



Rhode Island School for the Deaf

 Student & Family Handbook 

2025–2026



 **Location:** 1 Corliss Park, Providence, RI 02908

 **Phone:** (401) 222-3525

Videophone (VP): (401) 216-8425

Fax: (401) 243-1024

 **Website:** rideaf.net

Director: Sarah McGaughey

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Rhode Island School for the Deaf

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OVERVIEW

The Rhode Island School for the Deaf (RISDeaf) is a public, state funded, academic school (Grades PreK-12), approved by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), funded by the State legislature, and governed by an appointed Board of Trustees. This school provides a unique opportunity for deaf and hard of hearing students to learn the skills necessary for them to enter the world of post-secondary education and employment that awaits them upon graduation. RISDeaf is a place where instruction is tailored to the language and social needs inherent with children who are Deaf, where they have full access to the general curriculum, and where their learning needs are understood. Here is a place where they can fully access communication more easily, as they establish friendships and build a community of peers.

In a brief fashion, this manual provides some information on programs/services, athletics and after-school opportunities, along with school regulations pertaining to our elementary students. We hope this information will help to create a positive understanding and a cooperative effort among parents, students, and the school staff and faculty.

Although this handbook has been designed to answer many of the questions asked by students and their parents, it is not intended to replace personal contact between students, parents, teachers, and administrators. RISDeaf reserves the right to change the policies contained herein at any time, when changes benefit the school community.

RISDeaf is committed to parental involvement in their child's programs. We believe that ongoing communication between school and home is essential to student success.

Parents are always welcome to visit the school. As your child's strongest advocate, we encourage you to become involved at each level. Your input at your child's yearly Individual Educational Program (IEP) meeting is an excellent place to begin this dialogue. The entire RISDeaf faculty and staff are also available throughout the school year for student guidance, parent conferences, and any questions you might have regarding your child's program. If parents or students have questions regarding school policy, they should contact the principal for clarification.

MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure that all children who are deaf or hard of hearing who attend the Rhode Island School for the Deaf become literate, independent, and productive citizens who set and achieve life goals.

VISION

The Rhode Island School for the Deaf will serve as a critical, strategic, and responsive educational center with a commitment to educational excellence for children who are deaf or hard of hearing, an important low incidence population. The Rhode Island School for the Deaf will accomplish this through:

- forging partnerships with families, school districts, community groups, and agencies
- providing leadership, advocacy, and educational expertise that advances a continuum of educational options that honors the needs of each child and is based upon a comprehensive, whole-child assessment
- dedication to proven best educational practices in language and communication access and the utilization of American Sign Language and English
- establishing and maintaining high expectations for all students through accessible, engaging, standards-based curriculum that promotes social, vocational, and post-secondary success and utilizes state-of-the-art technology
- respect for the diverse cultures and perspectives of its families and students
- encouraging and supporting students' choices and self-determination to ensure their post-secondary success.

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DIRECTORY

Main Office: (401) 222-3525 (voice)

Videophone: (401) 216-8425

General email address: info@rideaf.net

Website: rideaf.net

** Please note: Teachers and therapists cannot take calls during class time. Please leave a message with the main office and we will ask the teacher/therapist to call you back during a free period or after school.*

Director	Sarah McGaughey	401-222-3525	smcgaughey@rideaf.net
School Secretary	Marie Silva-Golembiesky	401-243-1016	msilva-golembiesky@rideaf.net
Special Education	Mary Pendergast	401-243-1026	mpendergast@rideaf.net
Principal	Barbara Cesana	401-450-2287	bcesana@rideaf.net

Departments:

Athletics/After School Programs	Leo Gutierrez	401-602-0766	lgutierrez@rideaf.net
Audiology	Ryan McNamara	401-243-1000	rmcnamara@rideaf.net
Building/Facilities Rental	Ryan McNamara	401-243-1000	rmcnamara@rideaf.net
Counseling/Guidance	Joseph Batiano	401-626-4364 (vp)	jbatiano@rideaf.net
Free & Reduced Lunch	Ryan McNamara	401-243-1000	
Nurse/Health Services	Penny Bailey	401-243-1010	pbailey@rideaf.net
Outreach Services	Christen Kelly	401-243-1000	ckelly@rideaf.net
Social Services	Gerlany Mejia	401-243-1009 (Eng/ Sp)	gmejia@rideaf.net
Transition Services	Jeannie Desmarais-Valdez	401-227-0336 (vp)	jdvaldez@rideaf.net

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In general, if Providence Public Schools are open, RISDeaf is open, and if Providence Public Schools are closed, RISDeaf is closed. Exceptions to this rule may occasionally occur. Every effort will be made to post school closing information on our website at: rideaf.ri.gov and to send information directly to your email or text as you direct us.

For comprehensive information regarding the cancellation or delay of school, please tune in to RI television stations or the Internet. You can expect these types of announcements to appear by 6:00 AM and sometimes by the previous evening if a major storm is expected.

[RI Broadcaster's Association site](#)

[Turnto10](#)

Please note: Often local school districts cancel or delay their own “out of district busing” in cases of bad weather.

This may happen even though RISDeaf has not cancelled or delayed classes and is beyond our control. If you are unable to drive your child to school on these days when your district does not provide busing, this will be considered an excused absence.

During the 2025-2026 school year, we will not participate in distance learning. There are five days reserved for make-up days at the end of the school year.

The Academic Program

RISDeaf offers a range of programs to deaf and hard of hearing students and their families.

Educational programs include:

- ❖ Parent Infant Partners Program
- ❖ Early Childhood
- ❖ Elementary School
- ❖ Middle School
- ❖ High School
- ❖ Independence Academy (18-22 Transition Program)
- ❖ Transition Academy (post-grad program)

At each grade level, there is a focus on literacy and academic skills, language and communication development, social-emotional growth, and citizenship. Development of strong literacy skills is woven throughout all academic areas. Teachers work to ensure that the curriculum is aligned to the state grade level or grade span expectations, Next Generation Science Standards, and the Common Core State Standards. All students participate in English language arts, ASL, math, science, and social studies courses. Supplemental academic offerings for all students include health education, physical education, comprehensive school counseling (CSC), technology, and the Arts.

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Within the classroom, instruction is differentiated to meet the academic needs of each student. Additional special education support is provided for students with more complex learning differences. All students have access to small group instruction and may receive one-on-one instruction based on individual needs.

Community interaction is essential for students to better understand the world in which they live. RISDeaf often invites visitors to address students, and students participate frequently in curriculum-related field trips. Students may be involved in local, state, or national events, including, but not limited to, student body government, High School Academic Bowl, Middle School Math Competition, and/or Junior National Association of the Deaf activities. In addition, students may join intramural or interscholastic team sports such as volleyball, basketball, soccer, and track & field with local schools as well as schools for the deaf in New England and as far down the East Coast as West Virginia.

The combination of community interaction along with the offering of strong academic and vocational programming enables our students to be successful and contributing members of their families in both the hearing and Deaf communities.

Common Core Standards

These standards guide our students' math and English Language Arts (ELA) education in Rhode Island. They clearly define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education, so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The standards are aligned with college and work expectations; include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills; build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards; and were developed and guided by top educators from across the country.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations requires children between the ages of six and eighteen to attend a public, private, or parochial school. We wish to promote good school attendance. There is a close relationship between the students' success in school and their attendance.

REPORTING AN ABSENCE

When it is necessary that a student be absent, please email the school at absent@rideaf.net or call 401-222-3525

**Ryan McNamara
Information Aide**



Types of Absences

Excused: any absence verified by a written note, phone call, or email from a parent or family member due to:

1. Student illness;
2. Medical, counseling, or court appointment;
3. Family emergency or death;
4. Religious holidays;
5. School-sponsored conferences and events, and
6. School-issued suspensions.

Unexcused: Unexcused absences are days out of school that do not qualify as excused absences, such as absences due to family vacation, missing the school bus, employment, poor planning, cutting class, etc. Three unexcused absences on three consecutive days will result in a call to discuss attendance.

When a student has missed ten percent (10%) or more of the school days in one quarter due to unexcused absences or absences of concern, the family will receive an absenteeism letter. If the student's attendance does not improve (drop below 10%) 4 weeks after receiving the absenteeism letter, a meeting will be scheduled with the principal and/or special education director.

Absence Protocol

Parents/guardians are responsible for contacting the school by 8:00 a.m. when they know their child will be absent. **Email absent@rideaf.net or call 401-222-3525 or 401-216-8425 (VP).** A message will be sent by text, phone, and email to families who have not contacted the school to report their child's absence.

***Note:** If a child is absent and the school does not receive communication from a parent/guardian, the staff will assume the absence is unexcused. The student will receive a zero for that day, and make-up work will be provided only at the discretion of the teachers.*

When a student has three (3) unexcused absences on three (3) consecutive days, a call will be made to the student's parents to discuss attendance. When a student has missed ten percent (10%) or more of the number of school days in one quarter due to unexcused absences or absences of concern, the family will receive an absenteeism letter. If the student's attendance does not improve (drops below 10%) 4 weeks after receiving the absenteeism letter, a meeting will be scheduled with the principal and/or Director of Student Services.

The designated staff will attempt to determine, with the parent, the cause of the prolonged absences and help prevent more absences. Strategies may include home visits, daily calls, letters, or referral for support. The designated staff, with the parent/guardian, will view any information necessary to determine appropriate action.

Unlawful Absence

An unlawful absence is any absence from school for one or more days with the knowledge and consent of the student's parent or guardian for reasons inconsistent with provisions of state law pertaining to compulsory attendance. (R.I. Gen. Law § 16-19-1(a)).

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This definition applies to vacations taken beyond the parameters of the adopted school calendar. It does not apply to health problems or unanticipated emergencies.

The parent must assume full legal responsibility under state law. No disciplinary action will be taken against the child, but it is expected that all school work missed during the absence will be completed.

In serious cases of repeated unlawful absence, the school social worker and/or school counselor will become involved. If this intervention is unsuccessful, the school will contact the sending school district (*R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-19-1, § 16-19-4, § 16-19-6, and § 16-29-10*).

Truancy

Truancy is the willful, unexcused absence from school by a student for one or more days. In all cases of truancy, the parent will be notified and a concerted effort will be made to locate the child. A follow-up conference will be held with the child and the parent/ guardian.

The outcome of the conference should be a plan of action, including appropriate counseling activities, which will determine the causes of truancy and provide suggestions for the prevention of future occurrences.

In serious cases of repeated unlawful absence, the school social worker will become involved. If this intervention is unsuccessful the school will contact the student's local educational authority (LEA) in the student's home school district and the LEA's truancy officer (*R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-19-1, § 16-19-4, § 16-19-6, and § 16-29-10*).

Tardiness to School

Students must be on time for school. School starts at 8:05 am. Please send an email to absent@rideaf.net or call 401-222-3525 to let us know your child will be tardy. A student is marked as tardy for school if they are not in class by 8:15 am, unless they are tardy as a result of the late arrival time of their school bus or other excused absence listed above. When a student has four (4) unexcused tardies, a *Notice of Tardiness* letter will be sent to the parent.

Note: When a student arrives at school after 10:00 am or is dismissed early for unexcused reasons, they may not participate in extracurricular or sports activities for that day.

Students who arrive late must check in with the front office to receive a late pass. No student arriving late to school will be permitted into class without first signing in at the office and receiving a late pass.

In serious cases of repeated tardiness, more than four (4), a conference may be held with the parent or guardian and the child to develop a plan of action to remediate the problem. Additional instances of tardiness will result in referral to the school social worker, school counselor, and the principal or designee.

EXCUSED EARLY or LATE ARRIVALS

Late arrivals to school are excused for the following reasons:

- Late school bus arrivals
- Doctor appointments with a note from a parent or appointment card from the doctor
- Personal illness (with a note from parent).
- Other reasons as approved by the Director

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- A note or phone call must be received the day of the late arrivals in order for it to be excused.

Anyone picking up a student **MUST** have a valid photo ID with a signature, even if we know the person, prior to releasing the student to him or her.

Valid reasons for early dismissal:

- Doctors or dentist appointment.
- Illness in the family.
- Death of a relative.
- Arrangements approved by an Administrator.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS

If the family of a student has recently moved or plans to move, please be sure to notify the school as soon as possible. One week's notice is usually required by school districts to process a student's new bus route assignment. By giving sufficient advance notice of the move, the student will not miss valuable school time while new bus service is arranged. If a parent/guardian's work and/or home telephone, cell phone number and/or emergency contact numbers have been changed, please notify the Attendance Secretary as soon as possible so that **YOU** can be reached in any case of emergency.

Schedules

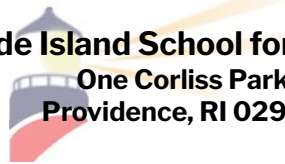
Elementary SCHEDULES

CLASSROOM HOURS: 8:05 AM TO 2:55 PM. Individual class schedules will be shared with families directly from each student's homeroom teacher. A typical day in Elementary School begins with Morning Meeting. Our 1st -4th Grade curricula are directly aligned with the Common Core, Next Generation Science Standards, and Rhode Island standards. Students have daily time devoted to English Language Arts (ELA) and ASL Language Arts, which includes:

- Guided Reading – direct reading instruction, reading fluency, reading comprehension, study of various genres of literature, and Read-Alouds
- Writing – daily quick writes, direct instruction, creative writing, the writing process (including editing, English Grammar)
- Word Work – spelling/spelling patterns, high frequency words, and related vocabulary
- ASL and English Grammars – structure and grammar of each language, and the connections between them
- Special blocks include Art, Physical Education, Makerspace, and Library. Elementary students also participate in Social Emotional Learning once a week with our School Counselor, Joseph Batiano.

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Upper Elem	Time	Lower Elem	Time
Morning Meeting	8:05-8:30	Morning Meeting	8:05-8:30
Read Aloud	8:30-8:45	Read Aloud	8:30-8:45
ELA	8:45-10	Handwriting	8:45-9:00
Snack	10-10:10	Math	9:00-9:40
BGC	10:10-10:40	Foundations for Lit	9:40-9:55
Math	10:40-11:25	Snack	9:55-10:05
Recess	11:25-12	Movement Break	10:05-10:10
Lunch	12-12:30	ELA	10:10-10:55
Quiet Time	12:30-12:45	Science	11-11:25
Fingerspelling/ Edmark	12:45- 1:05	Recess	11:25-12
Science	1:05-1:35	Lunch	12-12:30
Social Studies	1:35-2:10	Quiet Time	12:30-12:45
Specials	2:12- 2:55	Social Studies	12:45-1:10
		Centers	1:10-2:10
		Specials	2:10-2:55

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Below is our general middle and high school schedule. Our school principal, Barbara Cesana, will share your child's schedule via email. Some of our students will be enrolled in the CTE program at East Providence Career and Technical Center or William M. Davies, Jr. Career and Technical High School. Their schedules will show more specific information.

Middle and High School Schedule

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:05-8:22 HOMEROOM	8:05-8:22 HOMEROOM	8:05-8:22 HOMEROOM	8:05-8:22 HOMEROOM	8:05-8:22 HOMEROOM
PERIOD 1 8:24-9:07	PERIOD 1 8:24-9:07	PERIOD 1 8:24-9:53	PERIOD 1 8:24-9:07	PERIOD 4 8:24-9:53
PERIOD 2 9:10-9:53	PERIOD 2 9:10-9:53		PERIOD 2 9:10-9:53	
PERIOD 3 9:55-10:38	PERIOD 3 9:55-10:38	PERIOD 2 9:55-11:23	PERIOD 3 9:55-10:38	PERIOD 5 9:55-11:23
PERIOD 4 10:40-11:23	PERIOD 4 10:40-11:23		PERIOD 4 10:40-11:23	
LUNCH 11:25-11:55	LUNCH 11:25-11:55	LUNCH 11:25-11:55	LUNCH 11:25-11:55	LUNCH 11:25-11:55
PERIOD 5 11:57-12:40	PERIOD 5 11:57-12:40	PERIOD 3 11:55-1:23	PERIOD 5 11:57-12:40	PERIOD 7 11:55-1:23
PERIOD 6 12:42-1:27	PERIOD 6 12:42-1:27		PERIOD 6 12:42-1:27	
PERIOD 7 1:27-2:10	PERIOD 7 1:27-2:10	PERIOD 6 1:27-2:10	PERIOD 7 1:27-2:10	PERIOD 6 1:27-2:10
PERIOD 8 2:12-2:55 WIN(What I Need)	PERIOD 8 2:12-2:55 WIN	PERIOD 8 2:12-2:55 WIN	PERIOD 8 2:12-2:55 WIN	PERIOD 8 2:12-2:55 Advisory

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Marking Periods

First quarter: August 27-November 3 (midterm - September 29)

Second quarter: November 4-January 21 (midterm - Dec 9)

Third quarter: January 22 -April 2 (midterm - March 2)

Fourth quarter: April 3-June 16 (midterm - May 12)

State Assessment Timeline

ACCESS for ELLs and Alt ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA) (grades 1-12) January 6 - February 14, 2026

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Assessments

ELA & Math (grades 3-8, 11) April 1 - May 30, 2026

Science (grades 5, 8, 11) April 1 - May 30, 2026

RICAS (Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System) Grade 3-8

ELA: March 23 - April 10, 2026 **Math:** April 27 - May 15, 2026

RI-NGSA (Rhode Island Next Generation Science Assessment) Grades 5, 8, 11:

April 27 - May 15, 2026

PSAT School Day Grade 10 March 25, 2026

SAT School Day Grade 11 March 25, 2026

Report Cards and Teacher Conferences

Quarterly grades will be found on the parent portal. Progress toward each goal on the Individual Educational Plan (IEP), will be recorded and mailed home within two weeks after the end of the quarterly marking period.

Parents who desire to have a parent-teacher conference should contact their child's following teacher/graduation coach at any time to schedule a meeting.

Honor Roll

The Honor Roll is computed four times each year based on quarterly grades. All students attaining an average of "B-" or higher are recognized as Honor Students and those having an average of "A-" or higher are recognized as High Honor Students. Names of these students will be placed on the Honor Roll and displayed in the building and a certificate will be sent home to parents with the student's report card. Honors are based strictly on earned grades.

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Grading Scale

Passing Grades

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73

Warning and Failure Grades

D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	under 60

Incomplete Grades

Under extenuating circumstances, a teacher may request permission from the Principal to issue an incomplete grade for a student. Since an incomplete grade cannot be a final grade, the teacher will work with the student, and family if warranted, to create a plan to complete assignments within two weeks of the end of the quarter and finalize the grade.

Homework

Students often receive homework assignments for several of their classes on the same night and may need guidance and support from home to complete and manage this work. Homework completion is part of each student's classroom grade and should be taken seriously.

Valedictorian

The selection of the senior class Valedictorian will be based upon the students' GPAs. The senior student with the highest GPA will be the Valedictorian.

Class Rank

The final rank from which the class Valedictorian is selected is cumulative and computed at the end of the third quarter of the students' graduation year.

Credits

- Full Year Courses = 1 credit
- Semester Courses = .5 credit
- Physical Education = .25 credit per year
- Health = .25 credit per year
- The Arts = .25 credit per year
- ASL/Deaf Studies = 1 credit per year

It is helpful for parents to provide a distraction-free area at home where your child can complete homework. An agenda/planner will be provided to each student to assist in organizing assignments by



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class and due dates. In addition, teachers may require the use of Google Calendars to organize assignments.

The purpose of homework is to practice and demonstrate understanding of the classroom material that has already been taught. The teaching staff encourages parents to approach their child's homework with an understanding that it is the student's homework, and the child is responsible to do the work as independently as possible.

If the child experiences difficulty in completing the work, parents should encourage their child to do some of the work to show that an effort was made and enable the teacher to tailor instruction to address the misunderstanding of content. The following are guiding questions that you can use with your child to help with homework:

- Did you write down the assignment in your assignment book or in Google Calendar?
- What do you need to do to get started?
- What do you need to do next?
- What do you already know how to do?
- Which specific part is giving you trouble?
- Can you try it a different way?
- Where is this information in your notebook or textbook?
- Write your teacher a note explaining why you had difficulty with this assignment.

In the event of an excused absence, students will be responsible to check with their teachers for make-up homework assignments. Missed tests and exams are the responsibility of each student to complete and should be discussed immediately upon return with the teacher.

ACADEMIC HONESTY (Plagiarism, Cheating)

RISDeaf believes strongly in the value of truth, integrity, personal accountability and respect for the rights of others. As a result, the teachers and administrators of the school seek to promote an environment that fosters integrity and honorable conduct.

Plagiarism and cheating are strictly prohibited.

Any attempt to present someone else's work as one's own on quizzes, examinations, reports, or term papers, constitutes plagiarism. There are various forms of plagiarism. The following are the most common:

1. **Word-for-word plagiarism:** This includes: a) submission of another student's work as one's own; b) the submission of work from any source whatever (book, magazine, newspaper article, unpublished paper or thesis) without proper acknowledgement by footnote or reference within the text of the paper; and c) the submission of any part of another's work without proper use of quotation marks.
2. **Patchwork plagiarism:** This consists of piecing together of unacknowledged phrases and sentences quoted verbatim (or nearly verbatim) from a variety of sources. The mere reshuffling of other people's words does not constitute "original" work.
3. **Unacknowledged paraphrase:** It is perfectly legitimate to set forth another author's facts or ideas in one's own words, but if one is genuinely indebted to the other author for these facts or ideas, the debt must be acknowledged by footnote or reference within the text of the paper.

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4. **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** AI is not coming, it's here. Students will be taught how to use some digital tools appropriately and safely.

The use of AI to complete school work is strictly prohibited. Students are expected to complete work without the use of artificial intelligence unless permission is granted by the teacher to use specific AI tools to support their work. Artificial Intelligence should never be used to replace the human who should be doing the work.

Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, North Carolina Generative AI Implementation Recommendations and Considerations for PK-13 Public Schools Publication Date 1/16/24.

Instances of suspected plagiarism or cheating will be referred to the Director for review. The student's parents will be contacted to discuss further action. Points will be deducted from a student's grade for this serious violation, and depending upon the degree of plagiarism, the assignment may earn no credit at all.

Can I Use AI on this Assignment? Generative AI Acceptable Use Scale			
Generative AI refers to any of the thousands of Artificial Intelligence tools in which the model generates new content (text, images, audio, video, code, etc). This includes, but is not limited to, Large Language Models/ LLMs such as ChatGPT, Google Bard, etc, Image creators such as Dall-E3, Adobe Firefly, and any tools with built in generative AI capabilities such as Microsoft CoPilot, Google Duet, Canva, etc etc)			
	Level of AI Use	Full Description	Disclosure Requirements
0	NO AI Use	This assessment is completed entirely without AI assistance. AI must not be used at any point during the assessment. This level ensured that student rely solely on their own knowledge, understanding, and skills.	No AI disclosure required May require an academic honesty pledge that AI was not used.
1	AI-Assisted Idea Generation and Structuring	No AI content is allowed in the final submission. AI can be used in the assessment for brainstorming, creating structures, and generating ideas for improving work.	AI disclosure statement must be included disclosing how AI was used. Link(s) to AI chat(s) must be submitted with final submission.
2	AI-Assisted Editing	No new content can be created using AI. AI can be used to make improvements to the clarity or quality of student created work to improve the final output.	AI disclosure statement must be included disclosing how AI was used. Link(s) to AI chat(s) must be submitted with final submission.
3	AI for Specified Task Completion	AI is used to complete certain elements of the task, as specified by the teacher. This level requires critical engagement with AI generated content and evaluating its output. You are responsible for providing human oversight and evaluation of all AI generated content.	All AI created content must be cited using proper MLA citation. Link(s) to AI chat(s) must be submitted with final submission.
4	Full AI Use with Human Oversight	You may use AI throughout your assessment to support your own work in any way you deem necessary. AI should be a 'co-pilot' to enhance human creativity. You are responsible for providing human oversight and evaluation of all AI generated content.	You must cite the use of AI using proper MLA or APA citation. Link(s) to AI chat(s) must be submitted with final submission.
Adapted by Vera Cubero for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) from the work of Dr. Leon Furze, Dr. Mike Perkins, Dr. Jasper Roe FHEA, & Dr. Jason McVeigh Link to Original Work			
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PROMOTION POLICY

Students will be placed in the appropriate grade and promoted based upon completion of all required assignments and a grade of D or better has been earned. Students who miss 30 days of school or more and who have been unable to keep up with the academic content are at risk for not being promoted.

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INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)

During each school year, we will look closely at your child's progress through an annual IEP meeting. An IEP Review can also be held at any time throughout the year. Your local school district representative and outside agency representatives may attend, in addition to related RISD staff. Our school secretary will contact you to schedule the meeting for your child. These meetings are quite important for all to attend to ensure appropriate programming for your child. Please give advanced notice to our school secretary, Marie Silva-Golembiesky, if you need to re-schedule. All of the participants will need to be notified in a timely manner.

SCHOOL HEALTH GUIDELINES

RISD is a nut-free school.

The Health Office is open from 8:05 AM to 3:00 PM, and we are fortunate to have it staffed by an experienced, full-time registered nurse who is also certified as a School Nurse/Teacher. Penny Bailey, RN, uses ASL fluently. Students must obtain a pass from a teacher or an administrator to visit the Health Office. Our school nurse monitors and helps maintain the health and safety of students and also educates them on health issues. She can be reached at (401) 243-1010, by email at pbailey@rideaf.net, by text at 401-649-1995, or through the health portal. You can communicate through the health portal after setting up an account from the SNAP email you received.

Please contact the school nurse any time your child has health-related concerns, such as:

- * A new medical diagnosis or change in your child's health status
- * A newly prescribed medication or a change in medication
- * A serious illness, injury or hospitalization
- * A contagious disease, some examples include: chicken pox, respiratory virus, strep throat, ringworm, scabies, impetigo, or conjunctivitis
- * An absence for an extended period of time

To allow your child sufficient time to recover from an illness or injury, and to minimize the spread of an infectious illness to others, your child should be kept home from school if he/she has:

- A contagious disease such as an upper respiratory illness with significant coughing and/or nasal discharge, a sore throat, cough and chest congestion with a fever, or conjunctivitis (pink-eye).
- A fever greater than 100.4 degrees
- Vomiting and or diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- If your child becomes ill during the school day you are expected to make every effort to pick up your child. If your student becomes ill while they are at home, please keep



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them home until they are symptom and/or fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

Annual Health Emergency Packet

Health Emergency forms are included in the annual registration packet. These are to be completed by parents yearly and returned by the date provided to ensure that your child's safety, health and well-being are met. Forms, consents and medical documents that arrive past the due date may prevent your child from attending activities such as field trips and sports, as well as not receiving some services until the late arriving forms have been reviewed and processed.

Physical Examination and Required Immunizations

Your child is required to have an annual physical exam if they participate in sports. A current physical exam, every one to two years, and updated immunizations should be on file at the school for all students that do not participate in sports. All medical and religious immunization exemptions require a certificate that can be obtained on the Rhode Island Department of Health website <https://health.ri.gov/>

MEDICATION POLICIES

Prescription Drugs and Medications

All medication is given to students by the school nurse. For students that require medication during the school day- daily or as needed (prescription) medication must be brought to school by an adult in the original container or prescription bottle with the appropriate label. This must be done at the beginning of each school year or when a medication is started.

The nurse will administer the medication in the Health Office.

Inhalers and epi-pens *may* be self-carried and self-administered with mutual agreement by the physician, parent, and the school nurse. Annual physician and parent permission is required for inhalers and epi-pens.

- We encourage parents to administer medication before or after school hours, when possible.
- All prescription medications require a written physician's order and parental consent form annually, at the beginning of the school year, when changes are made in dosage or medication, or when a medication is to be started at school. **Medications will not be administered without this documentation.** Physician's orders may be given to the nurse by fax directly from the doctor's office, by email, through the health portal in SNAP, or a paper form.
- Over the counter medication is available as listed in the annual registration packet. Please list which medications you give permission for your child to take and sign your consent. Parents of preschool and elementary students will be consulted prior to over the counter medication administration at school.

- All required medication and procedure forms are available on our website. Click..... **Services, Nurse, then Forms**. For assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the nurse.

Medications on Field Trips and Self-Carry at Off-Site Events

For **preschool and elementary school** students that require daily medication and/or treatments on field trips, options are available. A parent can meet at the field trip to give the medication or the treatment. If a parent is unable to meet at the field trip, the Rhode Island School for the Deaf will attempt to get a nurse for the field trip. If a nurse cannot be obtained, the parent's decision about the medication or treatment will be followed. This may include omitting the medication or treatment or adjusting the time for that day.

Permission for **middle and high school** students to self -carry medication at off-site events may be obtained. The required form contains 4 parts: physician signature giving permission, parent permission, student acknowledgement that they will not abuse the privilege, and school nurse approval. The parent or responsible adult is required to bring the off-site medication to the nurse. It will be kept in the nurse's office until the off-site event. At the time of the off-site event, the medication will be put in a locked box. Off-site event staff will be assigned to carry the locked box and open it at the time the medication is to be self-administered by the student. A witness form will be kept to verify the date and time the student self-administered the medication.

Guidelines for Emergency medication for seizures off-site

At this time during the school day, emergency seizure medication can be given by the school nurse or a parent. If your child has been prescribed emergency seizure medication and is going on a field trip: 1.) The parent can meet at the field trip and administer the emergency medication in the event of a seizure. 2.) In the event the parent cannot meet at the field trip and a nurse is unavailable to attend the field trip, the emergency seizure medication will remain at school and 911 will be contacted. 3.) The parent can decide for their child not to go on the field trip.

Guidelines for Management of Life Threatening Allergies in School

Parents should notify the nurse and classroom or following teacher of any life-threatening allergies. Please schedule a phone or on-site visit with the nurse to discuss the specifics of the allergy and to develop an allergy action plan with input from the child's physician.

When prescribed, an Epi-pen will be kept at school for each student (please see self-carry guidelines under **Medications**). Staff are trained annually how to administer this emergency medication.



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Students that do bring nut containing products to school may eat them in the cafeteria at the nut table. When finished eating, they must wash their hands. The cafeteria tables are cleaned and sanitized after each meal, making this safe for students.

THE SAFEST PLAN TO PREVENT EXPOSURE TO FOOD ALLERGY IS TO FOLLOW THE NO NUT POLICY AND TEACH YOUR STUDENT NOT TO SHARE FOOD FROM HOME WITH OTHERS.

Emergency procedures

All accidents, injuries, and illnesses are reported. The school nurse will provide immediate medical attention and will notify a parent or guardian if the health need is serious.

In an emergency, 9-1-1 and the nurse will be called and parents will be notified at the time of the emergency. Your child will be transported by ambulance to the emergency room at Hasbro Children's Hospital, Providence. A staff member will remain with the student until the parent/guardian arrives, unless other arrangements are made. During an off-site emergency, such as a field trip, 9-1-1 will be called, and your child will be transported to the nearest hospital.

Please note: Any student who spends more than one period at the nurse's office is not allowed to participate in sports or afterschool activities for that day.

Required Screenings

Hearing, vision, weight and height screenings are provided annually to students. Scoliosis (postural) screening is provided for students in grades 6 through 8 because that is the time of the most rapid growth in children. ***If you do not wish your child to participate in any of these screenings you must submit that request in writing annually.***

Flu Shots The Wellness Company holds an annual flu and Covid clinic for students, families, and staff of RI School for the Deaf. Students 18 years and older can register themselves. All other students must have signed consent from a parent or guardian. Registration is on line. See our website for the date and time of the annual clinic.

TOBACCO USE

According to RI State Law, smoking or possession of tobacco products by students is prohibited within the school building, on school properties, or at school-sponsored events, whether on or off school grounds. Students who possess tobacco products will have them confiscated and will be subject to disciplinary action. Violation of this policy shall include, but not be limited to, actual smoking, holding or displaying of cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, etc., whether lit or not. Vaping is never permitted on school grounds.

Student Support Services
Student Wellbeing & Transition Department
Vision Statement

The Student Wellbeing & Transition Department consists of professionals and collaborators aiming to create an inclusive environment where all students feel supported by parents, educators, staff, administrators, and community members. The goal is to empower and prepare students with skills and resources to succeed in their future endeavors and thrive as responsible members of their communities.

Mission Statement

The mission of Rhode Island School for the Deaf's Student Wellbeing & Transition Department is to realize the true potential of each and every student being mindful of equity and access through school-wide collaboration and the use of data-driven practices, to educate and empower students in achieving success, in embracing their self-worth and identity, by fostering the development of essential life skills that prepare them to become lifelong learners and active members of their community.

Behavior Support Services

The Behavior Support Staff prioritizes trauma-informed care to meet students' needs, encompassing crisis intervention, facilitation, and safety support. The team serves as role models while guiding students towards positive behavior choices. With personalized plans and classroom support, the team is committed to creating a safe and inclusive learning environment for all.

School Counseling Services

School counseling services are guided by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model and the Rhode Island Framework for Comprehensive Pre K–12 School Counseling Programs, providing a comprehensive approach to student well-being. Counselors support students in academic, career, and social-emotional development through individual counseling, group sessions, and classroom guidance. By fostering inclusivity and collaboration, counselors create an environment that promotes healthy growth and empowers students to reach their full potential. The school counselor is available to all students for support and guidance in achieving academic success, social-emotional wellness, and preparation for future opportunities. This includes exploring and selecting Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, engaging in dual enrollment opportunities with partner colleges, and developing individualized post-secondary plans. Through these services, students are supported in making informed choices about their education and career pathways that align with their interests, strengths, and long-term goals.

School Psychology Services

The School Psychologist is a dedicated professional who diagnoses and implements individual and school-wide interventions and strategies that address academic learning. With expertise in testing,

evaluating, and interpreting assessment data, the school psychologist ensures that each student receives personalized support by collaborating with educators, parents, and administrators to address students' academic and social emotional needs, thereby creating a positive and inclusive learning environment. The school psychologist also may provide counseling and crisis intervention to students facing challenges.

School Social Worker & Family Liaison Services

The Social Worker is an invaluable resource for students, school staff and their families. Students facing challenges receive individualized support from the social worker, who is trained to address home, community, social, and emotional needs. Additionally, the social worker collaborates with families and the school to foster strong home-school partnerships. By advocating for students' well-being both within and outside the school environment, the social worker creates a supportive atmosphere conducive to success as well as plays a vital role in ensuring every student feels empowered and supported throughout their journey.

Transition Services

The Transition Coordinator is focused on guiding and preparing students for the transition from School to Adulthood. The IEP team collaborates closely with students and families starting at an early age to tailor support and determine the type of transition services students may need. These services, using a holistic approach, take into account students' preferences, interests, and strengths; provide immersive career and college explorations, work and community experience, and other post-school adult living objectives, as well as, if appropriate fostering the acquisition of daily living skills. The goal is to create a pathway to post-secondary success by preparing students with the essential skills, tools, and resources they need for adult living, ensuring meaningful, long-term outcomes after they leave school.

Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Program (CSC)

The program is dedicated to supporting the academic, social-emotional, career, and civic development of all students. The goal is to prepare every student to become a responsible, resilient, and productive member of the school, community, and society.

The program is aligned with the *Rhode Island Framework for Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Program* and the *American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model*. These frameworks ensure that services are comprehensive, equitable, and designed to support the whole child through a balance of prevention, intervention, and individualized supports.

Rhode Island Framework for Comprehensive Pre K–12 School Counseling Programs

The 2025 Rhode Island Framework for Comprehensive Pre K–12 School Counseling Programs provides a structured approach to school counseling, aligning with the American School Counselor

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Association (ASCA) National Model. It emphasizes a comprehensive, developmental, and data-driven program that supports students' academic, career, and social-emotional growth. The framework guides school counselors and other members from the department in delivering services that are proactive, inclusive, and collaborative, ensuring that all students have access to the resources and support they need to succeed. ([2025 RI Comprehensive Pre K-12 School Counseling Programs](#))

ASCA National Model

The *American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model* provides a framework for a comprehensive, data-driven school counseling program. It focuses on student outcomes in academic, career, and social/emotional development and emphasizes equity, collaboration, and accountability. The model guides counselors in delivering direct and indirect services, using data to plan and evaluate interventions, and ensuring that every student has access to a school counseling program that supports success in school and beyond. ([ASCA National Model](#))

The team includes the school counselor, school social worker/ family liaison, transition coordinator, school psychologist, and others as needed to best meet student needs. Together, this team collaborates to deliver a continuum of services that promote academic achievement, postsecondary readiness, and personal well-being.

The Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Program includes:

Social Emotional Learning (SEL): The process of developing skills that help students succeed in school and in life. SEL teaches students how to manage emotions, build healthy relationships, set and achieve goals, and make responsible decisions. These skills not only support social and emotional well-being but also strengthen focus, problem-solving, and perseverance, which are essential for academic success. By practicing SEL, students are better prepared to thrive in school, at home, and in their future careers.

Individual Learning Plan (ILP): The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is a required part of every Rhode Island student's education in grades 6–12. It is a student-driven planning tool that helps connect learning in school with future goals. Through the ILP, students explore their interests, track progress, and plan for success in academics, career, and personal/social development.

The ILP includes information such as course selections (including college and career readiness opportunities), supports and services, transition planning, and learning experiences inside and outside of school. Students review and update their ILP during the college, career, and life readiness courses and at key transition points.

The ILP helps students:

- Set and reach academic, career, and personal/social goals
- Build a program of study that prepares them for graduation and postsecondary opportunities
- Coordinate with other plans when needed (i.e. IEPs) The ILP is designed to ensure every student graduates ready for college, career, and life.

College, Career, and Life Readiness Courses:

These courses help students build the academic, social-emotional, and career skills needed to be successful in school and beyond. Beginning in middle school and continuing through senior year, each

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grade-level course is designed to help students explore who they are, plan for their future, and develop the tools they need to thrive.

These courses also connect directly to each student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and are aligned with both the *Rhode Island Framework for Comprehensive Pre K-12 School Counseling Programs* and the *American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model*.

Audiology Services

RISDeaf has an up-to-date Audiology Center. This on-site facility employs two full-time licensed audiologists. These professionals are available to serve our students' needs throughout the school day. FM technology is checked daily and hearing aid batteries are available. Students who use cochlear implants receive assistance with troubleshooting equipment and checking settings as needed.

Students from anywhere in Rhode Island may be screened at the Audiology Center at no cost. Our Audiology Test Technicians provide annual hearing screenings to all Rhode Island students in grades k-3 (approximately 55,000 children).

Communication: Speech & Language Services

Members of our Communications Department include ASL Specialists and Speech & Language Pathologists. They work together to provide individual and group speech & language therapy, and they support classroom carryover and program planning to ensure healthy ASL language development, spoken English development, and training in functional communication and pragmatic skills. These services are provided as detailed in individual student IEPs. Those students who utilize cochlear implant technology may also receive additional services that focus on auditory training (learning to listen) and auditory rehabilitation.

Occupational and Physical Therapy Services

RI School for the Deaf employs licensed occupational and physical therapists to provide individual and classroom support in the areas of motor skills, sensory issues, strength, balance, coordination and evaluations as they apply to student success in school. Each individual therapy session is typically 30 minutes in duration. Services are provided both as a "pull-out" service in a therapy area or as a "push in" model within the classroom.

Nursing

Deaf and hard of hearing students often do not have easy access to medical and health information. Therefore the school becomes one of the few places where this information is available in visual and accessible sign language. RISDeaf takes this responsibility seriously by employing a full-time and highly experienced Nurse/Educator who can sign. The nurse is able to communicate bilingually with your child and is available to monitor and help maintain the health and safety of students and also to educate them on concerns related to overall health literacy.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS

RISDeaf strives to provide a natural social environment for all of its students. There are numerous extracurricular athletic activities including: soccer, basketball and track and field. Athletic programs are offered in middle school at the developmental league level, and continue in high school at a more competitive, Varsity level.

Athletics are an integral part of the educational and social process at RISDeaf. Competitive sports offer a unique opportunity for our students to develop a positive self-image. The athletic program welcomes support from parents, staff, and the community. **Annual physicals are required.** The student athlete/parent handbook can be found on our school website or click [this](#) link.

Graduation Requirements

RISDeaf offers a high school diploma to graduates who meet the state's graduation requirements. RI School for the Deaf also requires that students demonstrate their graduation-ready skills through a digital portfolio - Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR). This consists of ten skill areas of focus, measured by the completion of common tasks in each area. Common tasks are uploaded to the digital portfolio and graded by the teacher according to the scoring rubric for that area of skill. Students are required to complete 24 hours of community service prior to May of their year of graduation. In order to meet the diverse interests and needs of its students, the high school program offers programming options. Some students pursue a rigorous academic course of study designed to prepare them for post-secondary education. Other students choose to pursue off-site career training-based programs in conjunction with classes at RISDeaf. There are some students who are involved in community-based work-study programs with a job coach. Transition plans are developed, as part of the IEP process, for all students beginning at age fourteen. Personalized learning is encouraged to support students who have a particular passion or skill.

In order to earn a high school diploma at the RI School for the Deaf, each student must successfully complete a minimum of 21 courses (21 Carnegie Units) including:

- 4 credits in English Language Arts
- 4 credits in math (which must include Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II)
- 3 credits in science (including 2 lab sciences)
- 3 credits in history/social studies
- 2 credits in a world language
- 1 credit in computer literacy
- 1 credit in financial literacy
- 3 credits in art, health, and physical education

RISDeaf courses are aligned to the Rhode Island Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, or the RI Social Studies Standards.

RISDeaf students will meet Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR), as set forth by the RI Department of Education and RI Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and approved by the RISDeaf Board of Trustees.

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We will regularly inform you of your child's progress toward graduation. If your child is not on-track to graduate, they will receive additional academic help and may need a "progress plan." Progress plans will describe the types of additional support that your child will receive in order to get them ready for graduation.

Dress Code

Students are expected to observe basic standards of cleanliness, modesty and good grooming at school and school sponsored events. The administration and teaching staff reserve the right to remove a student from class if they are dressed in a provocative/ offensive manner. Students in violation of the dress code must change or cover up. Appropriate cover-up clothing may be borrowed from the school nurse when available.

The following articles of clothing shall not be worn in school:

1. Clothing in an overly revealing or distracting fashion is not acceptable.
 - Abbreviated tops: halter, tube, tank, those that expose the midriff and cannot be tucked in, and those that are overly revealing or distracting are not allowed.
 - No "B's" should be exposed. This includes backs, buttocks, bellies, breasts, boxers, briefs, bras, or bathing suits.
 - Low riding pants or jeans, which display underwear, and the wearing of excessively revealing shorts or skirts are not permitted.
 - Shorts and skirts must be below the fingertips when the arm is at rest at his/her side.
 - Exposed beach wear, cut off shirts, undershirts, undergarments, and muscle shirts are not permitted.
 - Pajamas and slippers are not allowed except during "Spirit Week" activities.
 - Sunglasses cannot be worn while in the building.
2. Clothing or hairstyles that may be a health or safety hazard are not to be worn.
This would include loose or highly flammable clothing or unrestrained hairstyles in laboratories, around machinery, or in areas where a fire/safety hazard may exist.
3. Clothing which causes excessive wear or damage to school or personal property will not be worn. Such clothing includes metal taps or cleats on shoes, or metal studs on clothing.
4. Outdoor clothing:
 - Including hats, caps, visors, bandanas, hoods and other forms of outdoor headgear may not be worn indoors.
 - Scarves and/or hats for religious, cultural, or medical purposes are accepted and respected.
 - Caps and visors may only be worn on special occasions as designated by the building Principal.
 - Coats and jackets will not be allowed in classrooms except for medical reasons. An administrator may waive this provision if classrooms are too cold for comfort.
 - Coats, jackets, and headwear are to remain in lockers during the school day.
5. Appropriate and safe footwear must be worn. Wheeled shoes are not considered safe. The following may not be worn in school at anytime:
 - Dog collars, chokers, chains around one's neck with links exceeding 1/4";

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- Chains to secure wallets or other items to one's clothing or person or chains attached to one's clothing;
 - Wristbands, neck collars, or clothing with spikes of any type.
6. A student participating in physical education classes shall be allowed to wear any color of shorts or sweatpants and T-shirt without penalty so long as the clothing is modest, does not promote violence or unhealthy products. Sneakers must be worn.
 7. Students shall refrain from wearing any other item of clothing or jewelry that is likely to be disruptive to a proper educational environment.
 8. Dress Code Offenses:
 - A first dress code offense: students will be asked to change or cover up.
 - A second dress code offense: parents will be contacted, and students will be asked to change their clothes or cover up.
 - A third dress code offense: The student will be asked to change their clothes or cover up, parents will be contacted, the student may spend the day working on assignments in the office or a private area of the school (in-school suspension).

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY

Computer Use is a Privilege, Not a Right.

Student use of the school's computers, networks and Internet services is a privilege, not a right. Unacceptable use/activity may result in suspension or cancellation of privileges as well as additional disciplinary and/or legal action. The Director shall have final authority to decide whether a student's privileges will be denied or revoked.

Parents will be required to sign a permission form to allow their students to access the Internet and acknowledge they have read and understand the "Internet Acceptable Use Policy". Staff and students will sign a form acknowledging they have read and understand the "Internet Acceptable Use Policy" that they will comply with the policy, and understand the consequences of violating the policy.

Prohibited Use

The user is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving RISDEAF computers, networks and Internet services and for his/her computer files, passwords and accounts. Examples of unacceptable uses that are expressly prohibited include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Accessing/Transmitting Inappropriate Materials:** Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading, scanning, sending or displaying materials which are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing and/or illegal.

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2. **Illegal Activities:** Using RISDEAF computers, networks and Internet services for any illegal activity or activity that violates other school policies, procedures and/or rules, such as encouraging the use of tobacco, alcohol or controlled substances.
3. **Violating Copyrights:** Copying or downloading copyrighted materials without the owner's permission.
4. **Plagiarism:** Representing as one's own work any materials obtained on the Internet (such as term papers, articles, etc.). When Internet sources are used in student work, the author, publisher, and web site must be identified.
5. **Copying Software:** Copying or downloading software without the express authorization of the system administrator.
6. **Non-School-Related-Uses:** Using RISDEAF computers, networks, and Internet services for non-school-related purposes such as for private financial gain, commercial, advertising or solicitation purposes or any other personal use.
7. **Cyber-stalking and Cyber-harassment:** In accordance with Rhode Island law, whoever transmits any communication by computer or other electronic device to any person or causes any person to be contacted for the sole purpose of harassing that person or his or her family is guilty of a misdemeanor (*R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-52-4.2*).
8. **Violence and Discrimination:** Using the computer, networks and Internet services to send or receive any data or information which advocates illegal acts, violence or discrimination toward people or organizations, or which is outside the scope of educational use.
9. **Misuse of Password/Unauthorized Access:** Sharing passwords, using other users' passwords without permission, and/or accessing other users' accounts; forging or attempting to forge electronic mail messages.
10. **Malicious Use/Vandalism:** Any malicious use, disruption or harm to RISDEAF computers, networks and Internet services, including hacking activities and creating/uploading of computer viruses (*R.I. Gen. Laws §§11-52-3; 11-52-4.1*).
11. **Unauthorized Access to Chat Rooms/News Groups:** Accessing chat rooms or news groups without specific authorization from the teacher, supervisor, or administrator.

No Expectation of Privacy

RISDEAF retains control, custody and supervision of all computers, networks and Internet services owned or leased by RISDEAF. The school reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by students. Students should have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, including electronic mail and stored files.

The RISDEAF computer network belongs solely to RISDEAF and any files, records, electronic mail or other communication may be examined, edited, or deleted by RISDEAF at any time, without warning or notice.

Compensation for Losses, Costs and/or Damages

The student and/or the student's parent/guardian shall be responsible for compensating RISDEAF for any losses, costs or damages incurred by RISDEAF and related to violations of these rules, including investigation of violations.

RISDEAF Assumes No Responsibility for Unauthorized Charges, Costs or Illegal Use

RISDEAF assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by students including but not limited to credit card charges, long distance telephone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use of its computers, such as copyright violations.



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Student Security

A student shall not reveal his/her or any other student/classmate's full name, address or telephone number on the Internet. Students should never meet people whom they have contacted through the Internet without parental permission. Students should inform their teachers and/or administrators if they access information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate or make them feel uncomfortable in any way.

System Security

The security of RISDEAF computers, networks and Internet services is a high priority. Any user who identifies a security problem must notify the teacher, administrator, or system administrator immediately. The user shall not demonstrate the problem to others. Any user who attempts or causes a breach of system security may have his/her privileges revoked and may be subject to additional disciplinary and/or legal action. It is unacceptable to connect any personal computing device to the school's network without written permission from the Office of Technology. It is unacceptable to engage in activity for private or financial gain.

Violation of Policy

This policy applies to all school computer use, Internet activity and communication. If a user is found to be in violation of the policy, his or her network and Internet rights and privileges will be suspended until an investigation is conducted. Upon completion of the investigation, the Director will issue a decision to revoke or reinstate the computer user's privileges. Such violations may also result in further disciplinary measures or legal action.

Disclaimer

All staff and students of RISDEAF take full responsibility for their actions in the use of the computers, networks and Internet services. RISDEAF makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. RISDEAF will not be responsible for any damages the user suffers, including but not limited to the loss of data, delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions. Individual users are solely responsible for all charges and fees that they may incur in using the network, including outside telephone, printing, and merchandise purchases made through the network. RISDEAF is not a party to such transactions and shall not be liable for any costs or damages, whether direct or indirect, arising out of any network transactions by the user.

Chromebooks

No personal computers or laptops are permitted. Students are provided by this school with a school-issued Chromebook laptop for individual student use. This is an important part of your child's education. These Chromebooks are the property of the school and are provided to enable students to access technology at school and at home for school purposes (research, assignments, homework, etc.). Students are expected to use them for school purposes only.

There is a separate policy for Chromebook 1:1 device use. Students and parents are responsible to read this policy, sign the agreement, and abide by the *Chromebooks Care and Use Policy Guide* before a Chromebook will be assigned to any student. Chromebooks are collected for maintenance and updating during some school vacations.

STUDENT PARKING EXPECTATIONS

Students are encouraged to use the bus transportation provided by the school district. If a student wishes to drive a vehicle to school they must follow student parking regulations.

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Parking on school grounds is a privilege. Students are required to complete a parking application, which includes a copy of their license and registration.

Students driving cars to school have the responsibility of maintaining safety standards and observing the following regulations:

1. Students will park in designated student parking spots.
2. Cars illegally parked will be towed.
3. Reckless operation or excessive speed will result in students losing their privilege to use the lot and referral to appropriate authorities.
4. Students are not to loiter in cars or drive on campus between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
5. Books, School-issued Chromebooks, and personal belongings should be kept in school lockers—not in cars.
6. The school will not assume responsibility for any damage to the car or its contents.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Many students become increasingly aware of their physical attractions during the secondary years. Overt displays of physical or sexual intimacy will not be accepted as appropriate school behavior. A reasonable greeting/parting kiss/hug and/or hand holding outside of the classroom will be acceptable in the high school only.

Beyond this acceptable gesture of affection, students will be admonished and/or restricted. For a first offense, the students will be asked to refrain from the behavior and return to class. For a second offense, a meeting will be held with the school administration, and parents will be notified. For third and subsequent offenses, an IEP team meeting may be called to discuss further action.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Students are not allowed to have laser lights in school. Cell phones, headphones, video games, PSP, iPads, iPhones, or cameras are not allowed to be used during class time. These must be kept in lockers, backpacks, or in the main office.

Using personal technology for purposes other than schoolwork will result in the item being banned from school.

Students should never bring large sums of money or valuables to school.

RISDeaf is not responsible for valuables that are brought to school, and will not pursue a search for items that are not allowed in school.

LOST AND FOUND

Student belongings are often left behind at school events and in the cafeteria. RISDeaf has no responsibility for these items but will try to assist in recovery when possible. Please remember to write student's names on backpacks, notebooks and jackets. Valuables should be left at home. A *Lost and Found* box is located in the main office. If you are missing something, please inquire at the office, and we will try to help locate the missing item.

LOCKERS

The use of lockers is a privilege offered to students. The lockers are the property of the school rather than any individual student and are subject to inspection at any time. The school is not responsible for theft. Students are responsible for keeping their lockers clean, locked, and damage-free.

Using a lock on student lockers is highly recommended. The school does not sell or otherwise provide locks, however the school will keep a file with the locker combinations as a support to students in case their combination is lost or forgotten.

Students should not leave money or valuables in their locker. If students choose to use a backpack, it needs to be stored properly in a locker or on a hook. Backpacks are not allowed in the classroom without teacher permission.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students who bring electronic devices to school do so at their own risk. If an item is stolen, families may report the theft to the local Police Department for investigation. RISDeaf is not obligated to investigate the theft.

★ *Students are not allowed to use cell phones during the school day. High school students have the privilege to use their cell phones during their lunchtime.*

RISDeaf recognizes the important role electronic devices serve as communication alternatives for its students. However, in order to respect the educational environment:

- Personal cell phones, tablets, and music devices **must be turned off and put away** during the school day. Students may not use them during the school day.
- The use of cell phones, tablets, and music devices is **never** allowed during class time, passing time, project-based learning or cooperative learning experiences.
- All emergency calls must be directed to and from the school's main office (401-222-3525).
- Cameras or videos of any kind, including those in cell phones, must not be used in classrooms, locker rooms, bathrooms or anywhere on school property unless they are required for a school assignment.
- Students may lock them in the office of the Principal or in their lockers in the morning for safety if desired. Students will be permitted to use these devices during lunch and after 3:00 pm. When students arrive to school each morning, all technology should be put away.

Videophones (VP) are available throughout the school. RISDeaf students may use the VP/ Video Relay Service (VRS) with permission from the classroom teacher or other staff as appropriate. General student use of VRS will be supervised.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Fire Drills

[RI Gen. Laws § 16-21-4 \(Fire Drills Required – Failure to Comply\)](#) Fire drills are required. The Director or his/her designee will be responsible for training the students on drills, so that they may, in a sudden emergency, be able to leave the school building in the shortest possible time and without confusion or panic. There shall be fifteen (15) such drills or rapid dismissals during the school year. At least four (4) drills or rapid dismissals shall be obstructed by means of which at least one (1) or more exits and

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stairways in the school buildings are blocked off or not used and at least two (2) of such obstructed drills shall be held during the months of September and October.

At the beginning of the school year, teachers will review the evacuation procedure with students. Students are to assume that all visual fire alarms indicate an actual fire unless told otherwise by the administration. Students are to file out of the building quickly and quietly, following all instructions which might be given. If it is necessary to evacuate, students must remain with their classroom teachers in the designated safe area until further instruction is provided.

RI School for the Deaf has an agreement with a neighboring school within walking distance to shelter our students until parents can be notified, should the need to evacuate for a prolonged period ever arise.

Lockdowns and Sheltering in Place

At certain times, staff may be asked to keep students safe and occupied for an extended period of time until students can be released to go home. An example might be if an unexpectedly severe snowstorm prevents cabs and buses from arriving on time to school at the end of the school day. Students would be cared for and kept in school for an extended period while emergency plans are implemented.

Short-term shelter or lockdown in place situations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A dangerous or frightened animal comes onto our campus,
- There is a toxic substance in the air outside due to an accident in the community,
- Police warn that there is a dangerous person in the neighborhood surrounding the school,
- A crime scene or medical emergency scene must be isolated so that EMTs or Police can address the problem (such as a heart attack victim or a bad car accident in the parking lot) and avoid frightening the students.

RI School for the Deaf considers the safety of our community to be our highest priority. Instructing students and staff how to be safe in the face of an emergency is an ongoing process and will be practiced several times throughout the school year.

Smoking/ Vaping

Due to the overwhelming medical evidence that smoking, whether use of tobacco or vape/e-cigarette, is unhealthy and life threatening, RI School for the Deaf does not allow its use anywhere on campus. This is also a Rhode Island Law.

In accordance with *R.I. Gen. Laws § 23-20.9-1, et seq., The Smoking Restrictions in Schools Act*, the use of tobacco and all tobacco products is prohibited on school property. School property shall include, but not be limited to, all buildings, grounds and facilities, including school buses and field trip sites, which are under RISDeaf jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees. It shall be the purpose of this policy to ensure compliance with state law. Because smoking is a health issue, parents will be notified if a student is caught using tobacco and/or vape/e-cigarettes. The Athletic Director and Coaches will also be notified if the student is involved in sports. Students who are caught smoking will receive an in-house suspension during lunch for three days. For a second infraction, the in-house lunch suspension will be increased to four days and the student's special education team will be notified. For

a third infraction, the student will serve a full day of in-house suspension and will work on a project outlining the health hazards of smoking. This project will be presented to the high school. Violation of this policy shall include, but not be limited to, actual smoking, holding or displaying of cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, etc., whether lit or not.

DRUGS/ ALCOHOL

The use of alcohol and drugs by minors on the school campus or RISDeaf sponsored events is a criminal offense. When a student is found with or using drugs or alcohol, parents and police will be notified immediately and the student will be suspended. There will be an IEP team meeting to determine the student's future educational programming. To minimize confusion, non-alcoholic beer and wine are not permitted in school at any time.

The following steps will be taken in response to student use of alcohol and illegal drugs.

1. If a student voluntarily confides a drug or alcohol problem to any staff member, the staff member will consult immediately with the educational administration team. In such instances, the school will work with the student and his/her family to identify resources for support and treatment.
2. If a school administrator has reasonable grounds to suspect, through direct observation, that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but no contraband is found, an investigation will ensue. The student may be removed from class and parental contact will occur immediately. With the explicit approval of the parent, this investigation may involve a drug test. When a student is determined to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but no contraband is found, the educational administration team or designee will immediately inform parents and a conference will be held with the student and parents before the student returns to school. The student may be required to attend an approved alcohol or drug recovery program.
3. If a student is found to be in possession of drugs or alcohol, the educational administration team or designee will immediately inform parents and a conference will be held with the student and parent. There will be formal notification to the police by the school, and appropriate action will be taken. The student may be required to attend meetings at an approved alcohol or drug recovery program and will receive a maximum of ten days suspension from school. In the case of a second offense, the educational administration team will consider suspension for more than ten days.
4. If a student is found to be selling, distributing, or in possession of a quantity of drugs or alcohol sufficient to be charged with the intent to distribute, the educational administration team or designee will immediately inform parents and the police for mandatory removal of the student(s). There will be an out-of-school suspension and discussion of a possible expulsion from RI School for the Deaf. The police will be notified and will take appropriate action under the law regarding the sale of drugs in proximity to school buildings.

WEAPONS

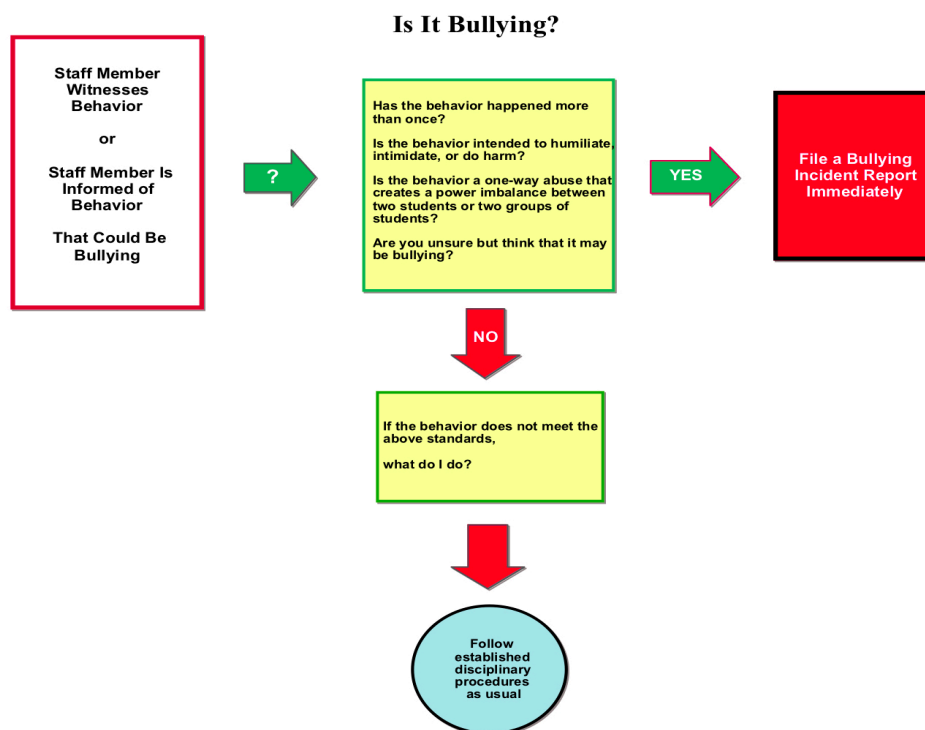
The Law defines weapons as including knives of any kind, slingshots, clubs, guns, martial arts paraphernalia, straight edge razors, or anything that can harm another person. The decision as to whether or not an item is a weapon is decided by school staff. Weapons will be confiscated and will not be returned, regardless of value. If a student is found with a weapon, he/she will be suspended from school and will not be reinstated until a meeting is held with parents and the student's IEP team. When necessary, the police will be involved.

BULLYING / CYBER-BULLYING

Bullying is an unprovoked, repeated intentional act of hurting, frightening, threatening, or consistently and intentionally excluding another person. It is unwanted, intentional, unprovoked and repeated. It can be verbal, physical, direct (face-to-face), or indirect (through another person, in writing, on social media such as Facebook, etc.). It sets up a power imbalance between an aggressor and a target. No matter how it happens, the bullying of students creates a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair student health and negatively affect their ability to learn. We believe that the prevention of bullying is critical to maintaining a safe, secure, and positive school culture that supports academic achievement and school engagement.

It is the policy of the RI School for the Deaf to promote and maintain an educational atmosphere for students, which is safe and free from harassment and bullying. Community members are expected to treat each other with respect and to report any bullying incidents immediately. **Every form of bullying, including cyber-bullying, is prohibited, whether in the classroom, on school premises, when a student is traveling to school, or at a school-sponsored activity.**

RI School for the Deaf has established a formal anti-bullying plan. This plan is available to all community members in hard copy and on the school web site rideaf.net and is discussed with staff and students annually. It is available in English, ASL, Spanish, Swahili, and in Portuguese.



HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, TEEN DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, & HAZING

Harassment, intimidation, bullying, teen dating violence, sexual violence, and hazing are prohibited under state law. (*R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 16-21-26; 16-21-30; 11-21-2*).

The prevention of harassment, intimidation, bullying, teen dating violence, sexual violence, and hazing is part of RISDeaf's strategic plan (*R.I. Gen. Laws §16-7.1-2(e)*) and school safety plan (*R.I. Gen. Laws §16-21-24*). Harassment, intimidation, bullying, teen dating violence, sexual violence, and hazing are prohibited at RI School for the Deaf.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination that violates federal and state law. (Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972, *20 U.S.C. §1681, et seq.*; *R.I. Gen. Laws §§16-21-26; 16-38-1.1; 16-85-2*). It is the policy of RISDeaf to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee of RISDeaf to harass any student or employee through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy. RISDeaf will act to investigate all complaints, whether formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual harassment, and to discipline any student or employee who sexually harasses a student or employee of the School. For the complete policy, please see Board of Trustees Policy: Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment.

Classroom Management

The Rhode Island School for the Deaf strives to support our students in developing responsibility in decision-making and for his/her behavioral choices. We use an approach called *Responsive Classroom*. It uses strategies to support our children's progress in social-emotional development along with academic progress. In order to live in today's society, it is of utmost importance that each child be taught how to interact positively, respect for self and others, self-awareness, decision-making, responsibility, positive communication skills, and the attainment of the academic level of which he or she is most capable.

We recognize that a child's education rests not only in the academic knowledge they acquire but also in the character they develop.

Principles of a Responsive Classroom®

1. The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How children learn is as important as what they learn: process and content go hand in hand.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. To be successful academically and socially, children need to learn and practice specific social skills. Five particularly important skills are
 - Cooperation
 - Assertiveness
 - Responsibility
 - Empathy

- **Self-control**

Known at school as **CARES** Knowing the children we teach - individually, culturally, and developmentally, is as important as knowing the content we teach.

5. Knowing the families of the children we teach is as important as knowing the children we teach.
6. How we, the adults at school, work together is as important as our individual competence; lasting change begins with the adult community.

Ten Teaching Practices of *Responsive Classroom*®

1. **Morning Meeting:** Teachers lead students in a daily gathering that uses a consistent format for friendly greetings, sharing of news, having fun together, and warming up for the day of learning ahead.
2. **Creating Rules:** Teachers collaborate with students to develop classroom rules that support everyone's learning
3. **Interactive Modeling:** Teachers actively involve children in purposeful activities, demonstrating and analyzing key behaviors that support both the social and academic.
4. **Teacher Language:** Teachers consciously use words as a professional tool to promote learning, community, and self-discipline.
5. **Logical Consequences:** Teachers respond to misbehavior with consequences that are respectful of the children and supportive of their efforts to learn how to fix their mistakes.
6. **Guided Discoveries:** Teachers introduce students to classroom materials in a way that encourages the children to use the materials independently, creatively, and responsibly.
7. **Academic Choice:** Teachers use children's interests and the powerful learning cycle of planning, working, and reflecting to maximize students' academic growth.
8. **Classroom Organization:** Teachers organize materials, furniture, and displays in ways that encourage students' independence, cooperation, productiveness, and other positive behaviors.
9. **Working with Families:** Teachers design avenues for respectful, two-way communication and collaboration with students' families.
10. **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** Teachers use structured approaches for working together with students to solve academic and social problems and teach them skills for solving problems with increasing independence.

STUDENT CONDUCT and DISCIPLINE

Guiding Principles

It is the responsibility of RI School for the Deaf to make, maintain, and enforce a student discipline code the purpose of which is to foster a positive environment that promotes learning. Each student, staff member, teacher, and administrator has a right to attend and/or work at a school which is safe and secure, free from threat (actual or implied) of physical harm by a disruptive student or community member. The Board of Trustees or the Director may suspend all students found responsible for conduct which violates the Student Code of Conduct, or which threatens these basic rights.



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Code of Conduct and Expectations of Respect

All members of the RISDeaf community have the right to be treated respectfully by one another and entitled to a safe, orderly environment in which to learn, work, or entrust their children. Although the language of instruction may vary in individual classrooms, conversations conducted in all open areas must be accessible through sign language.

Expectations and Rights of Students

Students have the responsibility to:

- Come to school on time, prepared, and ready to learn each day;
- Respect self, others, and school property; Tell the truth;
- Do their work to the best of their ability;
- Plan for the future; and starting at age 14, become active members of the IEP Team that plans their educational and vocational programming;
- Ask for help when needed.

Students have the right to:

- Fair and respectful treatment;
- A free and appropriate education with full access to the general curriculum and academic instruction in the language and communication modes that best meet their learning needs;
- Full communication access within the entire school environment and school community;
- Examine their school records and participate in developing their own academic program.
- Be free from danger, discrimination and harassment in school; and
- Be informed of, understand, respond to, and appeal any disciplinary action taken against them.

Expectations and Rights of Families

Families have the responsibility to:

- Ensure their child arrives at school on time each day, prepared to learn;
- Respect their child's education and school professionals;
- Help their child plan for each day, week and year in school;
- Provide a quiet place at home where homework may be completed;
- Ask for help when unable to meet the educational needs of their child; and
- Reinforce RISDeaf conduct expectations.

Families have the right to:

- Be treated with respect by school staff;
- Participate in planning their child's academic program in partnership with the school and to examine school records as needed;
- Expect the confidential maintenance of their child's records;
- Be informed of their child's academic progress and related concerns;
- Visit their child's school according to school-based protocol; and
- Be informed of, respond to, and appeal any disciplinary action taken.

Time Off to Attend School Events

Parents are entitled by regulation to time off from work to attend their child's school events:

- The Rhode Island Parental and Medical Leave Act makes it easier for parents to get time off from work to attend school functions. The law does not require that the leave be paid.
- The law states that a parent who has been employed by the same employer for 12 consecutive months is entitled to a total of 10 hours of leave during any 12-month period to attend parent-teacher conferences, an IEP meeting, or other school-related activities for a child of whom the employee is a parent, foster parent or guardian.
- The employee must provide 24-hour notice of the leave and make a reasonable effort not to unduly disrupt the operations of the employer.

The right of each student to learn must never be compromised

RISDeaf is committed to ensuring the safety of all members of its community. Maintaining respect and school connectedness is the driving value for all disciplinary action.

Behavioral Philosophy- RISDeaf faculty and staff will:

- Maintain clear expectations
- Teach expectations & related skills
- Model expectations and provide opportunities for guided practice
- Provide positive recognition
- Consistently deliver fair consequences and Interventions

Effective discipline will be implemented through effective partnerships with students, families and the community. Expectations and consequences for student conduct will reflect a balance between the responsibilities and rights of the individual and the responsibilities and rights of the school community.

A Community of Learners

The mission of RISDeaf is to provide every student with a safe, free and appropriate education. In order for RISDeaf to maximize the engagement of students in their education, it must foster the development of relationships among students, faculty, administration and support staff around the common mission of becoming a dynamic Community of Learners. This prevents disruptions to teaching and learning by creating a positive learning environment and by ensuring the safety of all members.

Respectful Interactions

It is the expectation of RISDeaf that all members of the school community refrain from swearing, or using language which stereotypes, generalizes, harasses, puts down, or violates the confidentiality rights of others. Individual student needs should be discussed between school professionals only when discussion is intended to improve the educational outcomes of those students. It is expected that all members of the school community use language that promotes human dignity and respects individuality.

Student Discipline

It is the responsibility of RISDeaf to make, maintain and enforce a student discipline code the purpose of which is to foster a positive environment that promotes learning (R.I. Gen. Laws §16-21-21). The Board of Trustees, or the Director, may suspend all students found in violation of school regulations which relate to the rights mentioned above, or when a student represents a threat to those rights of students, teachers, or administrators.

Students with disabilities are generally subject to the same rules governing student behavior and discipline as their non-disabled peers, although they are entitled to additional due process protections as outlined below.

No student with a disability shall be excluded, suspended, or withdrawn from any school-based education program for more than ten (10) cumulative days within one school year for behavior that is a manifestation of the student's disabling condition. Suspending a student for more than ten (10) cumulative school days for behavior that is a manifestation of the student's disability is a form of discrimination and violates federal and state regulations under IDEA. See section below titled Special Rules for Students with Disabilities.

Scope of Discipline

It is the responsibility of all RISDeaf personnel to maintain student discipline before, during, and after the school day in school buildings, on school premises, at other locations while attending school-sponsored activities, and while in transit to or from school. RISDeaf recognizes that while it is one entire school, it serves students of all abilities from grades preschool through 12. Therefore, every student shall be expected to follow the school wide Code of Conduct in a manner appropriate to their age and developmental level.

The goal is always to teach, model and support a student with the goal of guiding the child to learn to make better choices and to take responsibility for individual behavioral actions. Several tiers of support are in place to help students grow in this area.

Student Well-Being Team, Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA), and Positive Behavior Support Plans

The Rhode Island School for the Deaf has several teams that are formed to provide additional support to students and staff. The SWBT (Student Wellbeing Team) is one such team. Comprised of clinical staff and faculty, the team meets regularly to review student data and school systems that support students who present with challenging behaviors. The team coordinates FBAs (Functional Behavior Assessments) and develops PBSPs (Positive Behavior Support Plans) as needed to provide additional support for student success.

An FBA is completed in order to clearly understand a student's patterns of behavior and to develop an individualized positive behavior support plan for students with high risk and high frequency behaviors that are resistant to the first two tiers of intervention.

Tier 1 consists of general classroom intervention.

Tier 2 is a targeted, small group response.

The SWBT meets weekly to identify and develop plans for these students. Plans are developed with input from parents, faculty, and the student when appropriate.

The Positive Behavior Support Plan and its corresponding monitoring are designed as an individual Tier 3 intervention. The determination of this need will be based on systematic data collection that can include attendance, office discipline referrals, surveys, self-assessments, rating scales, direct observations and discussion with the parent/guardian and teachers.

Behaviors and Consequences

All members of the RISDeaf community need to teach, reinforce, and model these expectations. When it is clear that the student's behaviors are not related to the student's disability, staff must also respond swiftly and with authority while delivering consequences for unacceptable behaviors, in order to facilitate the development of self-discipline in students. Clear and concise expectations are essential for the understanding and support of an orderly school environment by students, families, school personnel and community partners. Consequences should match the severity of the behavior and the age of the student, as defined in the following Code of Conduct.

Student Code of Conduct

Students have a right to a safe place to learn and grow. Every member of RISDeaf is responsible for addressing student behaviors observed in the Scope of Discipline that compromise any student's right to learn or threaten the safety of the school community. This means the full complement of adults in the building at any given time before, during or after normal school hours is responsible for addressing student behaviors as described.

Definitions for Code of Conduct

- Assault: a physical act of a threatening nature, which puts another person in reasonable fear of immediate bodily harm.
- Chronic: three (3) or more instances of similar behavior defined in Levels 1, 2 and 3 for which interventions are not having observable impact.
- Community Service: organized and structured opportunities for students to contribute to the betterment of the school community.
- Conference: a non-public one-on-one conversation between a school professional and a student and/or family member regarding observed behavior that is disrupting the learning environment. A conference should include both members describing their concerns, with responsible adults specifically describing how the observed behavior is a barrier to learning or is disrupting the learning of others. Each conference should be resolved with an agreed upon plan for improvement. Conferences must never involve public humiliation of a student.
- Fighting: a mutually agreed to or mutually spontaneous eruption of physical aggression between two or more individuals.
- Intervention: an attempt to involve the student, family, teachers, school-based support staff, community providers and/or agencies to help support improvement in behavior, teach new behaviors, motivate and/or hold students accountable who are not upholding the expectations in the Code of Conduct.
- Major Graffiti: writing, painting or carving on property other than one's own which is permanent, or difficult to eradicate.
- Minor Graffiti: writing or painting on property other than one's own, which can be eradicated or cleaned up without substantial effort.

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- Major Theft: any theft of valuable items or school equipment involving destruction of school property, physical harassment and/or malicious intent.
- Minor Theft: any theft of minor items, e.g., school supplies.
- Non-Academic School Privileges: any student privilege, which is not an element of the fundamental education program. This does not include food, physical education class, art class, music class, field trips, or any program set forth in the student's Individualized Education Program.
- Weapon: a loaded or unloaded firearm or look-alike firearm or pistol, knife, razor, martial arts device, gas repellent, mace, stun gun and/or any tool or instrument which school administrative staff reasonably could conclude is capable of inflicting bodily harm.

ZERO Tolerance for Weapons and Violence

Any student found to be in possession of a weapon or involved in an aggravated assault will immediately be referred to the Director and may be excluded from school for the remainder of the school year or for a shorter period of time, in accordance with Rhode Island law. (*R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 16-21-18; 16-21-19; 16-21-21.1*).

In all cases involving weapons or aggravated assault in school or on school grounds, the Police and parents/guardians will be contacted. School grounds include, but are not limited to, actual property owned by the school, areas around the school, parking lots, school-sponsored events (whether on or off school grounds), school buses, and school bus stops.

Searches

Lockers

Lockers are school property and students should therefore hold no expectation of privacy in their lockers. RISDeaf officials may search student lockers when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will turn up evidence that the student has or is violating either school rules or the law. They also have the right to search lockers without notice, including through the use of animals and equipment to assist in the search.

Personal Property

When RISDeaf officials have reasonable suspicion that a student has or is violating school rules or the law, they have reasonable grounds for conducting a search of personal property.

RISDeaf officials may inspect and search school property and equipment owned and controlled by the school (such as lockers, desks, and parking lots) as well as personal effects left unattended by a student without notice to, or consent of, the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these areas or in their personal effects left unattended. School officials may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as purses, wallets, backpacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence that the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or RISDeaf student conduct rules. This also applies to student vehicles parked on school property.

Code of Conduct Consequence Guidelines

Level 1

Level 1 conduct includes those behaviors, which are insubordinate or cause minor disruptions to the learning environment. These behaviors can often be redirected by the teacher and resolved through

thoughtful planning and opportunity for discussion. Students may be referred to the Student Wellbeing Team, if the teacher or support staff cannot successfully abate the behaviors..

	Level 1 Behavior	Response
1.1	Attending Class without required materials or assigned work	• Discussion with Teacher • Written or verbal apology • Loss of privileges • Restitution • Detention (before, after school or during lunch with teacher) • School-based community service • Home contact • Parental visit to school if necessary
1.2	Off-task behaviors that demonstrate disengagement from class (out of seat, etc.)	
1.3	Behavior that disrupts or interferes with classroom teaching	
1.4	Inappropriate displays of affection	
1.5	Running in the classroom or hallways	
1.6	Communication that is not polite, courteous or respectful	
1.7	Refusal to comply with staff instructions or classroom, cafeteria or school rules	
1.8	Using computer equipment without permission	
1.9	Unauthorized use of pagers, phones, electronic devices	
1.10	Dress code violation	
1.11	Leaving class without permission: 1 st offense	
1.12	Cutting a class	
1.13	Pushing, shoving	
1.14	Chronic late arrival to class	
1.15	Minor graffiti	
1.16	First violation: minor cheating, simple plagiarism, throwing objects, anger or frustration, minor property theft, etc.	
1.17	Teasing with intent to embarrass another	

Level 2

Level 2 conduct includes those behaviors which are insubordinate or cause more significant disruptions to the learning environment. When these behaviors are more chronic, disruptive, disrespectful, requiring greater support to the classroom, and the teacher feels that regular interventions are not succeeding, students exhibiting these behaviors will be referred to the SWBT.

	Level 2 Behaviors	Response
2.1	Chronic Level 1 behavior that is escalating	• Discussion with Teacher • Written or verbal apology • Loss of privileges • Restitution • Detention (before, after school or during lunch with teacher) • School-based community service • Home contact • Parental visit to school if necessary • Closer monitoring • Peer conflict resolution activities • Referral for additional learning
2.2	Off-task behaviors that result in injury to self or others	
2.3	Fighting: 1 st offense	
2.4	Throwing items with intent to harm others	
2.5	Leaving the classroom without permission a 2 nd time	
2.6	Communication that involves swearing at peers	
2.7	Swearing at staff members	
2.8	Harassment	
2.9	Verbal arguments that disrupt learning	
2.10	Chronic dress code violations	
2.11	Cheating on a test:	

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2.12	Cutting class repeatedly	supports • In school interventions (i.e., timeout, focus room following school protocols), behavior contracting/monitoring by teacher/teams/administrators • In-school suspension • Mandatory social skills training or counseling services (i.e., anger management, problem solving, aggression replacement therapy) • Detention with anger management workshops or other appropriate skills training program • Referral to Director for in-school suspension (any in-school suspension requires an Follow up plan for prevention /intervention to avert further problems)
2.13	Harm to self or others	
2.14	Chronic late arrival to class	
2.15	Major graffiti	
2.16	Plagiarism	
2.17	Bullying (repeated, intentional, and targeted power imbalance) *Report must be filed for investigation	
2.18	Leaving school grounds without permission (1st off	

Level 3

Level 3 conduct includes those behaviors, which are dangerous or disruptive to learning for the larger school community and do not meet the school's expectations of respect, directly compromising the community. These behaviors require immediate interaction with the Administration, resulting in a referral to the Director. Any alleged criminal behaviors will automatically result in a referral to the Police. For students under eighteen, parents will immediately be notified.

	Level 3 Behaviors	Response
3.1	Any of the previous behaviors that escalates to a dangerous or violent level	• All those previously listed and all including: • Police involvement • Student and family advisement/ counseling • Legal response • Out-of-school suspension • Significant community service • Network of Support including community crisis resources • Immediate call for a Team m
3.2	Possession of a weapon or a gun	
3.3	Intentional and chronic sexual harassment	
3.4	Physical intimidation	
3.5	Sexual assault	
3.6	Physical assault	
3.7	Investigated Bullying or Cyberbullying	
3.8	Using school computer network to bully	
3.9	Possession or sale of a controlled substance	
3.10	Retaliation	
3.11	Violence and serious threats to a RISDeaf community	
3.12	Defiantly leaving school grounds without permission	
3.13	Major destruction of property	

Procedures Governing Suspension

Unless an emergency situation exists requiring the student's immediate removal, no student shall be suspended prior to having an informal hearing before the Director or his/her designee. At said hearing, the student will be informed of the charges and be given an opportunity to respond. In the event of an emergency, the informal hearing shall be held as soon as practical following the removal of the student. In addition:

1. The administrator shall make all possible attempts to notify the parent/guardian of the student about the suspension and state the cause(s) leading to the suspension.
2. A letter will be sent to the parent/guardian stating the nature of the infraction and noting the consequences. This letter will be sent to the last reported address of the parent/guardian.
3. If a student is suspended, a parent re-entry conference must take place before reinstatement.
4. Textbooks and homework may be provided for each student for the duration of the suspension period. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent to pick up this work from the school. The student shall be allowed to complete any class work, including examinations, without penalty, which he or she missed while under suspension. All make up work must be completed within the period of time equal to the number of days suspended (i.e. 5 days out-of-school suspension = 5 days to make up work). This period begins immediately upon returning from suspension.

Suspensions for More Than Ten Days

A suspension of more than 10 days can only be imposed by the Board of Trustees. Prior to suspension or expulsion of this duration, the student and/or his or her parents/guardians, if the student is not 18 years of age, shall be afforded:

1. a clear, written statement of the reason for suspension or expulsion;
2. notice of the right to a prompt public or private hearing, at the student's choice, and the right to be represented by counsel at such hearing; and
3. if a hearing is requested, the student shall be given prompt notice of the time and place of such hearing, said time and place to be reasonably set so as to allow sufficient time for preparation, without undue delay.

If the student's presence endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, however, the notice and hearing described above shall follow the suspension or expulsion as soon as practicable.

At the hearing, the student shall have the right to (a) representation and participation by counsel; and (b) cross-examine witnesses and to present witnesses on his/her behalf.

The hearing shall be recorded (through electronic or stenographic means) and preserved to send to the Commissioner of Education for the State of RI in the event of an appeal.

The student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be furnished with a copy of the proceeding, without cost, along with a copy of the written decision. The student and his/her parents/guardians may appeal the matter to the Commissioner in accordance with Rhode Island law. (*R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-39-2*). In that event, the Board of Trustees shall send a copy of the written decision and the record of the proceeding (transcript and any exhibits introduced) to the Commissioner.

Special Rules for Students with Disabilities

As students with disabilities, RISDeaf students are entitled to particular procedural safeguards in certain disciplinary situations, in addition to those set forth above. The relevant procedural safeguards are provided by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1415, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794.

For suspensions of fewer than ten (10) days cumulative for the entire school year, RISDeaf is not required to treat students with disabilities differently than it treats students without disabilities. (RIDE Regulations Governing the Education of Students with Disabilities) (§300.530(b)(1)).

However, additional procedural safeguards must be provided when a student has been suspended for more than ten (10) days cumulative for the entire school year. (§300.530(b)(2)). A suspension for more than ten (10) days cumulative for the entire school year is considered a change of placement. (§§300.530(d)(4); 300.536). When a change of placement occurs, RISDeaf immediately must notify the student's parent/guardian of that decision and provide them with a copy of the procedural safeguards notice (§300.530(h)). In addition, RISDeaf must perform a manifestation determination.

Manifestation Determination:

1. Within 10 school days of the discussion to change placement, RISDeaf, the student's parent/guardian, and relevant members of the student's IEP Team must determine whether the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability; or if the conduct in question was a direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP. (§300.530(e)).
2. If it is determined that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student's IEP Team must:
 - a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment of the student and implement a behavioral intervention plan (unless an assessment has recently been conducted) (§300.530(f)(1)(i));
 - b. Modify the already existing behavioral intervention plan to address the student's recent behavior. (§300.530(f)(1)(ii)).
3. If it is determined that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, RISDeaf must return the student to the placement from which the student was suspended, unless the student's parent/guardian and RISDeaf agree to a change of placement as part of the behavioral intervention plan. (§300.530(f)(2)).

Regardless of whether the student's conduct is determined to be a manifestation of his/her disability, whenever a change of placement occurs, the student must continue to receive educational services so that the student can continue to progress toward the goals set out in his /her IEP. The student's IEP Team always includes the LEA from the student's residence district and will determine appropriate educational services. (§300.530(d)(5)). However, it should be noted that these educational services might be provided to the student in an alternate setting.

If the student's parent/guardian disagree with any decision regarding their child's placement or the manifestation determination, they may appeal the decision by filing a complaint pursuant to §§

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300.507 and 300.508 (a) and (b). The parent/guardian will be provided written instruction on how to file a complaint.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

RISDeaf does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, citizenship, or status as a veteran (*R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 16-38-1; 16-38-1.1; 42-87-1, et seq.*).

Inquiries concerning incidents of discrimination can be made with the RISDeaf compliance officer:

Personnel Officer
Amy Vincenzi
401-243-1017

RISDeaf has designated this individual to coordinate its compliance activities with these regulations and investigate complaints filed through its internal grievance procedure.

Parents/guardians may ask may also contact:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202
www.ed.gov/answers

Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights
180 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401-222-2661)
<http://www.richr.ri.gov/>

Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Equity and Access
255 Westminster Street
Providence, R.I. 02903
(401-222-8437)
<https://www.ride.ri.gov/>

Generally, within 180 calendar days of the alleged discrimination or harassment, or within 60 days of receiving notice of the RISDeaf's final disposition on a complaint filed through the school's internal grievance procedure, the grievant may also file a complaint with OCR.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Notification of Parental and Family Rights

RISDeaf makes school records available to parents/guardians and to students over 18 years of age (eligible students) according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. FERPA affords the following rights to parents and eligible students:



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1. Process for Reviewing Student Records

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day upon which RISDeaf receives a request for access. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to the Director a written request, which identifies the record(s) that they wish to inspect. The Director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. Process for Amending Student Records

The right to request the amendment of that portion of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask RISDeaf to amend a record, which they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the Director, clearly identifying the part of the record that they want changed, and specifying why it is inaccurate or misleading. If RISDeaf decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, it will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right of a hearing.

3. Release of Student Information

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records is protected, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

- A school official is a person employed by RISDeaf as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; a person or company with whom/which RISDeaf has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.
- A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, RISDeaf discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. Student Directory Information

FERPA defines directory information as information contained in a student's education record that generally would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. As allowed by FERPA, RISDeaf has designated the following information as directory information:

- Name of student
- Address of student
- Telephone number of student
- Electronic mail address
- Photographs and video
- Date and place of birth

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- Student grade and school of attendance
- Dates of attendance
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received

FERPA gives parents the right to have their child's directory information kept private and not released to anyone, which means that it will not provide any information to any person or entity requesting such information, including military recruiters.

RISDeaf is required to provide military recruiters with access to the names, addresses and telephone listings of secondary school students, upon request of such recruiters (20 U.S.C. § 7908). Parents or students themselves, however, may request that RISDeaf not release the information without prior written parental consent.

Parents/ guardians therefore have two options for withholding their child's directory information. They can choose to withhold information from all sources or they can choose to withhold information from the military only, without written consent.

Process for Withholding Student Directory Information

In September/October of every school year RISDeaf will provide you with a Student Directory Information "Do Not Release" form in which you will be asked whether you want to withhold directory information about your child without your prior written consent. If you do not return this form, RISDeaf will provide the information to all sources, including military recruiters, upon request. If you do return this form, you must indicate on it whether you would like RISDeaf to withhold information from all sources or from military recruiters only.

5. Complaint Process:

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>

PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents/guardians certain rights regarding the school's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams (20 U.S.C. § 1232h; 34 C.F.R. Part 98). These rights are as follows:

Parental consent is required before students can be given a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;

- Sexual behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents/guardians; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

The following is a list of specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by the Department of Education.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents/guardians must receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any nonemergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Parents/guardians may inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights apply to a student who is 18 years old or older, or an emancipated minor under state law.

RISDeaf will directly notify parents/guardians of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys and provide them with the opportunity to decide not to have their children participate in such specific activity or survey.

RISDeaf will make this notification to parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year if it has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, RISDeaf will provide parents or guardians with reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys, and the opportunity to decide not to have their children participate. Parents/guardians will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

Complaint Process

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

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Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Highly Qualified Educators

At RI School for the Deaf, we are very proud of our teachers and feel they are ready for the coming school year and are prepared to give your child a high-quality education. As a Title I school, we must meet federal rules related to teacher qualifications as defined in the *Every Student Succeeds Act*. These rules allow you to learn more about your child's teachers' training and credentials. We are happy to provide this information to you. At any time, you may ask:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subject they are teaching,
- Whether the teacher received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived, and
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher holds, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

You may also ask if your child receives help from a paraprofessional. If your child receives this assistance, we can provide you with information about the paraprofessional's qualifications.

Our staff is committed to helping your child develop the academic knowledge and critical thinking needed to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are highly skilled.

If you have any questions about your child's assignment to a teacher or paraprofessional, please contact me at 401-222-3525.

Sincerely,
Sarah McGaughey
Director

RI School for the Deaf

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT & EDUCATION POLICY

A. Purpose

One of the guiding principles of the RI School for the Deaf is to involve families to the fullest extent possible in realizing the goals of the school and of the students. To achieve this, the School will offer a range of activities to:

- (a) welcome families to the school, as well as seek their support and assistance;
- (b) communicate effectively with families, ensuring that that communication is two-way and meaningful;
- (c) Assist families in playing an integral role in student learning and ensure that families (and students whenever possible) have the information they need to participate in assessing, planning, and implementing their children's education program;
- (d) Involve families as partners in shared decision-making and advisory functions; (e) Utilize the school community to connect students and families with resources that provide educational enrichment, support, and promote connections between students, families, and the community-at-large;
- (f) Communicate in languages families understand;
- (g) receive education and support in areas that will facilitate achievement of students;
- (h) Empower families to lead and collaborate confidently on issues of deafness, ASL, spoken language development, and resources for social-emotional support to their children with unique needs resulting from hearing loss.

The School recognizes that the diversity of personal beliefs, political opinion, religious affiliation, and cultural identity is a community strength, and is mindful of how employee's personal attitudes and opinions influence decisions and conduct. Accordingly, the School respects that each family is unique in their educational, cultural, and religious backgrounds and expectations, and rightfully deserves to obtain individualized services and programs compatible with their abilities, goals and cultural framework. Every effort is made to provide information and materials in the families' native languages.

Although parents are diverse in culture, language, and needs, they share the school's commitment to the educational success of their children. Collaboration between school and parent is essential to support student learning. Programs reflect specific needs of the students and families in the communities we serve.

This Family Involvement Policy supports the development, implementation and regular review of a parent involvement program. It obligates the involvement of parents at all grade levels in a variety of roles. Parent involvement programs are comprehensive and consistent with the standards set forth in the No Child Left Behind Act.

The Every Student Succeeds Act is a US law passed in December 2015 that governs the United States K–12 public education policy. The law replaced its predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act, and is based on four principles that provide a framework through which families, educators, and communities can work together to improve teaching and learning. These principles are 1) accountability for results, 2)

local control and flexibility, 3) expanded parental choice, and 4) effective and successful programs that reflect scientifically based research.

Three decades of research provide convincing evidence that parents are an important influence in helping their children achieve high academic standards. When schools collaborate with parents to help their children learn and when parents participate in school activities and decision-making about their children's education, children do better in school and schools improve.¹

B. Parent & Student Education

Numerous studies have documented the importance of educating parents and caregivers of children in all aspects of their child's education. The progress of children and the quality of their families' lives are greatly enhanced when there is ongoing, open communication between the family and school program, and when methodologies are consistent across environments. During the screening and subsequent education planning processes, any barriers that may interfere with the student's access to education will be assessed. Strategies for minimizing these barriers will be identified and may result in parent and student education activities.

The School will provide education and information to families (and students when appropriate) through a variety of methods so that families can get access to it through the channel that best meets their needs.

- During the referral and screening process, families will receive written information about the school, its scope of services, philosophy, and expectations for participation.
- Upon a student's acceptance into the school, a parent orientation meeting will be held with the family. The family's rights will be reviewed, along with School procedures relevant to the education of their child. Parents will be encouraged to discuss their expectations, interests, and ability for involvement in their child's school, and any barriers that may restrict or prevent their full participation. Such a discussion will enable the school to meet the family's needs and collaborate with the family in planning for the child's future.
- Parents will be provided with a handbook/information packet to use as a reference for understanding their rights, participating in their child's education planning, managing their child's health and safety, school expectations, community resources, and helpful information to care for their child.

Family Involvement

RI School for the Deaf views family involvement as one of the foundational principles of the school and encourages families to partner with us in providing children with the highest quality opportunities for healthy development.

Research has concluded that "the evidence is consistent, positive, and convincing; families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life. When schools,

¹



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families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.”²

Consistent with the standards set forth in the No Child Left Behind Act and the National PTA Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, a successful parent involvement program here at the RI School for the Deaf will include, but not be limited to, the following components:

Parent Teacher Collaboration (PTO)

A collaboration of parents and/or guardians, teachers, and administrators of RI School for the Deaf whose desire is to promote a sense of community in the school often plan activities together. They play a role in helping to develop and support enrichment programs and community-building for our children and families.

(CAB) Community Advisory Board: School Improvement or Strategic Planning

Compiled by a group of people who represent the school community and who are interested in making the school a better place for learning and teaching, this group decides what the school should do to improve student performance by gathering and analyzing data that can be used to make decisions that drive changes in the school.

Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

The overall purpose of the Local Advisory Committee is to advise the school on issues regarding students with special needs. This committee seeks technical assistance on specific education issues, disseminates information to the school community about special education concerns and participates in school planning meetings as an advocate for students with special needs.

School Volunteer Program

We benefit from having our families partner with us. Some of the volunteer opportunities include classroom parents, assisting team coaches, cataloging in the school library, and planning special enrichment events, etc. All volunteers must have received a COVID prevention vaccination.

Health & Wellness Committee

(a) The school committee of each school district shall establish a district-wide coordinated school health and wellness subcommittee chaired by a member of the full school committee. The subcommittee will make recommendations regarding the district's health education curriculum and instruction, physical education curriculum and instruction, and nutrition and physical activity policies to decrease obesity and enhance the health and well being of students and employees. Parents serve on this sub-committee,

(b) The school health and wellness subcommittee shall consist of members of the general public, a majority of whom are not employed by the school district, including at least one parent, and are encouraged to include teachers; administrator; students; community and school-based health professionals; business community representatives; and representatives of local and statewide nonprofit health organizations. The subcommittee will be chaired by a member of the school committee.

C. Parent-School Communication

Throughout the course of enrollment at the school, ongoing contact will be maintained with each family about their child's educational progress. Individual family communication needs will determine the frequency of contact. Several strategies may be implemented to provide a variety of opportunities for communication.

- A notebook may be set up for daily or weekly communication. This is particularly common with younger children who may have not yet developed a formal language structure that allows for telling mom and dad what is happening at school. Staff and parents may write to each other about activities, concerns, general information, and progress. Phone calls and email can be used as an alternative or a supplemental means of communication.
- Mid-quarter reports and end of quarter report cards will be sent home quarterly
- Written IEP updates/progress reports will be sent home quarterly.
- Review and general planning meetings will be held whenever requested by parents and/or school staff.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled each November to bring families of children and RISDeaf staff together to communicate about the school. Other evening events are planned to encourage parent-school communication.
- A series of educational workshops in parenting, communication, basic rights in special education, curriculum, and advocacy will be offered several times per year. Meetings will be scheduled at convenient times so as to optimize attendance.
- The school will provide ASL classes to parents/guardians and family members on an ongoing basis.
- Newsletters and other forms of informational materials may be distributed to parents. The newsletter provides information about school-wide activities, general news about the School, resources, and topics of interest.
- Families will be provided with information about parent support networks, educational advocacy, and legal assistance.
- Additional resources will be available through the RI School for the Deaf website at www.rideaf.net and the RI Department of Education website found at www.ride.ri.gov.

Family Nights

Several times each year, RI school for the Deaf hosts social and educational events for parents and families. Information about upcoming events will be distributed in advance. Every effort is made to provide childcare and interpreting services.

Additional Resources

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- ❖ **RIDE.RI.gov** website. Rhode Island Department of Education's comprehensive website about all matters educational in our state.
- ❖ The "**What Works Clearinghouse**" (WWC), a project to help education decision-makers answer such questions as now do we create better schools and how can we make sure that all children can read? A part of the Department's Institute of Education Sciences, The WWC has been established to put solid evidence from high-quality scientific research into the hands of educators, policy-makers and the public so they may make better choices about programs and practices. To receive email updates, subscribe to WWC Update on the Web at www.w-w-c.org. or call 1-866-WWC-9799.
- ❖ **American Society for Deaf Children.** A helpful website for families and professionals who care about making good decisions for deaf and hard of hearing children found at www.deafchildren.org
- ❖ <http://raisingandeducatingdeafchildren.org/deaf-children-are-not-hearing-children-who-can-t-hear>
- ❖ **Clerc Center at Gallaudet University,** The Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University provides information, training, and technical assistance for parents and professionals to meet the needs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Its mission is to improve the quality of education afforded to deaf and hard of hearing students from birth to age 21 throughout the United States. http://www.gallaudet.edu/clerc_center.html

FAMILY SIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES

We believe that parents are a child's primary teachers and thus, we encourage direct parent-to-child communication as much as possible. ASL classes are strongly encouraged for parents as well as for extended family members. Classes are offered at school in the evenings through a partnership with two community organizations, *ASL Academy* and *Perspectives, Inc.* These classes are offered to our parents at no cost for the first six levels of instruction. Parents are strongly encouraged to access registration for these classes through our school website under OUTREACH. Be sure to indicate that your child attends RISDeaf.

Special classes and workshops are also offered throughout the year, specifically for parents of young children, including occasional Shared Reading Saturdays in partnership with the Gallaudet Regional Center, Sign Language for Spanish-speaking families, and Sibling Signs classes.

FEES

No fees are charged for tuition, educational materials, the use of books, etc. Activities such as class trips or after school clubs and activities may require modest monetary support.

BIRTHDAY AND HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

We understand that birthdays are very special to youngsters. In the Elementary grades, however, we do not celebrate individual student's birthdays.

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We regret that we cannot accept treats and food from home due to the food allergies that exist in our student body. Our teachers and staff will make every effort to make the day special for your child without an emphasis on food treats or parties.

RISDeaf is a culturally rich environment. In recognition of the various holidays that are celebrated by our diverse student body, we do our best to acknowledge and educate our students on as many cultural traditions as possible through the general curriculum. Children are introduced to a wide variety of cultural and religious holidays (along with corresponding vocabulary) that are celebrated around the world. Religious holidays are always considered excused absences when provided with parental notice.

★ ***Due to allergies present in our school community, we are a latex-free facility. please do not bring or send latex balloons to school.***

SNACKS AND LUNCHES

RISDeaf offers a daily breakfast program and a hot lunch program for the children. If you do not choose to participate, children may bring a bagged lunch from home. Healthy, nutritious lunches and snacks are encouraged.

★ ***RISDeaf is a nut-free school. Please do not pack sandwiches or snacks that contain nuts.***

INTERPRETER SERVICES

The school ASL Interpreter provides services to meet a variety of needs on campus. Interpreting is available for parent tours and observations, visitor tours and observations, IEP meetings, parent/teacher meetings, support groups and workshops, and special events in the classroom. Spanish or other language interpreters are always provided for meetings and school events at no charge to the family. Please inform our school secretary as soon as possible when an interpreter will be needed. If your family would like to request an interpreter for an event outside of school, please contact the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RICDHH) at cdhh.ri.gov.

RECESS

RISDeaf adheres to RI General Law § 16-22-4.2. Free-play recess. *All children attending public schools, or any other schools managed or controlled by the state, that have elementary grades kindergarten through six (6) shall receive in those schools at least twenty (20) consecutive minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess each day.*

Please send appropriate clothing to school with outdoor play in mind (gloves, snow pants, raincoats, boots, etc.)

Library & Information Literacy

Our Beliefs

- We believe that reading with children is important.

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- Our students need to share books with parents and caregivers at home if we want them to become readers and learn to value reading as adults. Often, that is through a library book or several books coming home every week.
- We need to trust our students, and their parents/caregivers, and presume they can bring a book from the Library at school to home, and back again. It builds a sense of trust, both in the student, and the parent. We need to presume competence, not incompetence.
- Books are to be read and used, and not sit on shelves. We want to use our books, often. We want them to be read, shared, paged through, and loved. This helps us create a community of people who love books. We want to hook our students into the enjoyment of reading and books as soon as possible.
- We need to “walk the walk” if we are going to “talk the talk.” Readers talk about what they read, they share their reading, they often carry a book around with them, they tell others about what they are reading and they share recommendations about books. Let’s make this happen in our community!

Taking RISD Library Books Home Guidelines

1. One book a week will go home with students. They may have signed out 2 or 3 or more, but they will choose ONE at a time to go home.
2. Students will sign a 'contract' that they will care for and respect their Library books. It will be between the student’s homeroom teacher and the student.

Family Lending Library

We have established a Family Lending Library. This offers our families resources to borrow on a variety of parenting topics, as well as topics specific to raising deaf/ hard of hearing children, story videos, ASL DVDs, etc. as well as story books to read with your children. Please feel free to let us know what you are looking for, and we can send it home immediately for you to borrow.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a Team Effort!

Below, each team member’s role is defined. Our students do best when we all collaborate.

Teacher Responsibilities:

- Giving assignments during class and making sure they are explained clearly.
- Estimating the length of the assignment so that the task does not exceed the recommended time allotted for homework.
- Assigning homework on a regular basis and relating it to what is being taught
- the classroom.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Setting aside a regular time each school day for homework.
- Providing a favorable study environment that is free from distractions.
- Encourage your child to give their best effort on their homework.

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Student Responsibilities:

- Writing directions for homework and asking questions for clarification.
- Complete homework assignments to the best of their abilities.
- Asking the teacher about making up missed work. (Grade 2 and above students)

Purpose and Rationale:

The purpose of homework assignments is to advance the academic achievement of RISD students. RISD believes that homework can support student achievement and that students who do homework tend to be motivated learners who perform to their potential in school. Homework is also a communication tool to help inform parents about their child's learning.

Homework...

- ☐ should be consistently given at a reasonable amount related to child development,
- ☐ should be primarily for reinforcement of what was learned in class,
- ☐ should be able to be completed fairly independently, and
- ☐ should be followed up with timely feedback from the teacher.

Additional Information:

1. Academic areas are English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics.
2. For younger students (ages 7-11), for whom homework is appropriate, it may be given three to four nights per week. These assignments may be in addition to an ongoing or long-term project or assignment
3. Teachers may request feedback from parents regarding homework assignments. (See attached sample.)
4. The benefits of well-designed, quality homework outweigh simply having a lot of homework. More does not necessarily mean better or imply more rigorous expectations. Homework will be assigned per the following guidelines:

Assignments should be completed in a reasonable amount of time. Based on research findings, the National Education Association (NEA) recommends a maximum of 10 minutes per grade level per night. RISD will implement the following time guidelines:

Ages

5-7 years old
7-9 years old

Maximum Amount of Time

-teacher discretion, if given, 15-minute maximum
-up to 30 minutes

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9-11 years old	-up to 45 minutes
11-13 years old	-up to one hour
High school	-75-150 minutes

Assignments should reinforce skills, content, and concepts taught in the classroom and promote work habits (independence, responsibility, time management, and study skills).

5. One of the primary goals of homework is to help students learn accountability. Accountability is having the student finish the work. Implementation and monitoring of homework will include the following guidelines:

Students who do not complete homework assignments in a timely or satisfactory manner will be allowed to work on homework during other designated times of the school day.

- “Do-Now” work time
- specially designed supports for individual students, as needed
- Recess is never withheld for incomplete assignments

Parents are strongly encouraged to review their child’s completed homework and then sign it. There is no requirement for parents to help their child fix any mistakes in their homework. Teachers will use this information for assessment and re-teaching purposes.

While homework has the potential for increasing our home and school connection, RISD also firmly believes that children need play time, family time, and sleep.

On the following page, you will see our *Homework Feedback Form* that families can use to communicate about homework.

Homework Feedback Form

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Student's Name: _____

Date: _____

Homework Assignment(s): _____

Homework was completed.

Time needed to complete homework: _____

Homework was not completed.

Reason:

- ☐ My child did not have the necessary material(s): _____
- ☐ My child could not focus.
- ☐ My child did not understand the work.
- ☐ My child was too tired.
- ☐ Other: _____

Please contact me regarding my child's homework.

My phone number is _____

The best time to contact me is _____

Other comments:

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

SCHOOL BUS REGULATIONS

Bus transportation is available to RISD students. The Student Code of Conduct is in effect while on the bus or waiting for the bus.

The school expects the following behaviors of those students that ride on the bus:

- Respect and obey the bus driver.
- Be on time for pick up.
- Help keep the bus clean.
- Use appropriate language and safe behaviors:
 - Remain seated in assigned seat until the bus comes to a complete stop
 - Respect the bus environment while on the bus.
 - Keep hands, head, etc. inside the bus windows.
 - Watch for traffic while entering and leaving the bus.

- When crossing in front of the bus, be sure to be five steps in front of the bus, never cross in back of the bus.
- No eating or drinking on buses.

CUSTODY, COURT ORDERS AND CHANGES OF FAMILY STATUS

RISD encourages parents to be actively involved in their child's care and education. In providing care for a child, continuing and meaningful contact with both parents is ideal when possible. Therefore, the school will not prohibit parents from accessing records, attending activities or participating in conferences pertaining to their child unless otherwise required by court order or law.

The school denies a parent access to their child only if there is a legal document, which addresses that denial clearly. In these circumstances, we require (1) a certified copy of the current court order which states the rights or restraints ordered, (2) a letter from the custodial parent stating that the non-custodial parent is not allowed to pick up the child and (3) a photo of the non-custodial parent to help us with identification. We cannot accept information regarding the validity of orders over the phone; only legal written instruction will be accepted.

Visitation schedules and parenting plans are agreements made between parents and are not binding to the school. The school will release a child to either parent in accordance with school policy unless otherwise directed by a valid court order. Visitation with the non-custodial parent will not be permitted to take place at school. The school discourages parents from involving school staff in disputes over custody, visitation schedules, child support and other related issues. Staff members must stay focused on providing children the highest level of care. To do so, they must maintain good relationships with parents and should not be asked to support one parent over another. Staff will not testify or otherwise participate in a custody dispute in their capacities as school employees unless served with a subpoena. Often, child records can provide the same information as the testimony of a staff member, and parents have access to child records by law. Parents are encouraged to use records rather than staff testimony in resolving these types of disputes

FAMILY CODE OF CONDUCT

RISD expects parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy and respect. Our goal is to create an environment where all children can flourish, physically, cognitively, linguistically and socially. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees at RISD, but is also the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters our school grounds and buildings. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment.

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Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct may be escorted off of the school property.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY: RISD takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the agency. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but to all children, families and employees associated with RISD. RISD staff are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our school have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

VISITORS

Visiting the School

Parents and school related visitors are always welcome at RISDeaf. We welcome parents and family members to participate in the life of our school and to share their talents with our students.

RI regulations require that all visitors have a current BCI, a background check. This includes parents, as well. We apologize if this feels inconvenient, but we are first and foremost concerned about safety. These background checks can be obtained at the location described below:

Bureau of Criminal Identification ("BCI")

All in-person state and/or national background checks performed by the Attorney General's Office will ONLY be available at the address below:

**Attorney General Julius C. Michaelson Customer Service Center
4 Howard Avenue (corner of Pontiac Ave. and Howard Ave.)
Cranston, RI 02920
401-274-4400**

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Thank you for helping us maintain school safety!

Anyone visiting RISDeaf is required to report in at the front desk. Upon arrival, parents and visitors will be asked to remain in the waiting area. Arrangements will then be made by the school administrative assistant to bring parents or visitors to the classrooms. All visitors will be issued a visitor's pass while in the building.

If you would like to observe a class for an extended period of time, we would ask that you make the necessary arrangements ahead of time with the classroom teacher so that ASL interpreters are on hand to facilitate the visit.

Other Visitors

If a student would like to have a friend or relative visit classes; he/she must receive permission at least 48 hours in advance of the visit. Friends may visit for a maximum of one day. Past graduates also need to call the director's administrative assistant to choose an agreeable time to visit school. All visitors must report to the main office and sign in before entering the academic buildings. A visitor's badge must be worn at all times. Visitors must be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Visiting Other Students' Homes

RISDeaf understands that our students often live far from each other and may enjoy time together after school visiting each other's homes. If a student wishes to travel to a friend's home immediately after school hours, RISDeaf must have proper permission from both families involved, specifically a written invitation from the host's parents and written permission from the visitor's parents. These permission documents must be signed and dated by the parents and delivered to the Office. We regret that a telephone conversation is not sufficient.

Some transportation companies do not permit guest riders or may charge a fee for the privilege. Therefore, hosting parents should contact the transportation companies prior to each visitation. Anyone other than a parent who plans to take students off-campus during school hours for anything other than official school business must have written permission from the parents and show appropriate identification. Emergency Contact Forms were included in the summer mailing to parents/guardians.

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Appendix A

Permission and Acknowledgment of Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The Student:

I have read the Rhode Island School for the Deaf "Internet Acceptable Use Policy" and I understand and agree to abide by the terms of this request for network access, and the Rhode Island School for the Deaf rules for acceptable use of network resources. I understand that I am solely responsible for all charges and fees, including outside telephone, printing, and merchandise purchases made through the network. The Rhode Island School for the Deaf is not a party to such transactions and shall not be liable for any costs or damages, whether direct or indirect, arising out of network transactions by the user.

In addition, I acknowledge that the Rhode Island School for the Deaf computer network belongs solely to the Rhode Island School for the Deaf and that any files, records, electronic mail or other communication may be examined, edited, or deleted by the Rhode Island School for the Deaf at any time, in accordance with the School's policy or regulations. In general, electronic mail in personal accounts will not be inspected without the consent of the sender or recipient, except as necessary to investigate a complaint.

I further understand that should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, and school disciplinary and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. In consideration for using the Rhode Island School for the Deaf network connection and having access to public networks, I hereby release the Rhode Island School for the Deaf and its Board of Trustees, employees, and agents from any claims and damages arising from my use, or inability to use, the network.

I understand that the use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. I further understand that any violations of the above guidelines will result in immediate suspension of my Internet privileges, and that as a result of such violations further disciplinary measures may be taken.

Print Student's Name

Student's Signature

Date Signed

The Parent:

I am the parent/guardian of the above named student. I have read the Rhode Island School for the Deaf "Internet Acceptable Use Policy" and I understand and agree to all of the provisions, rules, and regulations delineated within. I hereby give permission for my child to use the Internet service provided by the Rhode Island School for the Deaf. I do understand that my child is required to follow this policy. I further understand that there is a potential for my son/daughter to access information on the Internet that is inappropriate for students and that every reasonable effort will be made on the part of the faculty and staff of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf to restrict access to such information, but that my son/daughter is ultimately responsible for restricting himself/herself from inappropriate information.

Print Parent's Name

Parent's Signature

Date Signed

Application for Student Parking Privileges

Student Name: _____

Vehicle Make: _____

Model: _____

License Plate Number: _____

Primary Emergency Contact:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Relationship to student: _____

Secondary Emergency Contact:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Relationship to student: _____

Please return this form to the front office with a copy of your driver's license and registration (copies can be made in the office).

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**Student & Family Handbook
Acknowledgement of Receipt**

Please complete and return the copy of this form that is with the handbook.

I have received and read the Student & Family Handbook.

My child is _____

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Permission and Acknowledgment of Internet Acceptable Use Policy

I am the parent/guardian of the above named student. I have read the Rhode Island School for the Deaf "Internet Acceptable Use Policy" and I understand and agree to all of the provisions, rules, and regulations delineated within. I hereby give permission for my child to use the Internet service provided by the Rhode Island School for the Deaf. I do understand that my child is required to follow this policy. I further understand that there is a potential for my son/daughter to access information on the Internet that is inappropriate for students and that every reasonable effort will be made on the part of the faculty and staff of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf to restrict access to such information, but that my son/daughter is ultimately responsible for restricting himself/herself from inappropriate information.

Print Parent/Guardian's Name

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date Signed