

# Elementary Family Handbook 2024-2025



### **General School Information**

Rhode Island School for the Deaf One Corliss Park Providence, RI 02908 401-222-3525 (voice) 401-256-5538 (video phone)

Email: <u>info@rideaf.net</u> Website: <u>rideaf.ri.gov</u>

Director: Sarah McGaughey

#### SCHOOL MASCOT/SCHOOL COLORS

The Rhode Island School for the Deaf sports mascot is the Rhode Island Red Rooster and the school colors are red, white and blue.



#### **Elementary Family Handbook**

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#### OVERVIEW

Welcome to a new school year!

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:

- General 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.

#### **Elementary Department Hopes and Dreams:**

The Rhode Island School for the Deaf's Elementary Department promotes academic excellence to grow students' language and literacy skills across domains (including Math, Science, and Social Studies) in an environment that supports their social and emotional development, develops strong and positive self-identity, and fosters a love of learning.

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

Videophone: (401) 216-8425

#### General email address: info@rideaf.net Website: rideaf.ri.gov

\* 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		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	401-243-1035 (v)	bcesana@rideaf.net
		401-450-2287 (Text/Face	etime)
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.

WEB: RI Broadcaster's Association site

http://www.ribroadcasters.com/News and Events/Closings Delays or https://turnto10.com/weather/closings

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 2024-2025 school year, the first two days of cancellation due to inclement weather will be made-up in June. Any cancelled days after that will be distance learning days and will not be made-up at the end of the school year.

## DAILY 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 1<sup>st</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> Grade curricula is directly aligned with the Common Core 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
- Fingerspelling Curriculum

English Language Arts skills are integrated throughout the academic day. Social Studies and Science often provide the driving themes for instruction. During Math time, we focus on learning the basic operations  $(+, -, x, \div)$ , as well as on problem solving and making "real-life" applications. Subject area vocabulary is also an area of focus throughout the curriculum. Throughout the week, students will participate in various "special" classes: physical education/health, the arts, library, and CSC (Comprehensive School Counseling). Students are engaged in cooperative learning activities and have opportunities for related field trips in order to bring the textbooks and classroom activities to life.

Field trips may be arranged throughout the school year to support classroom instruction and expand educational experiences for students. While students are on a field trip, they are expected to follow all school rules. Special programs are scheduled throughout the school year. At times our students, counselors and/or teachers will put on a program such as a play, character building events, or awards assembly. Sometimes we invite outside people such as guest speakers, students from another school, or entertainers, etc. Assemblies are interesting, entertaining, and usually offer a nice break from the regular schedule. In addition, students will receive any support services mandated by their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

#### STUDENT DRESS CODE

There are several "special" dress-up or theme days throughout the elementary school year. You will receive information regarding these events, such as favorite team day, hat day, crazy socks day, or pajama day, etc. These days are always voluntary and should not imply pressure to participate.

Young children's clothing can often be colorful and cute. As children grow, it can sometimes become challenging to find age-appropriate school clothing. We understand this challenge; however, we believe that children should dress appropriately and safely for school work and play.

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

- ★ Clothing of an overly revealing or distracting fashion is not acceptable. Our rule of thumb is NO "B's": no breast area, belly or "bottoms" should be visible.
- ★ 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
- ★ 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 fingertips when the arm is at rest at his/her side and shorts may only be worn during the first and fourth quarters of school only.
- ★ Exposed beach wear, cut off shirts, undershirts, undergarments, and muscle shirts are not permitted.
- ★ Students will need to wear appropriate shoes for Physical Education class (sneakers 2x/week) and for daily outdoor/gym recreation times (sneakers/rubber soled shoes). For safety reasons, no backless sandals or flip flops without a back-strap are permitted
- ★ Jewelry is acceptable, but please do not allow your child to wear expensive or fragile jewelry to school or long cords /chains that could be a dangerous choking threat on the playground.
- No messages on clothing or on backpacks and labels are permitted that encourage discrimination or depict hate speech, or target groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. No messages about alcohol or tobacco consumption are acceptable.

#### **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)**

During the course of each school year, we will look closely at your child's progress through an annual IEP Meeting for each of our students. An IEP Review can also be held at any time throughout the year. Your local school district representative and outside agency representatives may also be attending, 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 insure 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.

#### **Progress Reporting Periods**

Report cards are issued four times a year. The student's progress toward IEP goals is reported separately and sent home four times during the school year, typically one- two weeks after report cards are send home.

#### Marking Periods 2024-2025

*First quarter:* August 29-November 5 *Second quarter:* November 6-January 23 *Third quarter:* January 24-April 3 *Fourth quarter:* April 4-June 16

#### PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

In addition to the IEP meeting, individual conferences or classroom visits can also be scheduled at parent's requests. The Elementary Department will host two evening events for our families – one in the Fall (Elementary Meet the Teachers Night, September 25, 2024) and one in the Spring (Arts & Culture Night, May 22, 2025).

#### 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.

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.

# realized by the second second 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.

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#### **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.
- 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 creates 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.

#### 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:

<u>Ages</u>	Maximum Amount of Time
5-7 years old	-teacher discretion, if given, 15-minute maximum
7-9 years old	-up to 30 minutes
9-11 years old	-up to 45 minutes
11-13 years old	-up to one hour

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

Student's Name:		Date:
Homewo	ork 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 co	mments:	

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

#### 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. Within the Elementary Department, 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. <u>How</u> 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®

- 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.

#### <u>CONDUCT</u>

Code of Conduct Level 1

- 1. Respect people and yourself.
- 2. Respect property.
- 3. Demonstrate responsibility.
- 4. Demonstrate safety.

Example Behaviors that violate Classroom/Team Rules (not an exhaustive list):

- Classroom disruption
- Disrespectful language/gestures
- Unreasonable noise/activity
- Leaving the classroom without permission/pass
- Unsafe use of school property

Related Consequences (Code of Conduct Level I):

■ Warning (use of a prompt to help the student self-correct their behavior)

- Space and Time (use of a chair/space within the classroom where a student goes to calm themselves and regain self-control; sometimes called a "chill chair.")
- Reparation: "You Break It; You Fix It" (providing a means for students to fix something they broke, damaged, ripped, etc. For example, If a student was upset/overwhelmed by a math paper and ripped it, they could fix it by taping it back together.)
- Reparation: "Apology of Action" (guiding the student to do something nice for someone they
  may have insulted or hurt their feelings in some way: playing a game with them, helping them
  carry their lunch tray, etc.)
- Loss of Privilege (used when a student misuses/abuses a privilege For example, misuse of the classroom's pencil sharpener may result in not being allowed to use it independently for a designated time.)

#### Code of Conduct Level 2

**Related Consequences** 

- ➡ Time out (designated classroom area) K-5<sup>th</sup>
- Buddy Teacher
- ➡ Meeting with Principal/designee

*If behavior consistently re-occurs, the student, and the teacher should have a problem-solving conference at a calm and neutral time.* 

#### Example Behaviors that violate Elementary Rules (not an exhaustive list):

Refusal to go to time-out area within the classroom

Talking back when given a warning/time-out

\*A home contact should be made when a continued refusal occurs. We want to insure home – school communication. Our work together to support our students' learning of needed social-emotional skills is so important.

Additional non-compliance may result in

- 1. A request for a Student Behavioral Contract and follow-up planning meeting with a parent/guardian, if needed.
- 2. A referral for a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) Referral Related Consequences

#### Finish your work.

- □ "You Break It; You Fix It" or Repair a relationship
- □ Loss of Privilege: Make-up the work @ designated time

If this behavior consistently re-occurs, "Loss of Privilege" or problem solving meeting with the student and family may occur.

#### Example Behaviors that violate this Elementary Rule (not and exhaustive list):

- Incomplete home work/school work
- Missed class due to behavior related consequence



#### School Rules (Code of Conduct Level III)

Take care of school property. Be respectful of other people's property. Demonstrate safe behaviors, even when upset/mad/ frustrated.

#### Example Behaviors that violate School Rules (not and exhaustive list):

- Out of control behaviors that are potentially harmful to self/others
- Bullying/threats to others
- Sexual harassment/inappropriate behavior
- Obscene language/gestures
- Leaving building/school grounds without permission
- Throwing harmful object at someone with intent to harm
- Damage/destruction of school property
- Physical fighting/hitting others
- Pulling fire alarms
- Stealing
- Hitting staff

At this level, the principal will determine the course of response based on student need.

#### **RISD Code of Conduct: Level III**

The following are examples of serious behaviors that would require a team meeting (not an exhaustive list):

- Drugs (possession, distribution, use)
- Weapons (possession, distribution, use)
- Serious Bodily Injury (substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, disfigurement, loss/impairment of body part/organ or mental faculty)
- Any behavior determined by the school which causes unmanageable risk, danger, or harm to the school, its personnel, or its students and families



#### CAFETERIA RULES AND PROCEDURES

★ RISD is a peanut-free school. ★

- Sit at a table while eating.
- Raise your hand if you need staff help.
- Walk, don't run.
- Respect others
- Hands to self
- Quiet voice/ quiet signing



#### PROCEDURES

- Enter cafeteria calmly.
- Use hand sanitizer.
- Walk through the cafeteria line to get your food.
- Eat and chat politely.
- Clean your area.



#### STUDENTS WHO BRING A LUNCH FROM HOME:

- Soda or glass bottles are not permitted.
- Candy and gum are not permitted.
- We do not share food at RISD due to allergies.

#### 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.

Additional Bus Information for Families: No eating or drinking on buses.



#### <u>COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY</u> 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 <u>and</u> <u>acknowledge they have read and understand the "Internet Acceptable Use Policy".</u> 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

#### **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.



#### **SCHOOL HEALTH GUIDELINES**



🜟 RISD is a peanut-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. Her phone number is (401) 243-1010, and she can be reached by email at pbailey@rideaf.net.

Please contact the school nurse any time you have student health-related concerns.

The nurse **must be** contacted in the event of any of the following situations:

- \* A new medical diagnosis or change in your child's health status
- \* A newly prescribed medication
- \* A change in current medication
- \* A serious illness, injury or hospitalization
- \* A contagious disease such as chicken pox, flu, strep throat, whooping cough, head lice, ringworm, scabies, impetigo, conjunctivitis or MRSA infection
- \* 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, 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 degrees your child should not return to school until fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications, and until he/she is feeling well and able to participate in the classroom
- \* Vomiting and or diarrhea in the last 24 hours.

#### **Annual Health Emergency Packet**

A Health Emergency packet is to be completed by parents yearly and returned by the date provided to ensure that your child's safety, health and wellbeing, are met and that sufficient time is provided to properly review the forms and for administrative handling of the forms. Forms, consents and medical documents that arrive past the due date may prevent your child from attending activities such as field trips, 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 and updated immunizations list on file at the school.

All medical immunization exemptions require a certificate from your child's physician. Religious immunization exemptions require a statement by the parent or legal guardian that gives the reason for the exemption and a note from the physician stating that the individual is in good health and able to attend school.

#### **MEDICATION POLICIES**

#### **Prescription Drugs & Medications**



Unless otherwise determined by the school nurse, the student's physician, and the student's parent, only the school nurse may accept and administer medication of any kind to a student. Medication must be in the original container or prescription bottle with the appropriate label. The nurse will administer the medication in the Health Office.

Students may not carry or self-administer any medications other than inhalers and Epi-pens if they have been trained and determined to be capable of self-administration. A physician must provide permission and annual documentation for all self-administered medications.

- \* We encourage parents to administer medication before or after school hours, when possible.
- \* All prescription and over the counter medications require a written physician's order and a completed parental consent form. Medications will not be administered without this documentation. Physician's orders may be given to the nurse or faxed directly from the doctor's office. The nurse has a confidential fax number.
  - Medications must be in a correctly labeled pharmacy container that is delivered to the nurse by a parent/guardian or responsible adult, such as the bus driver.
  - Students are not permitted to carry medication to school or in school.
- \* All medication orders expire at the end of the school year. New medication orders, parental consent forms, and correctly labeled pharmacy containers are required at the beginning of the school year and whenever a medication order changes.

\* On a field trip, a trained teacher may administer prescribed medication, with the parent/guardian's written permission. There may be times when medical care and/or monitoring require that it is necessary for a nurse or parent/guardian to accompany the field trip.

#### **Guidelines for Management of Life Threatening Allergies in School**

Parents should notify the Nurse's Office and the classroom teacher of any life-threatening allergy pertaining to your child. 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. An Epi-pen will be kept at school for each student for whom it is prescribed. Staff, who work directly with the student, are trained annually by the school nurse in how to correctly administer emergency medication through the Epi-pen.

#### **Emergency procedures**

All accidents, injuries, or illnesses must be 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. 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, and postural (scoliosis) screenings are provided annually to students.

#### **Flu Shots**



When available through public health resources, annual flu shots are offered to students and families of RI School for the Deaf, on-site. Students who are 18 years and older, do not need parental authorization to get a flu shot. All other students must have <del>a</del> signed consent from a parent or guardian.

#### 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.

#### 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 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 and following up with a note in the case of an unexcused absence.

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.

<u>Note</u>: 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 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 special education director.

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 the determination of appropriate action.

#### **Unlawful Absence**

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

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 work, which is 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**

<u>Students must be on time for school.</u> 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.

# <u>Note</u>: When a student arrives to school after 10:00 am or 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
- 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.

#### 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.

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 sirector'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.

# HERE'S TO A GREAT SCHOOL YEAR!

# WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU OFTEN & WORKING WITH EACH OF OUR STUDENTS & FAMILIES.

#### **Elementary 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 Elementary Handbook. My child is \_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Date

Parent/Guardian signature

# 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