty	13

Community Expectations – Major Policies

Bullying Policy	16
Harassment Policy	18
Guidance For Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries	19
Behavior and Student Responsibilities	21
Technology Use Policy for Students	23

Student Health Information

Health Information	27
Immunization	29

Communication

Communication/Phone Numbers	30
Emergency Preparation Information	31
Emergency School Cancellation Information	31
Visitors	31

Transportation

Bus Transportation	32
Train Transportation	33
Arrival and Dismissal Procedures	33
Departure Changes	36

Daily Routines

The Lower School at RCDS	37
Attendance and Absences	38
Athletic Equipment	39
Books	40
Class Placement	40

Class Visits	40
Clubs	40
Haiku	41
Computers	41
Concerts and Performances	42
Dress Code	43
Electronic Equipment	45
Extended Day Program	45
Food: lunch, snacks, birthday treats	45
Gift Policy For RCDS Employees	47
Holidays	47
Homework	47
Library Policy	48
Lockers	48
Miscellaneous	48
Private Music Lessons	48
Parties / Social Events	49
Pets at School	49
Reports: Progress Reports/ Conferences	45
Snow Day Policy	50
Standardized Testing	51
Student Support Services	51
Toys/Fidgets	55
Trips: Off-Campus	55
Tutoring	56
Wait Rooms	56
Enrollment Information	
Tuition Payment Policy	57
Enrollment Termination Policy	57

MISSION STATEMENT

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.

RYE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL'S CORE VALUES

R – RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

C – COMMITMENT TO PERSONAL & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

D – DIVERSITY WITHIN AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

S - SERVICE

RCDS DIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

At Rye Country Day School, we believe that diversity is the existence of human variety. As such, 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.

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. We believe that only an inclusive school community can be equitable and just.

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 Rye Country Day School, 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.

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.

PUBLIC PURPOSE MISSION STATEMENT

Since 1869, Rye Country Day School's motto, "Not for Self, But for Service" has been integral to the culture of the School. The Rye Country Day School 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. Rye Country Day 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 Rye Country Day 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 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 each in fulfilling his or her potential for personal growth by providing an environment that nourishes cultural, social, and physical needs, as well as moral and ethical sensitivities, thus helping our young men and women 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 Rye Country Day School with a feeling of self-confidence and pride in their particular talents, capable of attending the colleges of their choice, 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, resulting in a graduate able to face the world with confidence, to compete effectively, and to contribute meaningfully to society.

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

Rye Country Day School 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.

LOWER SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The Lower School strives to instill within each child a balance between individual development and commitment to the community. Our invigorating and supportive environment stimulates and promotes ethical, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth in every student. In a program that recognizes each child's unique timetable and needs, the measure of success is in the ongoing process rather than the finished product.

RYE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL 2019-20 GOVERNING STRUCTURE

Board of Trustees

Ms. Andrea Sullivan – President
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Ms. Michelle Kroin
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Ms. Blair Metrailler '96
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Mr. Andrew Wallach

Alumni Board President

Mr. Scott Weiss '96

Parents Association President

Ms. Rosa Perkins

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Ms. Carmen Ribera-Thain '75 (1998-2004) (TE 2004)

Mr. Edward B. Dunn (1979-1993) (TE 2014)

Mr. Michael C. Murr (1989-1997) (TE 2014)

Mr. Edgar Wachenheim III (1983-1993) (TE 2014)

RCDS PARENTS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Rosa Perkins, President

Jodi Buchbinder, Vice President

Allyson Kim, Treasurer

Liz Roddy, Secretary

DIVISION COORDINATORS

Carrie Berg, Lower School

Kelly Mulderry Middle School

Susan Cohen, Upper School

PRINCIPAL'S INTRODUCTION

Dear Lower School Families,

On behalf of the Lower School faculty and staff, welcome! An exciting academic year is about to unfold for your children, and with new beginnings come new teachers, new programs, new routines, and new expectations. In the early weeks of September, the teachers' goals are to help their students transition smoothly from one grade to the next or in some cases, from another school to RCDS. The focus is on creating a sense of community within each classroom, as well as within the grade, the Lower School, and ultimately RCDS in its entirety. In many ways a family's experience in the Lower School should feel as though we are a small school with the level of attention that is given each student; yet a much larger school with the level of accessible resources available to our students: from bricks and mortar to special events to interactions with students and faculty from the different grades and departments.

In essence, we are one school dedicated to instilling in our students the qualities we have identified in the Portrait of an RCDS Graduate: "Students emerge from RCDS with strength of character, ready to engage in continuous learning, to show kindness and empathy, to adapt and thrive within a changing global context, to contribute meaningfully to their communities large and small, and to find joy and fulfillment in life." In the Lower School, we promote strength of character, the acquisition of knowledge, the absorption of skills, and engaged citizenship, and we provide experiences in age-appropriate ways so that our students see their journey through RCDS as one continuous path. Our "Responsive Classroom" philosophy plays a key role in addressing the social/emotional curriculum that complements our academic program and provides a well-rounded approach to learning for all our students. However, we cannot do this without your support, and we look to work together with our families.

This handbook has been created so that families and students understand the expectations and protocols that have been put in place to uphold the safety and respect for all its members, and for your children to feel safe and confident in their school environment. Each year, this handbook is carefully reviewed and revised. We recognize that for our rules to be effective, there must be clear communication and mutual support in both the wording and the intent of our stated policies.

This handbook is a key element in communicating essential information about the operations of the Lower School. We have tried to be very clear in stating the responsibilities of all members. In providing clear parameters for RCDS expectations, the faculty and administrators continue to support our students in making decisions and developing age-appropriate responsibility for their

behavior. Our goal is to ensure a rich and safe learning environment for all our students. As always, there are a few sections within this handbook that have been revised. I hope that you will read this handbook carefully and share with your children the many parts that are relevant to them.

Sincerely,

Barbara Shea
Lower School Principal

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Headmaster

Scott A. Nelson, M.S., 1993

Assistant Head of School; Middle School Principal

Meredith deChabert, Ph.D., 2005

Upper School Principal

Jonathan Leef, M.A., 2018

Lower School Principal

Barbara Shea, M.A.T., 1991-2014, 2016

Director of Admissions

Matthew Suzuki, M.Ed., M.A., 2003

Director of Advancement

Lynette Gioffre, M.A., 2014

Director of Athletics and Physical Education

Wendy Jo Haft, M.S., 1998

Director of College Counseling

Jeffrey Bates, M.A., 2007

Director of Diversity and Inclusion

Alikhan Morgan, M.S.Ed., 2013

Director of Finance

Robert Z. Brody, C.P.A., B.A., 2000

Director of Health and Wellness

Priya Singhvi, M.S., 2019

Director of Information Technology

Andrew Gillies, B.A., 2000

Director of Public Purpose

Rebecca Drago, M.Ed., 2018

Director of Strategic Initiatives and Marketing

Eliza McLaren, M.A., 2007

INITIATIVE LEADERS

Director of Academic Technology

Katie O'Shaughnessey, M.A., 2016

Director of Diversity and Inclusion

Alikhan Morgan, M.S.Ed., 2013

Coordinator of Global Studies

Daniel Murray, M.A., 2013

Director of Health and Wellness

Priya Singhvi, M.S., 2019

Director of the Institute for Innovative Teaching and Learning

Eliza McLaren, M.A., 2007

Director of Public Purpose

Rebecca Drago, M.Ed., 2018

Coordinator of STEAM

Catherine Bischoff, M.S., 2001

Director of Sustainability

Kerry Linderoth, M.A., 2012

LOWER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Lower School Principal

Barbara Shea, M.A.T., 1991-2014, 2016

Administrative Assistant

Mary Staudmyer, B.S., 2015

Director of Student Support Services

Debra Pager, Ph.D., 2002, Psychologist

Learning Specialists

Alexandra Kerker, M.S. Special Ed. 2018

Jamie Radwan, M.Ed., 2016

Librarian

Kimberly Love, M.S. LIS, 2016

Nurses

Nancy Gordon, R.N., 2001 Head Nurse

Gayle Regan, R.N., 2019

Rebecca Tenney, R.N. 2019

LOWER SCHOOL FACULTY

Pre-Kindergarten

Laura Festo, M.S., 2005

Amy Haff, M.S.Ed., 2006

Kindergarten

Monique Caterina, M.S.Ed., 2010

Marlana Moysak, B.A., 2019 Assistant Teacher

Francesca Davia, M.S., 2019

Samanta English, B.A., 2017, Assistant Teacher

Grade 1

Heather Lentini, M.A.T., 2018

Alexandra Levy, B.S., 2019, Assistant Teacher

Kristin Kassay, M.S., 2018

Diana Liso, B.A., 2018, Assistant Teacher

Grade 2

Sandra Castagna, M.S., 2001
Jourdan Layne, B.A., 2019, Assistant Teacher
Karen Cosgrove, M.Ed., 2016
Andrea Catalano, B.S., 2018, Assistant Teacher

Grade 3

Joanne Aventuro, M.A., M.Ed., 2006
Rebecca Hidalgo, B.A., 2018, Assistant Teacher
Jessica Hauben, M.Ed., 2018
Sydney Berkman, B.S. 2018, Assistant Teacher

Grade 4

Stacy Kaufman, M.S.Ed., 2006
Nicole Leath, M.S. Ed., 2004
Caryn Olson, M.S.T., 2005

Math Coordinator

Sara Ingrassia, B.A., 2003

Math Support

Andrea Rackow, J.D., M.S., 2019

Art

Eric Drotch, Department Chair, M.F.A., 2017
Lauren Behar, M.S., 2018

Computer Science

Katie O'Shaughnessey, M.Ed., 2016, Dir. of Academic Technology
Whitney Turner, M.A., 2007

Drama & Dance

Jay Gerlach, B.A., 2011, Department Chair
Ashley Taylor, B.A., 2013, Dance Teacher/Choreographer

French

Maggie Parker, M.A., Ph.D., 2012, Department Chair
Lyvia Sage, 2011

Global Studies

Daniel Murray, M.A. 2013, Coordinator of Global Studies

Spanish

Elvira Rebate, Degree, Elem. Ed. Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2006

Music

Mary Marcell, M.M., 1992, Department Chair

Melissa Liebowitz, M.M.Ed., 2011

Physical Education

Wendy Jo Haft, M.S., 1998, Director of Athletics and Physical Education

Georgette Summers, B.S., 2000, Assistant Athletic Director

Jenny Smith, M.Ed., 2012, Coordinator of Physical Education K-12

Heidi Southard, B.S., 2011, Head Athletic Trainer

Giovanni D'Onza, M.S., 2019, Assistant Athletic Trainer

Alin Andrei, M.A., 2011

Elizabeth Bennett, B.A., 2016

John Calandros, M.S., 2007

Gil A. Castagna, Jr., B.S., 1979

Breann Joyce, B.S., 2017

Richard Knazik, M.A., 2003

Alex Langerhorst, B.S., 2011

Theodore J. Lawrence, M.S., 1996B

Ray McGhee, M.S., 2000

Uchechi Charles Ogbonna, M.A., 2011

Amanda Popoli, M.A., 2019

Science

Charaun Wills, M.A., 2010-2012; 2014, Department Chair

Cathie Bischoff, M.S., 2001 Coordinator of Steam

Debra Simpson, M.S., 1998

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

BULLYING POLICY

Rye Country Day School considers any form of bullying—physical, verbal, written, or emotional—to be harassment, and thus inappropriate behavior that will be dealt with most seriously. This policy applies at school and at all school-sponsored and affiliated events. Please note that the School’s policy stated below covers all forms of bullying.

Definition – Bullying is the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or verbal threats, 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, emotional, or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety.

Such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes but is not limited to conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex, or any category protected by law. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Epithets, slurs, quips or negative stereotyping that relate to any of the categories above;
- 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.

This list is not all-inclusive. Other unwelcome acts of an offensive nature may also constitute bullying.

Reporting – The School encourages all members of the school community to report all incidents of bullying, regardless of who the offender may be. The School will take prompt, reasonable action to prevent, investigate, and remedy bullying. Any student who believes that he or she has been the victim of bullying shall report the incident(s) to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Grade-Level Dean, Advisor, Counselor, School Nurse, or School Psychologist (the “Point Persons”). The student may also speak to the offender directly, if

comfortable doing so, and request the bullying stop. Any parent who believes a student has been or is being bullied by another student or by a school employee, or any parent who has witnessed an incident of bullying by another student or by a school employee may also report the incident(s) to one of the Point Persons. Any School personnel who observe instances of bullying should also report to a Point Person.

Investigations and Discipline – The School will promptly investigate any allegations of bullying brought to the attention of a Point Person. An investigation may involve interviews with the complainant, the alleged offender, and others. It may include outside investigation or other methods. Any student found to have engaged in bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion. Any School employee found to have engaged in bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include probation, suspension, or termination of employment.

The School recognizes that false accusations of bullying can cause serious harm to innocent persons. Although the School encourages complaints made in good faith, if an investigation reveals that a student or parent knowingly or maliciously accused another falsely of bullying, the School will take all appropriate action.

No Retaliation – There will be no retaliation against any person who submits a complaint in good faith or who assists in providing information about a complaint. If the facts and the results of the investigation substantiate the complaint, then the appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action will be taken.

STUDENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Students at Rye Country Day School have the right to feel safe and respected, and to learn in an environment that is free from sexual harassment. This policy applies at school, and at all school-sponsored and affiliated events. It applies to sexual harassment between students, and between adults (teachers, administrators and staff) and students. Romantic or sexual relationships between adults (teacher, administrator, or staff member) and students are expressly prohibited.

Definition of Sexual Harassment – Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Examples of the type of behavior that may constitute sexual harassment include demands for sexual activity; sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; sexual innuendoes or suggestive jokes; comments of a sexual nature to describe an individual or an individual’s body; unwelcome physical contact such as touching, pinching or brushing the body; any type of coerced sexual activity; displays of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and obscene gestures or materials. This list is not all-inclusive. Other unwelcome acts of an offensive nature may also constitute sexual harassment.

Reporting – The School encourages all members of the School community to report all incidents of sexual harassment, regardless of who the offender may be. The School will take prompt, reasonable action to prevent, investigate, and remedy the harassment. Any student who believes that he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment shall report the incident(s) to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Grade-Level Dean, Advisor, Counselor, School Nurse, or School Psychologist (the “Point Persons”). Any parent who believes a student has been or is being sexually harassed may also report the incident(s) to one of the Point Persons.

Investigations and Discipline – The School will promptly investigate any allegations of sexual harassment brought to the attention of a Point Person. An investigation may involve interviews with the complainant, the alleged offender, and others. It may include outside investigation or other methods. Any student found to have engaged in sexual harassment shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include suspension and possible referral to law enforcement.

The School recognizes that false accusations of sexual harassment can cause serious harm to innocent persons. Although the School encourages complaints made in good faith, if an investigation reveals that a student or parent knowingly or maliciously accused another falsely of sexual harassment, the School will take all appropriate action.

No Retaliation – There will be no retaliation against any person who submits a complaint in good faith or who assists in providing information about a complaint. If the facts and the results of the investigation substantiate the complaint, then the appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action will be taken.

OFF-CAMPUS BEHAVIOR

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.

GUIDANCE FOR MAINTAINING 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 staff 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 his or her 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 him or her 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, his/her parents 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). An employee should never have only one student alone at his or her home, nor should they have students to their home at all unless there is another adult present.

- During any and all overnight trips and sleepovers, should not be alone with a student in his/her 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 who may have crossed a boundary. 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) or 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.

BEHAVIOR AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All students at Rye Country Day School are expected to be **courteous, respectful and responsible** in ways that are appropriate to the age level. We encourage the development of patience, empathy, and understanding in everyday interactions. We expect children to exhibit respect for every person with whom they come in contact, both at school and in the community.

Our basic guidelines are:

WE SHOW RESPECT FOR AND SENSITIVITY TO THE NEEDS AND FEELINGS OF OTHERS.

Written or verbal put-downs, verbal or physical abuse, inappropriate language and email comments, bullying, talking back, and rudeness are examples of unacceptable behaviors.

WE SHOW RESPECT FOR LEARNING.

Students are expected to be respectful and courteous to all members of the RCDS community and its visitors and to contribute to a positive environment within the classroom.

WE SHOW RESPECT FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT.

Students are expected to use and enjoy the facilities and equipment in the ways that they are intended to be used. Classroom and recess equipment is readily available for all students, and they are responsible for returning those items for others to use.

WE ACT IN WAYS THAT PROMOTE SAFETY FOR OTHERS AND OURSELVES.

Students should be considerate of others at all times. Unsuitable and unsafe activities before and during school, at recess or dismissal, or on fieldtrips and buses, will not be accepted. Behavior such as pushing, shoving, hitting, scratching, wrestling, and snowball throwing, as well as games such as Dodge Ball, are forbidden. Running around and ball playing by the curb at dismissal time will be strictly prohibited. Weapons of any kind (as well as toys of any kind that resemble weapons) **may not be brought to school at any time.** All students are covered by Rye Country Day School's harassment policy. Behavior that endangers others, involves teasing or bullying, or is otherwise harassing in nature, will not be tolerated.

Consequences are typically meant for the student responsible for violating the guidelines, and the School will respect the privacy of the student involved in disciplinary situations. Therefore, it will not always be obvious to the community at large what the School's response has been to a specific event.

As a Lower School we embrace the Responsive Classroom philosophy, which uses the notion of "logical consequences" when responding to misbehavior. Students in the Lower School are learning not only academic subjects, but also appropriate behaviors for school.

Consequences may include:

- Removal from the classroom, lunchroom, gymnasium, playing field or outside play area.
- Rescinding of privileges or restriction from special events.
- Mandatory meetings of parents and student with the teacher(s) and/or the Principal, and where appropriate, the school psychologist or other school personnel.
- Children being sent home.

Repeated, disrespectful behavior will be addressed in a most serious manner, which could include suspension, dismissal, or a decision not to re-enroll the student in the next year.

TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Rye Country Day School provides students with access to its computer systems for educational purposes only. The School requires at all times that all members of the school community use computer systems in a safe, responsible, appropriate, and legal manner. The same rules and customs that guide behavior without computers apply when using computers. The goal of the Technology Use Policy is to maximize the opportunities of all members of the school community to carry out school-related technology work and communication responsibly in an environment free from inappropriate distraction.

Students must be aware that privacy is NOT guaranteed when using the School's computers, computer systems, and network. The School's technology resources, including e-mail accounts and computer servers, are the property of Rye Country Day School. The School reserves the right to monitor and access these resources, including e-mail, deleted e-mail, password protected files, Internet site access logs, and the downloading and printing of documents, to ensure that users are using the system responsibly. The School also has the right to access these resources to investigate any situation involving information stored or transmitted over the School's computer network.

Appropriate Communications

- Students must use electronic mail (e-mail), Internet access, and any other computer communication only for legitimate and responsible interaction with students, faculty, administrators, and the outside world. Rude, abusive, offensive, threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate language or content is not permitted. Students must always be aware of the tone of their e-mail communications. E-mail used in a frivolous manner is similarly not permitted. Students must not use the School's computers, computer systems, or Internet connections to access any inappropriate sites or communicate any inappropriate information.
- If a student receives any rude, abusive, offensive, threatening or harassing e-mail messages or other communication, he or she must immediately report this situation to one of the deans or the division principal.
- Students must not access or use another person's e-mail account under any circumstances.
- Any potentially disruptive electronic communication, such as instant messaging or infrared communications involving one or more students in a class, is not allowed.
- Each RCDS student in grades 7-12 will be given an RCDS e-mail account and should check it for school-related communication at least once during the school day.

- Students must keep individual passwords confidential at all times. Passwords should never be shared with other students.
- Students must never attempt to bypass any security system of the School's computer network.
- A student must never provide any personal information about himself or herself, or another member of the school community in any electronic format that might threaten his or her well-being, the safety of other individuals in the community, or the safety and reputation of the School.
- When communicating over the Internet with other individuals, students must always exercise caution about the identity of any unknown individuals. Students must remember that unknown individuals involved in e-mail communications may not always be who they claim to be.
- **Students should not e-mail or post on websites, blogs, or any other public or private Internet sites any inappropriate, sexual, or graphic material that might be offensive to others or embarrassing to the School.**
- Students must not use the School's network to access personal social media or other non-school internet accounts.
- Students must not download or e-mail music files or any other large, copyrighted information through the School's network unless such files are obtained legally and are being used for a school-related project.
- Students must not use the School's network to send chain letters, spam, anonymous e-mails or solicitations.
- Students must comply with all copyright laws, including using only legally purchased or licensed software on computers. If a student is not sure about copyright restrictions, he or she must check with a faculty member or librarian.
- When information travels over a computer network, whether the Internet or the School's network, it may leave a permanent record. The content of each student's account is archived and thus remains available for years. Students must exercise caution to avoid using computers in any way that may threaten the current or future reputation of the School or any member of the school community, including themselves.
- Since most laptop computers and cell phones now have built-in digital cameras, students are never allowed to use these devices at any time in the School's bathrooms or Athletic Center locker rooms.
- Laptops and cell phones must not be used to make audio recordings without the consent of those who are being recorded.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Internet

Between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on school days, students may use the School's Internet connection only for research or information gathering that is directly related to academic assignments or extracurricular projects supervised by RCDS faculty; other uses of the Internet, including illegally downloading larger music or video files, hinder those using the School's Internet connection for legitimate academic purposes.

While the School uses Internet filtering software to block offensive materials that have no relevance to school courses or activities, this filtering software does not block every objectionable site on the Internet. Students must not access any Internet site that contains inappropriate information, including but not limited to pornographic, violent, or offensive materials. If a student inadvertently accesses an inappropriate site, he or she must click off from that site immediately and report the site to a teacher or Computer Department personnel.

Private Information

People are generally aware that attempting to break into or enter locked or private rooms or containers is a serious infraction with serious consequences. Attempting to break into or enter locked or private areas of computer systems, such as e-mail accounts or password-secured sites, is no different and constitutes a very serious violation of other people's privacy.

Students may access only those files that belong to them or that they are certain they have permission to use. 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.

Students may only store files related to formal school courses or activities on school servers. Games, music, commercial software, graphic, video and other files that are not for a school project or formal activity may not be stored on school computer systems.

Protecting an Academic Environment

- Students must make sure that they follow the School's Academic Integrity Policy and properly document any information that is taken from the Internet and submitted as part of their coursework.
- Students must not display on their computers or computer screens any inappropriate slogans or designs, such as vulgar or profane language or the suggestion thereof, or anything that may be taken as degrading to a gender or race, religious or ethnic group, a person's sexual orientation, or any other constituency of the school population. Slogans and images

involving references, subtle or otherwise, to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and sex are also forbidden.

- Using laptops or school computers to play a game is forbidden during school hours unless the game is part of a class assignment or official school activity.
- Students are not permitted to watch feature films, television shows, or other commercially produced material during the school day unless the material is part of a class assignment or official school activity.
- - Sound must be turned off unless the computer is being used with sound in class. During free periods, Upper School and eighth grade students may listen to audio files on their computers by using headphones.

Equipment and Resources

- Students must not do anything, including downloading viruses that could damage the School's computers, computer systems, and network.
- Students are required to bring their laptops to class when a teacher tells them in advance to do so. Students must ensure that their laptops are fully charged, functional, and able to connect to the Internet.
- Students may only print one copy of a document. They must make photocopies when they need additional copies. Any printed document must be retrieved by the student doing the printing.

Enforcement

Any student who is aware of any problem with the RCDS computer network or computer systems, or who knows of any misuse of the School's computer network or systems, must immediately report such information to the Computer Department, a Dean, or the Principal.

Access to RCDS computer systems is a privilege, not a right. Violating the letter or spirit of Rye Country Day School's Technology Use Policy may be cause to limit or deny a student's access to the RCDS computer systems and may result, even on a first offense, in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion. In addition, students and their parents must understand that computer use involving illegal activity will also be reported to the appropriate legal authorities.

STUDENT HEALTH INFORMATION

Health Information

It is essential for all parents to cooperate fully with the School's procedures with respect to matters of health. A statement concerning the School's policy and requirements is sent to all parents in the spring of each year. RCDS health forms are available on the Magnus Health Portal and must be completed by the family and their physician. Non-RCDS health forms are also accepted as long as they contain the necessary information. Please note that it is necessary for a Health Report to be submitted to Magnus, the RCDS online health system, every year for each student. Parents must access their student's Magnus account annually and answer the questions therein.

Students whose Health Reports are not received may not be able to attend school. Your attention is called specifically to the requirements for boys and girls who wish to participate in interscholastic team sports. No student will be permitted to attend physical education classes or practice with a team until the Health Report has been submitted to the School.

Students in Grades 9 through 12 who have pre-season practice must submit their completed Health Reports to Magnus by August 1. Additionally, parents of students in Grades 7-12 must submit Interval Health reports online, before the Fall, Winter, and Spring athletic seasons. Magnus will contact parents about the deadlines concerning this New York State requirement.

The School administers screening examinations for vision and hearing, but the responsibility for being informed as to the condition of the child's vision and hearing rests with the parent. The School does, of course, report to parents when it appears evident that a child suffers from poor vision or poor hearing. Screening for Scoliosis by your child's pediatrician is necessary for girls in grades 5 and 7 and for boys in grade 9 and must be documented on the Health Report. All Pre-K students must have a documented lead level with the date it was done on their health report.

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

If your child becomes ill during the school day, school personnel will telephone you. If your child's physical education program is to be restricted for more than one week, this situation should be confirmed in writing by the examining physician and forwarded to the School Nurse.

The School Nurse must be informed whenever a student is on medication. If medication is to be taken during school hours, it should be given to the School Nurse for distribution to the student. Students are not permitted to carry and/or administer their own medication at school (including cough drops). Students who use an inhaler and have written permission by their parent, physician, and School Nurse to self-administer it may carry and use their inhaler independently at school. 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.

All contagious diseases must be reported to the Health Office by the parent as soon as a diagnosis is made. If your child should develop a contagious illness, such as a strep or staph infection, bacterial conjunctivitis, a viral illness such as fifth's disease or coxsackie, or mononucleosis, please notify the School Nurse immediately. Please be aware that your child must be on medication for some infections for 24 hours and be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. A doctor's note may be required before your child returns to school. In addition, all students *must remain home for 24 hours* after any episodes of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting.

If absent for one week, your child will need a doctor's note to return to school. A doctor's note is also required for a child to participate in athletics if the child has sustained an injury.

Immunizations

Immunization Requirements: For entrance into school, the New York State Department of Health requires:

<i>Vaccines</i>	<i>Pre-K</i>	<i>Kindergarten-5</i>	<i>Grade 6-11</i>	<i>Grades 12</i>
DTaP/DTP/T DAP	4 doses	4 to 5 doses	3 doses	3 doses
TDAP	N/A	N/A	1 dose	1 dose
Polio (IPV/OPV)	3 doses	3 to 4 doses	3 to 4 doses	3 doses
MMR	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses
Varicella	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	1 dose
HIB	1 to 4 doses	N/A	N/A	N/A
PCV	1 to 4 doses	N/A	N/A	N/A
MCV4	N/A	N/A	Grade 7, 8, 9 & 10: 1 dose	2 Doses Grade 12 (2nd dose after age 16)

Scoliosis screening: Girls grades 5 and 7; Boys grade 9.

Weight Status Category (BMI %)

* It is mandatory that an updated vaccine record be submitted annually with the health form. Alternatively, the provider may write the vaccine dates on the health form.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY: Several phone numbers where you and others responsible for your child (grandparent, babysitter, etc.) can be reached are to be given to the Division Office at the beginning of the year. This information is also kept on file with the School Nurse. Please include car/mobile phone numbers. Families are responsible for notifying the School of any changes in this information.

COMMUNICATION

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

Headmaster's Office	921-4250
Associate Head of School	925-4565
Assistant Head of School	925-4613
Health Office	925-4552
Director of Diversity and Inclusion	925-4595
Director of Financial Aid	925-4569
Director of Public Purpose	925-4792
Director of Student Support Services	925-4568
Lower School Office	925-4572
Middle School Office	925-4571
Upper School Office	925-4596
Development Office	925-4524
Business Office	925-4522
Admissions Office	925-4513
Athletic Department Office	925-4545
Summer School	925-4511

We value open lines of communication between parents and school. Grade level newsletters are sent by email and archived on the classroom teacher's Haiku page. From time to time, questions or concerns may arise. It is important to the relationship between home and school that proper channels of communication be respected and followed. *Questions that relate to classroom practices and procedures, or curriculum, should be addressed directly to the teacher responsible before being brought to the Principal.* Mrs. Shea is available if further assistance is needed, or if the question is more general in nature.

During the school day, between 8:00 a.m. and 3:05 p.m., a teacher will not be available for phone calls, unless it has been prearranged. If you email a teacher, *do not assume that the teacher will read it during school hours.* Please understand that faculty are teaching between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. so they will not be checking emails or phone messages until after dismissal. If you must contact the teacher, please call the Lower School Office and your message will be relayed to the teacher. You may also leave a voice message for faculty members by calling their voicemail directly.

The RCDS phone numbers are listed in the RCDS directory. Should you choose to communicate by e-mail, the faculty addresses are first name_last name@ryecountryday.org. In general, faculty are expected to respond to phone calls and e-mails by the next business day.

EMERGENCY PREPARATION

Rye Country Day School 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.

EMERGENCY CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

When circumstances such as snow, ice, or other emergencies make it necessary to cancel a school session, faculty, staff, and families will be informed by an automated telephone call or email. In addition, there will be a message posted on the RCDS website (www.ryecountryday.org) by 6:30 a.m. if school is closed or opening is delayed. Emergency Closing information will be broadcast/posted as follows:

Internet: www.ryecountryday.org

www.WHUD.com

www.News12.com

www.wfasam.com (Go to Storm Center; enter “Rye”)

Television: Cablevision Channel 12 Westchester

Radio: WFAS 1230 AM (White Plains)

Please do not call the Headmaster or the Rye Police Department. If in doubt, parents should check the RCDS web site for a message. In the event that individual local public school districts are closed because of inclement weather, bus service from those districts to Rye Country Day School will not be available.

VISITORS

Visitors to the Lower School should check in with the receptionist at the Main Entrance. *All* visitors are asked to sign in and *everyone* will be given a visitor’s pass.

TRANSPORTATION

The School does not provide transportation for students to and from school, nor can it assume any responsibility for this function. Parents who use buses, car pools, 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 who intend to use public school transportation for their children should remember that applications for such transportation must be filed with the local school districts no later than April 1, in most cases, 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 district's bus service. Students having playdates with friends who take a bus cannot ride on that bus if they are not a registered bus rider.*

Transportation By Bus

Young children often find bus transportation to be stressful and intimidating. Parents of Pre-kindergartners and Kindergartners may wish to drive their children, at least at the outset of the school year. Should your young child be riding a bus, instruct him/her to sit near the driver in the front of the bus. Often finding an older student as a "buddy" is a positive experience.

Students riding the morning bus should ask the driver how to identify the bus in the afternoon (i.e. bus number, bus company name, driver's name.)

A Lower School teacher greets students in the morning at the bus drop off as they arrive, and escorts students to the Lower School Morning Wait Room in the Lower School Dining Room, which is supervised by our teachers. Lower School students, who travel home by bus, will also be supervised by teachers in a classroom until 3:15 p.m., and then they will be brought to the Athletic Center from 3:15 p.m. until they board their bus. The older students will join Lower School students, and buses will depart at 3:30 p.m. following the Middle School dismissal time. **Please note that even though normal daily dismissal is at 3:05 p.m., there will be one bus pick up only at 3:30 p.m.**

First Days

- Morning bus service will be available beginning Thursday, September 5, 2019
- Most bus companies do not provide transportation for K - 4 students at 12:00 p.m. dismissal Thursday, September 5, 2019. Please check with your district's bus company to confirm.

- There will be no end-of-the-day bus pick up provided for Pre-K or Kindergarten students who have early dismissal, Friday, September 6 through Wednesday, September 11, 2019.
- There will be no bus transportation for Pre-K students dismissed at 1:30 p.m. from Thursday, September 12 through Friday, September 27, 2019. (Full day Pre-K begins on Tuesday, October 1, 2019.)
- Full day Kindergarten begins on Thursday, September 12, 2019 and end-of-the-day bus pick up at 3:30 p.m. will begin on that day.

Transportation By Train

Lower School students generally do not travel to school by train. In rare instances, a Lower School student might travel by train with a parent or older sibling. Regardless of whether students arrive from the North or South, they are to exit the station area from the school side, not the town side of the station. They are 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. At no time should students be climbing the hills around the train station or walking along the Boston Post Road. All students **MUST** travel directly from the train station to the School.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

The safety and well-being of students as they enter and leave our campus is of utmost importance as we begin and end our days. Our procedures, although not always convenient for drivers, have been structured with the safety of all children foremost in mind. Please help us ensure that students are safe by adhering to the following guidelines.

Drop Off and Pick Up by Car

In the morning, cars transporting children are to enter the parking lot to drop off children in the Main Circle along the curb by the Main Building. Parents wishing to accompany children into the School are to leave their cars in parking spaces in the parking lot, not along the curb.

As there will be no supervision in the unloading area after 8:20 a.m., drivers of children in Grades K - 4 must park in the appropriate spots and walk children to the Lower School Office where they are to sign in.

- **Only Pre-K families** may use the Admissions Building parking area for drop off in the mornings. This is a safety factor for our youngest students; therefore, only those cars with Pre-K children will be permitted in this area.
- The pick-up area for all Pre-K children is in the Main Circle. Those who have siblings in the Middle School will be escorted to the assigned

Waiting Rooms, and they will accompany their siblings to the Main Circle.

- At dismissal in the afternoon (12 noon, 1:30 p.m. or 3:05 p.m.,) please use the Lower School family name cards provided at the beginning of the year. They should be attached to the visors and will help teachers recognize your car and prepare your child for pick up. Teachers will escort students to the curb on the school side of the parking lot and dismiss the children to authorized drivers. All cars 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. Anyone wishing to come onto campus must park the car in appropriate parking slots. Children are expected to watch for their cars patiently, mindful of the teachers and younger students around them.
- ***Teachers have an important role at dismissal supervising all their students' safe departures. Therefore, parents are asked to refrain from informal conversations with the teachers as their children are put into the car.***
- If you park your car to collect your child, and you would like to socialize with other parents, *we respectfully ask you to move away from the students still waiting for pickup*, so that the teachers can be attentive to the dismissal line of cars.
- Play dates are *not* to be arranged in the car line at dismissal time. This slows our process and can be disconcerting to children. Please park to make social arrangements.
- **If your child is having a play date with a friend, and car seats need to be exchanged**, please park to make this exchange so as not to slow down the car line.
- **If your child is having a play date with a few friends, and buckling them all safely into car seats will require time**, please consider parking so that you do not hold up the car line.
- At no time should the driver leave his/her seat behind the wheel with the engine running.
- Should you be delayed in getting to school in time for dismissal, please call the Lower School Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Staudmyer, in the Lower School Office, at 914-925-4572, who will advise the teacher.
- To ensure proper supervision between Lower School dismissal time at 3:05 p.m., and Middle School dismissal times (3:15 p.m. – Gr. 5 & 6; 3:25 p.m. – Gr. 7 & 8), we have several Wait Rooms in the Lower School, supervised by our teachers. This is provided for students waiting for their Middle School siblings. These Wait Rooms are not for preferred later pick-ups by parents/caregivers, but ONLY if a child is waiting for a Middle School sibling.
- Lower School students with siblings in the fifth or sixth grades should be picked up by their siblings in the designated Wait Rooms at 3:15 p.m. and if the siblings are in seventh or eighth grade at 3:25 p.m. The

Lower School teachers supervise these Wait Rooms. Students must then proceed *directly* to the outside circle. **Lower School students are not permitted to leave the Wait Rooms and accompany their Middle School siblings to the Dining Room for a snack.** All Middle School siblings are asked to pick up their siblings by 3:30 p.m.

- When there is a 12:00 p.m. Lower School and 12:30 p.m. Middle School dismissal, the Middle School student will join his or her Lower School sibling for the noon dismissal and necessitate only one pick up time for both students.
- **In accordance with the Rye City Code, RCDS has a policy of “No Idling” for more than three minutes.**
- **The use of car/cell phones is not permitted while waiting for students. We require that your full attention be given to the pedestrian and car traffic around you.**

SCHOOL POLICY PROHIBITS ANY RCDS STAFF MEMBER FROM RELEASING A CHILD TO SOMEONE OTHER THAN A FAMILY MEMBER OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION IN WRITING FROM A PARENT. As a courtesy to parents, the school provides “Change of Departure” note pads, which will be sent home in early September. *We recommend keeping one of these pads in your car for last minute changes.*

For safety reasons, students are to be dropped off and picked up in designated areas *only*. Students who are dropped off or picked up on Grandview Avenue, Cedar Street or unescorted from the parking lot will be subject to disciplinary action.

DEPARTURE CHANGES

Students should arrive at school knowing how they are going home. Play dates should be arranged the night before. It is very unsettling for a child to wonder throughout the day how, or with whom, he or she is going home. For the safety of children, parents must notify the homeroom teacher if there is a change in the pick-up routine. **Only a student's parents/guardians can make a change in departure, unless the parents have provided written authorization for another person to do so.**

In case of a planned **change of departure:**

- Send your child in the morning with a completed **RCDS Lower School Change of Departure slip**, which will be given to the classroom teacher. (These pads are provided in September.)
- Do NOT send a daily email with your child's departure information. Please use the **Change of Departure Pad**.

In case of an **unforeseen change of departure:**

- Please **call or e-mail the Lower School Office before 12:00 noon** (Mary_Staudmyer@ryecountryday.org, or 914-925-4572) and Mrs. Staudmyer will pass the message on to the classroom teacher. **Do NOT e-mail a change in departure to the teacher directly, without copying the Lower School Office.** Teachers might not retrieve the message before dismissal due to teaching responsibilities.

In case of a **last minute change of departure due to an emergency:**

- **Please call the Lower School Office** at 914-925-4572

In case of a **change of departure from After-School Clubs:**

- Please **call the Lower School Office until 4:00 p.m.** at 914-925-4572, after which time, **please call the Principal's Office** at 914-925-4560.

DAILY ROUTINES

THE LOWER SCHOOL AT RCDS

The Lower School years at Rye Country Day School (Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 4) encompass a time of significant growth for students. Intellectually, socially, creatively, emotionally and physically, children acquire skills and knowledge that will contribute significantly to the quality of their lives, throughout their lives. For a student of this age, the most valuable skills and knowledge are not composed of isolated facts and repetitive drills but come from the child's ability to make meaning of the work by integrating it with prior knowledge and experience. This is why our program in the Lower School is based on active learning, learning by doing, learning by challenging oneself, and stretching in ways that promote growth in all developmental aspects.

Lower School classes are small, with homeroom instruction based in math, social studies, and language arts. The broad educational experience includes classes in music, visual art, science, physical education, computer science, library, and, beginning in second grade, French or Spanish. Many opportunities exist for various curricular areas to be integrated from time to time, thus deepening student understanding.

The personal and social skills acquired during the early years of school instill in a young student the importance of working and playing effectively with others. As with other areas of development, personal and social responsibilities are mastered over time, with opportunities for practice under the guidance of caring adults. During these formative years, children learn how to resolve conflicts, assert themselves appropriately, and care for their environment. A student's behavior has an impact on the community, and the community atmosphere has an impact on the development of the student's system of values. School and family share the responsibility for helping a child to develop into an honest, ethical, respectful, and responsible community member.

A successful community is one in which all constituents support the letter and spirit of common behavioral values. The guidelines for Lower School students clarify for our community the values espoused by Rye Country Day School so that all of us - teachers, parents, administrators, staff members, and students - share an understanding of what the expectations are. The Lower School Parent-Student Handbook is designed to give clarity, consistency, and a structure for mutual support.

Attendance And Absences

Parents are to inform the Lower School Office before 8:30 a.m. if a child will be absent for the day. (914-925-4572)

- ***You may e-mail the teacher, but also please copy the Lower School Office (mary_staudmyer@ryecountryday.org)***
- ***You may call the Lower School Office (914-925-4572). ALL absences must be documented in writing, so please follow up the phone call with an e-mail to the office AND the classroom teacher.***

The Lower School day begins at 8:15 a.m. Teachers arrive earlier and must be free to pursue their preparations for the day without interruption. Students are not to arrive in the classroom before 8:00 a.m. ***There is a supervised Wait Room in the Lower School Dining Room ONLY for children who have older siblings and must arrive early or children who ride the bus.*** This Wait Room is for students with siblings in the Middle or Upper School, and not to be used by children wanting to come to school early. For traffic and supervision reasons, Lower School students should not arrive before 8:00 a.m.

It is important for the smooth beginning of the day that students arrive promptly. Kindergarten – Grade 4 students who arrive later than 8:15 a.m. must report to the Lower School Office. The parents of students who are habitually late will be asked to meet with the Lower School Principal to design a plan for improving the student's attendance.

It is assumed that students will be in attendance each day school is in session. When a child is ill, home is the best place to recover until he or she is well enough to participate fully in school activities. *A child who has been out sick for the day may not participate in the after-school clubs or any after-school events.* Upon returning to class, a student needs to bring a note or an e-mail to the classroom teacher explaining the absence. The note or e-mail should state the dates of and reasons for the absence.

Missed work is not sent home for Lower School children, except in the case of an unavoidable, prolonged absence. A sick child needs time to rest and relax, not be burdened with schoolwork. When the student returns to school healthy and fit, the teacher will help the student to make up needed work.

Absence caused by a communicable disease such as chicken pox, strep infection, conjunctivitis, etc. must be reported immediately. Please call the School Nurse (925-4552), as soon as a diagnosis is made.

A student may need to leave school during the day because of illness. The School Nurse will notify the home, and the student will wait in the Health Office until picked up by a parent or caregiver. **The parent or caregiver must sign the student out in the Lower School Office, and then go to the Health Office to collect the student.**

Early Departures and Late Arrivals

Other than leaving school due to illness as described above, should it be necessary for your child to leave school before normal dismissal time, a note must be sent to school clarifying the time of departure, and designating who will pick up your child.

- **The person picking up your child must first come to the Lower School Office to sign the child out,** and then proceed to the classroom where the child will be waiting.
- If the child is returning to school later in the day, **the person dropping the child off must report to the Lower School Office with the child, to sign the child back in, and walk the child to the classroom.**

Unexcused Absences

The School has planned for ample time during which families may enjoy out-of-town vacations together. Students who are on vacation during normal school days are at risk of missing important instruction and activities. We expect parents to support their children by respecting the commitment to attend school when school is in session. **The School is not responsible for providing work for students who are absent without a valid excuse.** (*Family vacations, while school is in session, are considered to be unexcused absences.*)

Athletic Equipment

Each Lower School student is to have *sneakers* at school for daily physical education classes. It is easiest if the student wears athletic-type shoes to school and does not have to take time to change shoes before and after physical education classes.

Skating: During the winter months, all students should bring **ice skates and helmets** on the days when they are scheduled to skate. (Parents will be notified in November as to their child's scheduled times in the rink). It is prudent for kindergarten or first-grade students to have **helmets that have facemasks**. Any fourth grader who plays hockey must have **a hockey stick, a helmet with a facemask, and hockey gloves**. There is some equipment at the school for students who do not have their own.

Books And Classroom Materials

Rye Country Day School provides required classroom books and materials to Lower School students. However, each classroom may have some specific requests that will be sent home from the classroom teacher. Given that student progress is monitored and addressed individually, students may not use every book or piece of equipment; teachers decide what is appropriate to a specific student's needs.

Class Placement

Students are placed in classes after careful consideration of all factors that affect the educational development of the individual student. Teacher recommendations, individual learning styles, class balance, and group dynamics are some of the factors evaluated. Parents are expected *not* to request the assignment of children to specific teachers, but to trust the school's professional judgment as to appropriate placement.

Classroom Visits

Parents wishing to observe in their child's classroom may make arrangements to do so between October 15 and May 1. Arrangements are made in advance through the Lower School Principal. A parent interested in visiting a classroom that does not include his or her own child must first meet with the Principal. Visiting family guests may visit for part of a day with advance permission from the Principal, though they may not participate in the physical education classes. Prospective student guests must register through the Admissions Office.

Clubs

Optional after-school clubs are offered each season (fall, winter, spring). The selections vary, and Lower School faculty members teach most of these programs. Information is sent home well in advance. Registration is done electronically, and it is on a first come, first served basis. Children enrolled in clubs are supervised between regular dismissal (3:05 p.m.) and the start of clubs (3:15 p.m.). A snack will be provided in the Lower School Dining Room. At 4:15 p.m., children are to be picked up at the curb on the same side of the parking lot as at the normal dismissal time. If there is a change in departure from a club, please call Mary Staudmyer (914-925-4572) in the Lower School Office before 4:00 p.m., after which time, please call Mrs. Shea (914-925-4560). **In the fall, Kindergarteners are acclimating to the school day and are not eligible for after-school clubs until the winter session. Pre-K students are not eligible for the after-school clubs.**

Haiku

A strong Home/School connection is important for the children. Class/grade level newsletters will be sent home via email approximately every two weeks. Rye Country Day School also uses Haiku, a Learning Management System that at the Lower School level is used to share curricular information with parents. Each classroom, and special area teacher, has a Haiku, and teachers update it periodically with archived newsletters, photos, or general information. Please become familiar with it as it may provide much needed information.

1. Parents can access Haiku by visiting <http://ryecountrydayschool.haikulearning.com>
2. Parents can also go to the **RCDS web page**. Under the tab “*Parents*,” there is a pull-down menu with *Haiku* as an option. Click on it and it will bring you to the opening screen of the Haiku. If you do not remember your password, you can click, “**Forgot Your Password**”, (on the right-hand side), at which point you can reset your password.

Computers

Lower School teachers use a variety of tools to help their students develop the skills necessary to interact in this current age of technology. In addition to lessons in the computer lab for students in kindergarten through fourth grade, all students have access to iPads, and third and fourth grade students have laptops in their classrooms. Beginning in third grade, students use laptops to develop fluency in writing as well as to work collaboratively on group projects. For this reason, students in the third and fourth grades are given a Google account to access the Google Suite for Education, and Google Docs in particular. Through this App, the students can share their digital work with their teachers and with other students, when the teacher so chooses. These accounts are to be used only in school and should not be accessed at home. The students do not have access to Gmail or at this level, email of any form. Nevertheless, our students are quickly learning about the advantages of communications online. We encourage parents to set guidelines for the appropriate use of the Internet and e-mail among the various members of the community. In school, students are closely monitored and have supervised access to teacher-directed, pre-determined sites on the Internet on a very limited basis for specific research purposes. In the Lower School, we use the Technology Use Policy (p.17) to develop guidelines in teaching age-appropriate ways to foster responsibility and safety in using the computer both at home and at school.

Concerts And Other Performances

Although the Lower School curriculum is not designed to be performance oriented, from time to time parents are invited to a musical concert, drama play, poetry reading, research demonstration, or other type of student presentation. The Lower School is committed to using these events as learning opportunities where students participate in ways that are appropriate to their experience and developmental level. Some of these events take place in the classroom; others occur in the Performing Arts Center, the PAC Foyer, Memorial Hall or the Black Box Theatre.

The musical concerts, plays and performances are important events for our families. Siblings are welcome to attend these special occasions, if the parents choose. ***Parents are asked to pick up the siblings from their classrooms and following the performance, escort the siblings back to the classrooms. You may also email the Lower School office before 8:15a.m. and your child will be escorted to the venue.*** The expectations are that siblings will sit with their families and behave in a respectful manner.

DRESS CODE AND STUDENT APPEARANCE

Lower School students are expected to dress in a manner that is respectful of the character and purpose of an educational community. Students are expected to come to school in clothing that is appropriate for work and play. Our dress code is established to instill discipline, *prevent distractions, avoid safety hazards*, and develop awareness that there are distinct occasions appropriate for formal and informal attire. Although the School recognizes that there are differences of opinion regarding what constitutes proper attire, the School must delineate and require that certain standards be met. *It is expected that students and parents will support the dress regulations both in letter and in spirit.*

T-shirts with writing (phrases or messages) on them are not allowed. Other students might focus on the message, trying to read or pronounce it during instruction; that shirt becomes a distraction. These t-shirts in-and-of-themselves are not inappropriate, but since they are distracting to others, they are not appropriate in school. It is never too early to teach a child about perspective and have them be mindful of others. Any questionable clothing your child might have should be saved for after school or weekends.

Appropriate Dress Code

- Neat, clean and tailored
- All shirts must cover the midriff
- All pants/shorts/skirts must adequately cover a child, especially when the child is seated
- *Short* skirts and *short* dresses must be worn with leggings, conversely leggings must be worn with dresses, skirts, or appropriate tops that fall mid-thigh.
- Images on t-shirts must be child-friendly
- Sneakers must be worn every day for physical education and recess.
- Shoes and sneakers need to be fastened and secured safely to the foot (laces, Velcro or buckles)

Inappropriate Dress Code

- Clothes that are a safety concern
- Torn, ripped, or frayed clothing
- Underwear worn as clothing
- Excessively short or tight clothes, such as shorts, pants, skirts, and
- T-shirts that can be revealing
- Tank tops, shirts with spaghetti straps or otherwise revealing attire
- Excessively baggy or oversized clothing
- T-shirts/sweatshirts with phrases or messages
- Writing/slogan on the seat of the pants
- Images that are not child-friendly (ex. skull and cross bones)

- Leggings, jeggings, or overly tight pants, unless they are worn with dresses or skirts, not just with a long t-shirt
- Athletic clothes –
 - Sweatpants or other pant outfits resembling exercise or athletic wear
 - Shirts, shorts, pants or any clothing made of mesh or similar material
- Shoes
 - Light-up sneakers are very distracting for all
 - Beach-type sandals, flip-flops and crocs are safety concerns
 - Platform shoes, “mules” or “slides,” or shoes with high heels may *not* be worn in Lower School, even for special events such as concerts.
- Jewelry should *not* be worn to school
 - Pierced earrings should be studs only, as hoops or dangling earrings can be dangerous in PE and/or at recess.
- Hats may be worn to and from School, at recess, and on the playing fields, but are *not* to be worn inside at any time.

All Lower School students are required to have an extra pair of suitable school clothing kept in their cubbies/lockers in case a change of clothing is needed during the day.

Outdoor gear: Daily outdoor play is an important component of our Lower School program, and so children are to wear or bring clothing appropriate to the outside weather conditions. There may be times when snow pants, boots, hats, gloves, rain gear, etc., are called for; your child's health can be protected by having proper outdoor clothing. It is the goal of our Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade teachers to have the children dress themselves independently. Please support and encourage this goal at home.

Please label all clothing, shoes, outer gear, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc., with your child's name. Misplaced belongings can be returned to the rightful owners, if they are clearly marked with a name.

In the case of a questionable article of clothing, the Principal will decide as to appropriateness. Students in Grades K-4 who attend school wearing inappropriate attire will be asked to change into their “extra” set of clothes (required for each student) or call home for a replacement outfit. If no one is available to bring a more appropriate outfit to school, the Principal may request the child to wear clothing that is available at school, and the family will be billed accordingly.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Cell phones or portable music players **may not be used during school hours**. Students who bring these items must store them in their lockers and refrain from using them until they leave school. We ask that no electronic equipment be brought to school, including Kindles, iPads, or other tablet devices unless it has been cleared with the Lower School Principal for specific use in the classroom and based on a recommendation from an educational evaluation.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

The Extended Day Program is open to students in K-Grade 4 of dual full-time working parents, single full-time working parents, and faculty and staff members. This program is available from Monday-Friday, 3:05-5:30 p.m. Our Extended Day program provides a safe and secure environment for our students after the school day has ended. Indoor and outdoor play are staples of the program, as well as the completion of homework with teacher support. A healthy snack is always provided. Students travel to classrooms to participate in special activities such as arts and crafts, science experiments, board games, robotics, yoga and much more! Registration is available on the Parent Portal.

FOOD

Rye Country Day School is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for all students, faculty, and staff. In order to ensure that such an environment exists at school, it is imperative that RCDS be sensitive to various food allergies that are life threatening to some students, faculty, and staff. Students, parents, faculty, and staff should not bring nut or nut containing products on campus.

Lunch

Lower School children in Pre-Kindergarten through fourth grade may bring lunch or participate in the School's lunch program. Lower School children who bring lunch from home must bring nut-free lunches to be eaten in the Lower School Dining Room. These children will be provided with a beverage. From time to time, a student who normally brings lunch from home will have lost or forgotten his or her lunch. The School will, of course, see that the child is provided with a cafeteria lunch. We encourage children to make healthy choices at lunch. Soda and candy are not permitted. For safety reasons, glass bottles are not allowed in the Dining Room. Flik does not use any nuts or nut by-products in its preparation of meals.

Snacks - Classroom

The School's food service provides nut-free snacks each day to children in grades pre-k through fourth. If a child is allergic to the snack offered by the School, he or she may eat an alternate snack. Alternate snacks should be provided by the child's parent or guardian and must be individually prepackaged and free of nuts and nut products. The teacher will store alternate snacks in the classroom.

Snacks - Before and After School

After-school snacks are provided for the children enrolled in the After-School Clubs or the Extended Day Program. The cost of the snack is built into the price of these programs. If a child is allergic to the snack offered by the School, he or she may eat an alternate snack. Alternate snacks should be provided by the child's parent or guardian and must be individually prepackaged and free of nuts and nut products. Alternate snacks will be stored at the teacher's discretion in the classroom.

No Lower School child is permitted to buy a snack in the Middle/Upper School Dining Room at the beginning or end of the day without parental/adult supervision. All children dismissed from the classrooms at the end of the day must proceed directly to the Main Circle, Wait Room, or Bus Room. When students are dismissed from the Wait Room, they are to go directly to the Main Circle with their siblings.

Snacks - Special Event/ Birthdays

No home baked items are allowed in the Lower School. At the beginning of every month, each grade level has determined a specific day of the six-day rotation to celebrate ALL the children who have a birthday that month and a special treat will be provided by Flik. The teacher and the "birthday children" will determine the treat, and those participating families will be billed accordingly. Appropriate substitutions to the selected birthday treat will be provided for children with allergies. For those children who have allergies, a parent or guardian may provide his or her allergic child with individually pre-packed cookies or a similar treat, free of nuts and nut products. These alternate treats would be stored in the classroom by the teacher for the child. On the actual date of the child's birthday or a date specified by the family (for those birthdays that fall on a weekend, a holiday or during the summer) the School will supply a special birthday t-shirt for the student to have signed by his or her classmates as a souvenir of his/her special day and the year.

GIFT POLICY FOR RCDS EMPLOYEES

No individual or group gifts from parents and/or students to faculty, staff, coaches, or administrators are allowed at any time. Cards and notes from students or families are welcome and desired. 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.

HOLIDAYS

Children, in their generosity, often like to bring in favors or small treats for the whole class for a special holiday, such as Valentine's Day, Christmas, or Hanukkah. Please refrain from doing so; even simple candy treats or chocolates are not allowed.

HOMEWORK

A student's time in school is directed and productive. We provide a long school day so that Lower School students can complete most activities within the classroom environment under a teacher's supervision. There are times when a Lower School teacher assigns homework, but there is no expectation that Lower School students will have homework every evening. However, there is an expectation that all children will read for pleasure (or be read to) at home for a short period of time every day. Even children who can read, love to be read to and they benefit from hearing the fluency of a more seasoned reader and a more challenging book with rich vocabulary. As at school, children working at home will complete assignments in differing amounts of time. The general time parameters are indicated below; they are to be used as *rough guidelines only*.

- **Grades 1 (10 minutes) and Grade 2 (20 minutes):** The purpose of homework in Grades 1 and 2 is to develop responsibility and good learning routines. Each child is to obtain the assignment, take it home, complete the task, and return the work to school at the designated time.
- **Grades 3 (30 minutes) and 4 (40 minutes):** Homework in the upper grades may be assigned to reinforce and/or extend class work.
- NO homework will be assigned over vacations, weekends, or religious holidays that occur on school days.

LIBRARY POLICY

The Lower School Library serves students, faculty, staff, and parents at RCDS. Students are welcome to check out any book in the library, as are faculty, parents and staff. We do not charge fines, and unless a title is in particular demand, books may be renewed by bringing them into the library and requesting renewal. The following procedures will be followed on books that are overdue:

- A notice is sent (within the school) to students when the book(s) are overdue. If the book(s) are not returned, a second notice in the form of a postcard is sent to the student's parent(s).
- Following the third notice (another postcard sent) there will be a **non-refundable** charge for the book(s). The charge for the book(s) will be billed, through the Business Office, to a family's RCDS account. The money is nonrefundable because at that point the library will have ordered a replacement. Although we are, of course, anxious to have our actual materials returned and often cannot find replacements of equal value, the book(s) that are paid for now belong to the student.

LOCKERS

Students in grades 2 - 4 are assigned lockers in which to keep their extra change of clothing, outdoor clothing, and their school supplies. These lockers *are not to be decorated* inside or out, as the decorations then become a distraction to their learning.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Students are not to bring money or valuables to school. The School cannot be responsible for any loss that might be incurred.
- Under no circumstances may Lower School students use skateboards, in-line skates or sneakers with built in rollers on campus.
- Chewing gum is never appropriate at school.

PRIVATE MUSIC LESSONS

Private music lessons can be arranged during school (physical education and recess) beginning in the second grade for piano, and in the spring for fourth graders interested in studying band instruments. Students wishing to have music lessons at other times may contact the Private Lessons Coordinator (914-925-4580) to schedule time before or after school. Parents who have scheduled music lessons for their child after 3:30 p.m. must have arrangements in place to have that child properly supervised by a parent/adult while waiting for the lesson.

PARTIES / SOCIAL EVENTS

Children's birthday parties are important to the child hosting the celebration and to those who have been invited to attend. A party is also important to the child who has not been invited, who may feel devastated at being left out. While we realize that it can be difficult to invite a whole class to a party, *and we are not encouraging you to do so*, we request that you model for your child a sensitivity to the feelings of others by distributing invitations through the mail and not at school, and by being discreet about discussing social arrangements around children who are not included. If several students are going to a party after school and being picked up by one adult, please be sensitive to those who are not invited, and do not send the group to the after school Wait Room. It is hard for the invited students to contain their excitement, and yet it is equally hard for other students in the grade level who feel excluded. Gifts are not to be brought to school even if they are for a party scheduled for after school. "Birthday goody bags" and other party favors are not permitted. Students are not to give presents to each other at school.

PETS AT SCHOOL

In the interests of community safety and for reasons of health and sanitation, pets can only be on campus for a short period of time, as a classroom event arranged well in advance with the teacher and the Lower School Principal. Dogs that accompany parents and caregivers to drop off and pick up must stay in the car. We regret that we cannot allow dogs to walk around campus, even if they are on a leash.

REPORTS: PROGRESS REPORTS / CONFERENCES

Regularly scheduled conferences with the homeroom teachers are held in November and March. Additional conferences may be initiated by parents or teachers and scheduled for a mutually convenient time. The first progress report in November will be handed to the parent during the scheduled November conference. However, the subsequent reports (March and June) can be accessed on the parent portal. You will receive notification that the reports are available when the time comes.

Special area reports are sent home electronically twice a year, in January and in June. Although formal conferences are not scheduled with the special area teachers, we encourage parents to ask for a conference, as these teachers are very much a part of your children's education and have the added benefit of seeing them from year to year. Letter grades are not used in Lower School.

SNOW DAY LOWER SCHOOL POLICY

The Lower School acknowledges that students need routines and make greater headway in their learning when they have uninterrupted instruction. However, snow days are inevitable, and while we want your children to enjoy the great outdoors if the weather allows, we also know that there is plenty of time in the day to do some work. This work will be in keeping with the age of the students, the materials available at home, and with their current units of study.

Pre-K to Grade 2: We encourage students at this age to be creative and enjoy this unexpected, free day. Play is often their vehicle for learning, and we hope their creative talents can be put to good use. We also encourage them to read with a parent or caregiver, and perhaps do some writing, creative or otherwise. Drawing a picture of what they did on the snow day, and then writing about it, is a great idea. Playing board games or card games are wonderful ways to reinforce number sense. There are many websites with great ideas for *snow* days and many iPad apps that provide interesting review, such as ABC Phonics (K and 1st). On the grade level Haiku, teachers often have resources, such as web sites or specific iPad apps that are instructional and fun. (*Instructions for getting to the Haiku are below.*) The students will not be required to bring work into school the following day, although they are welcome to do so if they choose.

Web sites for snow days: (crafts, word search puzzles, printable activity sheets)

- <http://herviewfromhome.com/36-snow-day-activities-and-ideas-for-you-r-kids/>
- http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2014/01/things_to_do_on_snowy_day_kids_indoor_activities.html
- <http://freebies.about.com/od/free-printable-word-searches/tp/winter-word-search.htm>
- <http://www.abcteach.com/directory/holidays-months-and-seasons-seasons-winter-3615-2-1>
- <http://www.starfall.com>

Grades 3 and 4: With the use of our **Haiku**, the third and fourth grade teachers will post an assignment by 9:00 a.m. that will provide some schoolwork for the children in reading, writing, math or social studies. The goal is not to make the work laborious or lengthy, just some review appropriate to what the students are working on in their classrooms. Upon returning to school, the teachers will review the work as if it were homework.

Haiku log-on information: Two ways for parents to access Haiku.

1. Parents can access Haiku by visiting <http://ryecountrydayschool.haikulearning.com>
2. Parents can also go to the **RCDS web site home page**. Under the tab “Parents,” there is a pull-down menu with *Haiku* as an option. Click on it and it will bring you to the opening screen of the Haiku. If you do not remember your password, you can click, “**Forgot Your Password**”, (on the right-hand side), at which point you can reset your password.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

As is the custom in independent schools, the Lower School participates in standardized testing in a limited way, using the resulting information as one of many pieces of data for evaluating a student's abilities and achievements. The Director of Testing coordinates standardized testing in the Lower School. Students in third and fourth grades take the Comprehensive Testing Program IV (CTP-IV) from the Educational Records Bureau (ERB) in the winter. Results are sent home to parents, and if necessary, follow-up conferences can be set. Formal and informal assessments are administered on an "as needed" basis to clarify problems and further define the student's program.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Counseling Support

The Lower School Psychologist’s responsibilities include seeing individual students, making referrals for ongoing care and support, and advising the administration and faculty when needed. In addition, the Lower School Psychologist leads whole class activities and discussions, small group discussions, and provides opportunities to discuss child development issues with parents or guardians. The psychologist organizes on-going friendship groups at all grade levels. That direct work with students provides the psychologist with insights to the issues or topics that are important to the students at the various grade and developmental levels.

Learning Support

Learning specialists provide support to students and teachers through an inclusion and/or pull-out model. The teaching of basic skills in reading, writing, math, and spelling based on the student’s individual needs is emphasized, as well as the organization of strategies for efficient learning. The teacher(s), the support team, and the Principal determine if students need support beyond what they receive in the classroom. Throughout the process, the teacher and the learning specialist provide parents or guardians information through regular

updates. These students may be assigned to work with a learning specialist individually or in a small group. The goal is to help a student with relatively minor learning issues to master the fundamental skills needed to function successfully in the classrooms of the Lower School. Students with greater difficulties may be referred for an outside evaluation and/or more intensive remediation.

Director of Support Services

The Director of Support Services is the head of the department and works closely with the counselors and learning specialists to make sure that all students' needs are being met. Also, the director has names of several evaluators who know RCDS, its standards and curriculum, and who are qualified to assess the student in order to help the teacher better support him or her. Parents or guardians are encouraged to discuss evaluators with the Director of Support Services before embarking on the process. Once the School receives the completed evaluation, the Support Team, which consists of the classroom teacher, the Learning Specialist, the Director of Support Services, and the Principal, meet to discuss the report and the recommendations. After the Team reviews the evaluation, a meeting is set up with the Team, the parents or guardians, and sometimes the evaluator, to discuss the report and the educational plan. Several weeks after the plan is put in place, a follow-up meeting is held with the Team and the parents or guardians to assess how the student is doing.

Accommodations

Rye Country Day School (the "School") 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 and City law. 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.")

What is a Disability?

This Policy does not apply unless a student has a limitation that is defined as a "disability" in compliance 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. The Team consists of the Director of Student Support Services, the Division Learning Specialist, and the Division Principal. Requests made to teachers, administrators, or others 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, the student, parent, or caregiver requesting the accommodation must provide the Team with medically certified proof of the physical or mental disability and medically certified proof of the need for the accommodation. For learning disabilities, a complete psycho-educational or neuro-psych educational evaluation is required; such evaluation should include a

diagnosis of a specific disability and demonstrate the need for any requested accommodation.

If a parent is concerned about a student's learning and is considering having him or her evaluated, we encourage the parent to set up a meeting with the Director of Student 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 have been effective in investigating a student's learning difficulties. If a parent does not have a meeting with the Director of Student Support Services ahead of time, in order to work together and best support the student, it would be helpful for the evaluator to speak to the Director of Student Support Services before completing the evaluation to make sure that the evaluation will meet the criteria before any recommendations or accommodations are suggested. For further detailed guidelines on academic accommodations, please refer to the guidelines: (Put the link)

What is the Process for Determining Appropriate Accommodations?

Once the School receives 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 his or her parents or guardians. After the Team reviews the data and the recommendations, a meeting is set up with the Team, the parents or 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 should 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 his or her parents or guardians' responsibility to follow up with the Accommodations Team about changes to the student's disability status or need for accommodation. 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 or guardians if the accommodations remain appropriate and/or need to be updated. Any questions regarding this Policy should be directed to the Director of Student Support Services.

TOYS AND FIDGETS

We do not permit the use of toys in school, including toy weapons and any “super hero” action figures, which foster aggression. Electronic toys and equipment may *not* be brought to school other than for "show and tell." They may not be used at school.

Fidgets can be used as either toys or tools for learning depending upon a student’s need. An occupational therapist may recommend any one of a variety of fidgets to help a student in the classroom. However, the same fidget can be used as a toy and increase the level of distraction for that student and those around him/her. For this reason, the Lower School will rely on the occupational therapist, parent, and teacher to make the determination when a fidget is beneficial to a student’s learning in the classroom.

TRIPS: OFF-CAMPUS

In order for a student to participate in a school-sponsored trip, **a parent must sign the permission slip provided by the School.** Individual permission slips covering trips involving bus transportation are sent home/provided online in the parent portal for parent signatures prior to each trip. When necessary, the Lower School teachers will ask parents within the grade to assist in chaperoning the students.

For safety reasons, children who fail to have signed permission slips may not participate in the event, and parents may be asked to provide transportation for the child to return home.

TUTORING

RCDS faculty 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. If a tutor is needed, Dr. Debra Pager, the Director of Student Support Services, will provide guidance in this area, either suggesting an in-house tutor or providing names of outside tutors, or learning specialists, when needed. If your child is being tutored by an outside specialist or teacher, the School encourages open communication between the tutor and the classroom teacher to ensure that there is a coordinated plan to support the student. Please know that the RCDS tutoring policy includes the following:

- Teachers cannot tutor RCDS students whom they might teach next year.
- Any tutoring on campus must happen outside of the regular school day. (8:15 a.m. - 3:05 p.m.)
- Teachers must inform the division principal and the Director of Student Support Services of any tutoring arrangements involving RCDS students.
- If a teacher tutors an RCDS student, the student's teacher must be informed.
- Students are not to bring cash to school to pay a tutor; teachers should bill parents.

WAIT ROOMS (FOR STUDENTS WITH SIBLINGS)

Morning Wait Room: The morning Wait Room is a supervised wait room, which was created to accommodate Lower School students who have Middle and Upper School siblings with different arrival and dismissal times or for children who arrive early by bus. The Middle and Upper Schools begin at 8:05 a.m., and therefore, some Lower School children may need to arrive earlier with their older siblings. The Morning Sibling Wait Room will be in the Lower School Dining Room, and will begin on Tuesday, September 10. It opens daily at 7:40 a.m. – 8:00 a.m., at which time the students in Grades K-4 will be dismissed to their classrooms, and the Pre-K students will be escorted to their classrooms. **This Wait Room is to be used ONLY for students with siblings in the other divisions.**

Afternoon Wait Room: When the Lower School day ends at 3:05 p.m., there will be afternoon wait rooms available for children with siblings in the Middle School who are dismissed at 3:15 p.m. or 3:25 p.m. (Upper School students are dismissed prior to the Lower School dismissal time.) These Wait Rooms begin on the first full day of school, Friday, September 6, and are **ONLY for Lower School students with siblings in the Middle School.**

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

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 payments 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.

Enrollment Termination Policy

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.