

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

FACULTY AND STAFF

DAILY PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

2024-2025



School Improvement goals for the 2024-2025 school year:

- The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on ELA state assessments will increase to 4% or more by the end of the 2024-25 school year.
- The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on mathematics state assessments will increase to 4% or more by the end of the 2024-25 school year.
- The RI School for the Deaf will improve its ratings in two categories on Survey Works. The Cultural Awareness and Action (student and staff focus) will increase from a "favorable response" average of 50%.

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I. Mission Statement

The Rhode Island School for the Deaf (RISD) is a critical, strategic and responsive educational center with a commitment to accessible instruction and educational excellence for children who are Deaf or Hard of hearing, an important low incidence population.

The Rhode Island School for the Deaf's mission is:

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

II. Introduction

We are a state-funded educational community, committed to building this state's capacity to best serve students with different hearing levels. Our primary focus must always be the successful preparation of students for post-secondary life. We believe that excellent education is the result of strong, intentional, sustained, and positive interactions between staff and students wherever they may learn and grow.

RISD's recognized strength has always been its uniquely qualified and dedicated staff members who are able to work effectively with all of our students. This hallmark is especially significant, because education today is difficult and complex work that requires extensive knowledge of subject matter as well as the ability to reach diverse learners, many of whom have special needs, limited language proficiency, and a wide range of family and community challenges.

Our shared goal is to create an educational environment where the staff, families, and the community can work together to guide students to their highest degree of positive self-worth, independence, and respect -- a place where students can *Imagine, Believe and Achieve* as they journey toward their future and meaningful contributions to society.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with the RISD and the state of Rhode Island's employment expectations. Guidelines and job-related information are provided to assist you in the performance of your assigned duties. This handbook should increase your understanding, eliminate the need for personal decisions on issues of procedures and operational matters, and it should also help to assure uniformity and fairness throughout the school.

It does not override existing agency policies and procedures, state and federal laws, or negotiated contracts. Nothing in this handbook should be construed as a written or implied contract for employment. RISD has the authority to change or revise these guidelines and procedures at any time to improve operations and/or student outcomes. If you need further information or clarification, you should contact the Personnel Office.

III. FOR ALL STAFF:

1.BASIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

Rhode Island School for the Deaf was founded in 1876 (148 years ago) and later established as a State of Rhode Island facility funded by the RI legislature. The school serves students ages 3-22 years. Governed by an appointed Board of Trustees and under the oversight of the RI Department of Education, it is a Rhode Island public school that has also served Massachusetts and Connecticut students for many years.

Address:

Rhode Island School for the Deaf
One Corliss Park
Providence, RI 02908
401-222-3525 (V)
401-216-8425 (VP)
www.rideaf.ri.gov

HOURS OF OPERATION:

The core hours of school operation are 7:30 AM to 4 PM.

Doors are locked at all times and rely on a buzz-in system for entry. Staff members must remember to carry key scan cards for entrance at all times. A State ID will be issued to each full-time employee, and a key scan card will be issued to those contracted to work this building.

Students attend school from 8:05 AM to 2:55 PM daily, Monday through Friday. No students should enter the classroom before 7:55 AM. Students arriving earlier should wait in the cafeteria and be dismissed at 7:55 AM. All classroom teachers and student support staff are scheduled and ready to work from 7:55 AM to 3:05 PM daily. Classroom assistants work from 7:30-3:30 PM and occasionally remain until the last student is dismissed. All personnel are expected to remain in the building until their official workday is completed.

Classroom assistants and one-to-one support staff are expected to be in the cafeteria daily by 7:45 AM. Students may enter the cafeteria any time after 7:45 AM. Staff hired as one-to-one supports should go to the bus to help their student off the bus and walk them safely to the cafeteria. All of the students shall remain in the cafeteria until 7:55 AM at which time middle and high school students will be dismissed and classroom assistants will lead the elementary students to their classrooms.

Other staff members work various schedules as assigned, hours particular to specific positions. Employees must have the written authority of the administration when working outside their core hours of operation. Applicable contract negotiations will apply.

2. COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Language access is crucial for students' cognitive, academic, social and emotional growth. Incidental learning significantly contributes to the education and language development of all children. The goal is to create an environment where communication access for the Deaf is the guiding principle.

All RISD staff are expected to use ASL to the best of their ability while on the RISD property. Spoken English or simultaneous communication should not be used. In public spaces, everyone should sign to the best of their ability. Interpreters should be requested when spoken English is used in a public space with non-signers (e.g., school tours, LEA visits). ASL should be the primary language modeled for visitors to reflect the language of the school. Interpreters are used to accommodate visitors as needed.

Public spaces include, but are not limited to, the main front office, hallways, all classrooms, shared common areas/pods, hallways, audiology, mail room, the playgrounds, the track, and lounges.

RISD's enrollment includes a number of students who have auditory access to spoken English through the use of cochlear implants and digital hearing aids. For these students, specially designed instruction using spoken and written English may be provided on a case-by-case basis as noted on the student's IEP. This will be determined by the school's Language Planning Team. At no time will a student of RISD be deprived of access to information, regardless of their primary language.

Staff are expected to continuously improve their skills in ASL. RISD will offer ASL proficiency assessments at no cost to the staff member, allowing them to confidentially evaluate their skill level and work towards greater fluency. Teachers of the Deaf and classroom assistants are expected to achieve a score of 4 on the ASLPI or Advanced on the SLPI.

Please support one another in creating a Deaf-friendly, language-rich environment where everyone feels included and valued. Even if you are a new signer, please use ASL to the best of your ability.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

As professionals at this school, it is expected that all members of the staff will maintain CONFIDENTIALITY when dealing with colleagues, students, and parents.

No person may make a surreptitious recording of any conversation or meeting at the school or in school-related activities for any purpose.

Confidentiality of student information is paramount and shall be maintained at all times. School staff members serve as role models for students to emulate, and this carries with it a responsibility to maintain boundaries regarding conversations that occur in the open areas.

Because we are dedicated to being an accessible communication school, staff must take care that they are aware of their surroundings at all times. Signed conversations are very public by nature; therefore, all conversations that should be confidential shall be relocated to private areas.

It is expected that all staff make themselves familiar with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (of 1974 FERPA)*. All emails and documents that refer to students information is to be treated as confidential documents and only shared with those who have a right to know. All sensitive information including verbal and written records that are gained by any employee during the course of duties must be kept strictly confidential. The privacy rights of students are codified under Federal Law 20 USC section 1232g under FERPA.

For more information, log onto

www.access.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpc/ferpa/index.html

Student information is protected and shall not be left available on desks, in copier trays, or in common areas. Files must be maintained in a private and locked area. Student information that is printed or written and no longer useful shall be shredded immediately. A large paper shredder bin is provided in the mail room in the Main Office.

4. STAFF ATTENDANCE

Currently, all staff members are required to log in every day upon arrival and at any departure through the FRONTLINE online platform. The FRONTLINE system documents arrivals, departures and approved leave discharged by staff. It also ensures accurate awareness of who is in the building in the event of an emergency. There are two FRONTLINE scan stations: one in the Main Office and one in the Elementary Lobby.

All staff are required to clock out when leaving the campus for lunch breaks, appointments or for the day.

Staff that clock in seven (7) or more minutes after the work day begins (currently 7:55am) or before the work day ends (currently 3:05 pm) will be charged personal, vacation, or leave without pay (LWOP) minutes equal to the amount of time missed.

5. SICKNESS AND/OR PERSONAL EMERGENCIES

All staff who will not be coming in to work must email staffabsent@rideaf.net by 6:55 AM or at least 1 hour prior to the start of your shift. If calling out please identify if you will be late, or the reason for your absence (illness, FMLA or other reason, and if known, if your absence will be longer than one day). This is especially important for teaching staff so that arrangements can be made for a substitute.

A complete message must be left, so that appropriate dissemination of information can occur upon arrival of staff. Intentional substitute lesson plans are required and must be emailed in to StaffAbsent on that same morning. Sub plans should not be “busy” work plans.

If teachers know that they will be away for a conference, professional development activity, or personal reason, it is requested that you talk to your students beforehand to inform them and to discuss your expectations when you are absent from the classroom.

Teachers should not assume that students can “roll with the punches” in a new situation without preparation. Often children, (even older students) are disappointed, anxious or confused if their teacher is absent. Many do not like the change in familiar routines.

Reassure younger children that you expect to return the next day and encourage them to help the substitute teacher. With older students, make your expectations of cooperation clear and prepare them that you are leaving relevant work for them to do that is also important to you.

Always collect the work that you assign while away to emphasize that it was not “busy” work.

6. DISCHARGING SICK TIME

Sick time is accrued by each staff member so that when the employee is ill or has a medical appointment that is unable to be scheduled before or after school hours, the employee may properly seek care and recuperate.

It is expected that all regularly scheduled and/or predictable appointments (i.e., dental cleaning and cavities, annual physicals, hearing tests, license renewals, allergy shots, mammograms, routine colonoscopies, etc.) shall be scheduled during non-work hours and during regularly scheduled school breaks. For full sick day absences, requested in advance, a medical note must accompany the request and should be uploaded into Frontline when the request is made.

7. STAFF DRESS CODE

All staff members must dress in attire that is appropriate for the position they hold in our school setting. Clothing should be clean and neat. Staff must refrain from wearing items of clothing that are worn/torn, soiled, display explicit or graphic messages, expose private parts of the body or undergarments, or are intended for exercise or beachwear. Clothing in an overly revealing or distracting fashion is not acceptable.

Caps, hats, visors, bandanas, hoods and other forms of outdoor headgear may not be worn except on certain approved spirit days. Scarves and/or headgear worn for religious or medical purposes are accepted and shall be respected. Facial jewelry, tongue jewelry, and/or bold flashy jewelry that distracts or interferes with the clarity of communication with deaf and hard of hearing children is inappropriate for use during work hours.

It is recommended that staff with direct teaching responsibilities take care in selecting clothing to be worn while teaching to ensure that very busy patterns and plaids do not provide poor contrast with hands, thereby making signing unclear to the students.

Please refrain from wearing blue jeans, sweatpants, sweatshirts, hoodies, and rubber flip-flop footwear. Tight yoga pants and stretch leggings in place of slacks/pants are also not considered professional clothing unless the leggings are worn under a long tunic top.

Friday, however, may be considered a more casual day for classroom staff. On this day only, clean and neat dress jeans with no tears or stains are permitted. Staff should plan to “dress for your day” on casual work days. Be mindful if IEP or other meetings are scheduled when selecting work clothing.

During very hot weather, staff may wear longer dress shorts that maintain the wearer’s professional appearance. This applies to summer ESY programs and/or for outdoor activities such as Field Day but not during the regular teaching year. Coaches and PE instructors may, however, wear shorts as appropriate for their work. For more information, see the detailed Dress Code Policy developed and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Additionally, all staff should be familiar with the student dress code and monitor that students comply with those expectations.

8. KEYS AND IDENTIFICATION

Each staff member will be provided with a scan key card, a photo ID badge, and a key to his/her classroom or office. **Keys and IDs should be carried at all times.** Keys should be guarded and not left where students may gain access to them. Do not loan your staff keys to students at any time. An inventory of keys distributed to staff shall be maintained by the administration. Staff members must sign for all keys assigned to them each year. Keys shall be returned annually in June or July and reassigned in the fall of each new school year. Lost classroom keys are \$75.00 to replace and there is a \$2515.00 replacement charge for scan key cards.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The RISD shall make every reasonable effort to provide and maintain safe conditions for the health and safety of its employees and students.

Safety is everyone’s responsibility.

Any employee who notices an unsafe condition should report this situation immediately and make every effort to keep students and colleagues away from the danger.

Medical services should not be delayed if someone is hurt or care is needed. In the event that staff come upon a serious injury or an unconscious person, do not hesitate to

call 911 to request emergency response. The school's address is One Corliss Park in Providence (or use address 154 Hawkins Street - top of our main driveway for a dependable address.)

Many employees have been trained in CPR and Basic First Aid. The school has four (4) AEDs (heart defibrillators) located throughout the building.

In the event of a potential health-related contagious outbreak, RISD will follow the recommendations provided by the RI Department of Health as well as the RI Department of Education.

10. SUSPICION OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF A STUDENT

All persons in Rhode Island are required by law (RIGL §40-11-3) to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect. All employees are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect of a student.

If a faculty or staff member suspects that a child is being abused or seriously neglected, it must be reported confidentially and immediately to the Director, Principal, Special Education Director, and /or School Social Worker. Employees must not discuss these suspicions with peers, other colleagues, or students. Once the concern is reported, the investigation will commence. The mandated reporter who raises this concern must call DCYF themselves.

11. EMERGENCY DRILLS, LOCKDOWNS, FIRE DRILLS

It is the responsibility of all employees to follow emergency procedures. All staff will be trained in how to follow emergency procedures and will participate in numerous drills and practices throughout every school year. The State of RI requires 15 drills each school year. Of this number, 4 must be obstructed drills with 2 completed during September and October. A total of 8 must be completed by the end of November. The remaining 7 must be completed before the end of the school year and must include 2 evacuation drills and 2 lockdown drills. Staff should remain calm and proceed as trained, leading students to safety as quickly as possible.

Each classroom or office has a TV monitor connected to the school's emergency alert system. These monitors will display emergency alert messages and instructions. Escape routes are posted in each room throughout the building, displaying routes to nearest exit doors. Fire doors should be closed at all times. If the alert monitor is not directly in

your line of sight, please be sure to check the screen often as there is no monitor capability for external flashing lights.

For safety reasons, all classroom and office doors are usually locked during the instructional day but may be kept open if in locked key positions, in case they must be shut quickly in an emergency.

All classrooms are equipped with doorway flashing light buttons that will indicate when someone is requesting to enter if and when your door is locked.

Windows on classroom doors must not be obscured during regular teaching days. If they are found obscured, the covering will be taken down.

Injuries to students must be reported to the school nurse on the same day they occur. Older students can report to the nurse independently, but staff should assist and remain with younger students until the nurse is available.

Injuries sustained by a staff member must be reported to the Personnel Office on the same day they occur. The employee must complete a FIRST REPORT OF INJURY FORM and submit to the Personnel Office on that same day.

12. CLOSING OF SCHOOL

In the event of severe weather or an emergency which necessitates the closing of school, teachers, families, and students will receive alerts on the school website, local radio and television stations and through email. Families and staff may also choose to be notified through a schoolwide automated phone tree system called BLACKBOARD, which is an email, text, and telephone alert system. The RI Broadcasters Association maintains a school closing on-line notification system that can be bookmark at:

http://www.ribroadcasters.com/News_and_Events/Closings_Delays

Or

<https://turnto10.com/weather/closings>

All 12-month year-round employees shall report to work, as usual, unless otherwise instructed.

13. CLOSING FOR SNOW DAYS

Please be aware that snow days will not be virtual learning days unless we receive direct approval from RIDE. There are 4 days at the end of the school calendar reserved as make-up days in the event of closure due to inclement weather for which the Governor has not ordered a mandatory "state of emergency" shut down. These days will be considered part of the required 181 school days.

14. MAINTENANCE REQUESTS AND REPAIRS

All maintenance requests including repairs, moving of equipment or furniture, and general cleaning should be submitted through the Jotform found on the staff portal on the school website to be reviewed by the facilities manager. All necessary repairs or potentially dangerous situations involving facilities should be requested (reported electronically) through the facility maintenance request system which will be reviewed by our Facilities Manager.

Please do not request a non-emergency repair by going to a member of the Maintenance Team directly, without making a formal request using the online form.

These hard-working staff members do not have the authority to address concerns unless they are assigned directly to do so, and they all have daily scheduled responsibilities that must be taken care of first. Our Facilities Manager will schedule your request accordingly.

15. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The school is committed to creating conditions conducive to the physical and psychological health of everyone who works within its community. No staff member may use, possess, manufacture, sell, distribute, or be under the influence of any intoxicating or illegal substance, or be in possession of any equipment or paraphernalia connected with the use or manufacture of illegal substances while within the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees of this School.

16. SMOKING Rhode Island School for the Deaf is a smoke-free campus.

This school complies with all laws regarding smoking in the workplace, and strives to provide a work environment that promotes good health

and wellness and provides for the maximum well-being of its employees, students, and visitors. Smoking is illegal on any part of a school property at all schools in Rhode Island.

Research has clearly demonstrated that smoking is harmful. Accordingly, smoking (including vaping) is prohibited on all school grounds, on school buses, and at all school-sponsored events. Teachers and staff must refrain from smoking/vaping while on-school business and are strongly discouraged from smoking, vaping, or using tobacco whenever they may be in the presence of students. This applies to cigarettes, pipes, cigars, vaporizing cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and hand-rolled cigarettes. Those employees who smoke but desire to quit smoking may obtain materials on a variety of smoking cessation approaches from the Nursing Department.

17. ETHICAL PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONALISM

Rhode Island School for the Deaf is committed to conducting business and delivering services in an honest, ethical and transparent manner. No preferential treatment is given in the delivery of services, regardless of one's affiliation with the school.

It is expected that staff members will use professional behavior in the execution of all work duties and in dealings with others, will treat all members of the school community with mutual respect, and will maintain professional boundaries. Staff members are expected to make every attempt to patiently resolve any personal and professional differences that arise and to model this for students.

Staff should refrain from discussing students, other teachers, administrators, Board of Trustee members, staff members, or parents/guardians outside of conducting regular and necessary school business.

It is expected that all employees

- will abide by the Professional Standards for Rhode Island Educators and Administrators established by RIDE
- will faithfully follow policies and procedures as set by the Board and by the Administration,
- will respect and adhere to decisions and authority that apply to the whole school community, and
- will utilize appropriate channels of communication when seeking clarification or to resolve workplace problems.

The Director or designee shall make all staff assignments and transfers. No employee can refuse to work where assigned, unless it is in direct violation of contractual agreements that apply to the individual.

18. HARASSMENT

The school's goal is to promote a workplace that is free of harassment.

Harassment occurring in school or in any school activity settings is unlawful and will not be tolerated. To achieve our goal of providing a workplace that is free from harassment, conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated. RISD will respond promptly to complaints of harassment, and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, the school will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

What is Harassment?

Harassment is defined as unwanted behavior which is intended to, or which creates the effect of, violating a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. Such behavior may often be focused on characteristics that form the basis of prejudice and discrimination such as sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, and age. However, it is also possible for harassment to take place without intended discriminatory motives or effect. Harassment is verbal, written, texted, or physical conduct that demeans or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual and that may be offensive to others, create an offensive, intimidating or hostile working environment, or interfere with another employee's work performance.

It is impossible to give a comprehensive list of behaviors that may constitute harassment. The following are examples:

1. Offensive gestures, language, gossip or jokes
2. Insulting or abusive behavior or comments
3. Spreading malicious rumors
4. Physical contact, ranging from an invasion of personal space and/or inappropriate touching, to serious assault
5. Display of sexually suggestive, pornographic, racist or otherwise offensive pictures or other material or

the transmitting of any such messages or images via electronic mail or mobile devices

6. Persistent and unwanted isolation or exclusion
7. Persistent unwanted attention
8. Humiliating or intentionally demeaning criticism
9. Bullying
10. Epithets, slurs, insults or negative stereotyping.
11. Conduct or comments that are hostile or demeaning with regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age or disability.
12. Threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age or disability.
13. Written, texted, or graphic material that demeans, ridicules or shows hostility toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age or disability.

RISD will not tolerate harassment of employees on the job by supervisors and/or other employees nor by non-employees such as parents, vendors or contractors.

Retaliation against any individual for reporting or cooperating in the investigation of an incident of harassment is unlawful, will not be tolerated, and will be treated with the same strict discipline as the harassment itself.

19. HOUSEKEEPING

Common areas (teacher's lounges/ work rooms, libraries, meeting rooms, etc.) are to be kept neat and left in an acceptable condition. Please do not leave food or personal belongings in any common area or in school vehicles. Trash should be placed in trash receptacles, and tables wiped clean if used for eating.

Refrigerators are provided in the teacher lounges. Food that is perishable should not be left in refrigerators over the weekend. Teachers and staff shall ensure that the lounge and staff refrigerators are maintained in a clean fashion.

Any food goods in the building must be wrapped and stored properly in tightly covered containers to avoid attracting insects and rodents.

Outer school doors may not be propped open at any time. We have had many field mice enter through doors that were propped for only minutes and then they have proceeded to nest in the school. Let's be vigilant about this.

20. VIDEOPHONES

School telephones and videophones are provided in several places throughout the building. This equipment is intended for school business and is not provided for personal calls, except in emergencies. Teachers will not be interrupted while teaching students in order to take phone calls unless there is an emergency. The front office personnel can take phone messages while teachers are with students, and these will be relayed to teachers during breaks or after school.

Cell phones and tv alert monitors serve as the school's inter-office communication network for critical communication among faculty and staff, especially during emergencies.

Personal business conducted on cell phones should occur when off duty or alone with no students present and when no student responsibilities are assigned.

**** Personal cell phones may not be used by teachers and staff in classrooms during instructional time, in the presence of students, in the hallways, or during school training sessions, workshops, and meetings.**

In addition, all staff should be familiar with the student cell phone policy and assure that students comply with those expectations. Student cell phones should be off and put away or collected by the classroom teacher during class and given back to students after class. If students abuse this privilege after a warning, the school may take away a student's cell phone privilege for the remainder of the quarter. The principal must be notified of students who violate cell phone policies.

21. COPY MACHINES/ PRINTERS/ FAX MACHINES

Printer/copy machines are located in the library for high school staff use, in the staff lounge for middle school staff use, in the work-study area for preschool and elementary staff use, and in the Main Office. Staff may be assigned a privacy code for copying. All copiers have scanning capability. Fax machines are also available. These machines are intended for school business and are not intended for personal or non-school business.

Students are not permitted to use school copiers or fax machines without permission and should be accompanied by their teacher. Any malfunctions noted with this equipment should be reported immediately to Assistant Director or IT Coordinator via email.

22. COMPUTER AND INTERNET USAGE

The internet offers a wealth of information, the ease and opportunity to exchange ideas, and the possibility of collaboration. Use of computers, network, network equipment and internet access is a privilege for staff and students, not a right. It is expected that these tools will be used in a responsible manner for educational purposes consistent with the objectives of this school. Users are responsible for their actions when using technology at school.

Accessing or transmitting inappropriate materials, student information or photographs, conducting illegal activities or sales, violating copyrights, cyber-stalking or cyber-harassment, malicious use or harm, misuse of passwords/ unauthorized access, etc. are examples of unacceptable uses that are expressly prohibited. All network, files, email, and records belong solely to RISD and may be monitored, edited, or deleted at any time by the administration. There are no expectations of privacy when using the school's technology services.

23. SUPPLIES AND STAFF ORDERS

Program and classroom supplies should be treated carefully and students should be instructed to care for school belongings. When additional or new supplies are needed, requests may be submitted directly to the main office for your supervisor's approval using a requisition form. No supplies, equipment, or textbooks should be ordered without prior approval.

Please use materials responsibly. If new materials are needed that we already have in the supply closet, you may request them through the Fiscal Clerk in the main office. Please do not take items from the supply closet yourself, as they are counted and budgeted for.

All requests made to FRIENDS of RISD or other funding sources such as DONOR'S CHOICE, etc. for funding of special items must be submitted through the Jotform system found on the School's website first to your supervisor then Director for final approval.

Please note: at no time may student's names or identifying information be used on public media when posting online requests for funding. Thank you for protecting student privacy.

24. CAFETERIA SUPPLIES

Cafeteria supplies are purchased through a carefully controlled system for student use only. Staff may not take condiments, paper plates, napkins or plastic eating utensils from the cafeteria for personal or classroom use or for arts and crafts projects. This includes requesting to use kitchen knives, pans or other materials.

25. BIRTHDAYS AND RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Birthdays are very special to youngsters. In the Preschool, Kindergarten, and Elementary grades, students and staff may celebrate individual birthdays. Parents are welcome to come in for birthday celebrations but may not bring birthday cakes/cupcakes into school.

We regret that we cannot accept treats and food from home due to food allergies.

Teachers and staff should make every effort to make the day special for young children without an emphasis on food treats. It is important to acknowledge each older child's birthday, as well, but teachers shall not interrupt instruction to celebrate birthdays in the older grades. No birthday cakes or unhealthy treats should be brought into the classroom in middle or high school. Rather, RIDE's policy on not emphasizing food shall be adhered.

Exposure to holidays may be appropriate as part of the general curriculum. Children may be introduced to a wide variety of cultural and religious holidays (along with corresponding vocabulary) that are celebrated around the world.

Celebrating religious holidays in the classroom must be balanced with the educational purposes of such celebrations. No one specific religion may be highlighted at the expense of another. If, for example, a teacher feels it is important to teach about Christmas vocabulary, then all other winter holiday vocabulary must also be introduced to students (i.e., Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Diwali, etc.).

Please be considerate of students/staff who do not celebrate holidays and those who

celebrate various lesser known religious holidays. The list of religious observances is on the calendar issued by the school at the beginning of the school year. Note the dates and plan class work, homework assignments, and tests/quizzes accordingly.

If an employee requires personal time related to a non-scheduled religious holiday, please file requests with your supervisor through Frontline in a timely fashion so that preparations may be made for any possible absences from the classroom.

26. INTERPRETING SERVICES

RISD employs a certified staff ASL Interpreter and often uses certified ASL interpreters and global language interpreters and translators from the community to serve our students educational needs and staff members' professional needs.

The Staff 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 world language translators are provided for meetings and school events at no charge to the family.

To schedule an interpreter or translator, all requests must be submitted in writing through the Interpreter Request Form or Translator Request Form. Please provide as much lead time as possible. If a CDI (certified Deaf interpreter) is more appropriate, please be specific in your request. ASL interpreters will be secured by the Staff ASL interpreter. World language translators will be secured by the School Secretary.

27. PERSONAL PETS

Personal pets belonging to staff may be allowed at school, with the advance approval of the Principal, for the sole purpose of curriculum enrichment. Pet owners must show proof that all required shots have been given by a licensed veterinarian. Pet owners must take full responsibility for any damage or harm caused by their pets while at school.

28. THERAPY DOG

RISD recognizes the benefits of inviting certified therapy dogs to campus. All therapy dogs who visit will be fully trained and certified as a therapy dog by a nationally recognized organization. Any therapy dog on school grounds will have their trained and certified handler with them at all times.

29. STUDENT RECORDS

Every student at Rhode Island School for the Deaf has an annual IEPs, which summarizes the child's learning style, necessary accommodations and modifications for learning, Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, academic, and functional goals and short term objectives, testing accommodations, placement designation, and transition assessments and services.

The Following Teacher/Graduation Coach is responsible for knowing about that student's educational profile and for knowing and understanding what is included in the student's IEP. IEPs are maintained in each student's black binder file, which is located in a central locked file area when not in use.

In addition to IEPs, student files contain records of eligibility, student testing, evaluations and assessment information, health, allergy, and emergency information, quarterly progress reports, transition information, consents and release of records authorizations, as well as, important correspondence related to the child. Correspondence from the parent to RISD and from RISD and sending school districts to the parent (beyond normal, daily, or routine concerns) should also be filed in the student's record.

Teachers should make it a priority to read the IEP and become familiar with the evaluations and files of each student in their care as early in the schoolyear as possible. This is the legal responsibility of each teacher.

These records are maintained in a locked office in the Front Office area in black binders, one for each student. To read student records, please request and sign out the binder from the Information Aide or School Secretary.

If you receive a request for student records to be shared or mailed out to another party, you must refer this request to the Special Education Director. Do not mail out student information without approval.

If you are asked to complete a questionnaire or forms for a student, the administration must review a copy of your responses before they are mailed or returned.

30. TRANSPORTATION/ SCHOOL VEHICLE RESERVATION

Vehicles are available for student and class use, but they must be reserved at least 2 weeks in advance.

The use of personal vehicles to transport students is not permitted.

All requests for transportation must be submitted through a Jotform. Requests should be made on a field trip form, or if the purpose is not for a field trip, by email to Facilities Manager. Requests must include the date, time of departure and arrival, number of students needing transportation, destination, and if a driver will be needed. If you are requesting a wheelchair accessible van, please be specific.

Any staff who drive a school vehicle must have a copy of their driver's license on file in the Personnel Office. Any member of the staff driving a school vehicle is expected to obey RI traffic laws, and is responsible for any driving infractions (speeding or parking tickets).

31. TRAVEL

All applicable state travel regulations apply for all in-state and out-of-state travel for State/RISD employees. Staff must obtain the written pre-approval of the Director or Assistant Director prior to incurring any travel expenses. Requests for reimbursement of authorized travel expenses must now be submitted electronically. See the School Secretary for instructions on how to follow this procedure.

Rhode Island requires special pre-approval for out-of-state travel, including when driving the vehicle yourself.

32. VACATION AND PERSONAL LEAVE

All requests to discharge vacation time, sick time or personal leave must be submitted to your supervisor via FRONTLINE for prior approval. Prior to approving such leave, your supervisor will review to ensure that adequate personnel will be in place for the safe and continued operation of the school and its functions. All contractual agreements will be

adhered to and include language outlining how far in advance requests should be made. For any staff that do not follow a union contract, requests for time off must be made 14 days in advance for review and approval.

Please remember that requests for using personal time require at least a 5-day advance window per the teachers contract.

33. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) REQUESTS

Regular professional development for educators is now tied to renewal of certification.

Extensive PD is offered on-site during the school year. Staff members may submit a request to attend workshops or conferences related to their assigned position through the Jotform found on the School's staff portal. Should a staff member require to attend an important PD off-campus, a **new Request for PD** form must be submitted at least 3 weeks in advance for approval. There are limited funds for outside, unplanned PD, and the School makes every effort to distribute these funds evenly for important training and meetings that faculty and staff may need to attend. PD needs that offer PLUs needed for recertification or current classroom needs will have priority.

All PD must be related to the position the staff member holds and must provide information that is relevant to our current students. When an off-campus PD offering is approved, the staff member who attends is expected to share new skills and knowledge with the School staff upon return. Materials obtained as part of the registration paid for by RISD are the property of the School.

There might be times when PD funds are unavailable. The administration may offer to approve the time off, paid, to allow the staff member to attend the PD, if desired, at their own cost.

34. VISITORS

The safety of our school community is paramount; therefore, all outside doors are to be kept locked and never left propped open.

All volunteers, including parents and grandparents, must first receive a cleared BCI (RI background check). Background checks from other states do not satisfy this requirement. BCIs are obtained from the State

Attorney General office in Cranston, RI, and at some local police stations.

Clients, vendors, parents, and visitors of this school are required to sign in upon arrival and to sign out when departing. Only those individuals with official school business will be permitted to enter the school building. Each person will be given a visitor's pass to wear and will be seated in the reception area until an appropriate escort is arranged. At no time will clients, visitors, or vendors be allowed beyond the reception area without being accompanied by a staff member.

Staff members who are expecting a parent, a classroom visitor, or a vendor should notify the Information Aide or the School Secretary in advance.

Adult family members will first be required to obtain a BCI. Please note that children of staff and faculty are not permitted to travel on school vehicles.

Faculty and staff shall not bring their children to work while school is in session. Adult family members may visit the classroom for the sole purpose of curriculum enrichment and must obtain a BCI prior to entering the classroom.

Children of staff are not permitted to travel on school vehicles.

35. VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers must apply and be approved by the administration.

For anyone coming in for more than one day, we require a resume, a letter of request explaining their desire to volunteer, preferred age group, past experiences with children, and a description of their ASL skill level.

If over 18 years of age, they also require a Rhode Island BCI. If under age 18 and intending to volunteer for school purposes, a letter from their teacher explaining its purpose and attesting to the character of the high school/college student is required. Volunteer files will be maintained in the Personnel Office.

36. BRANDS/ MARKETING

RI general law is very strong in supporting healthy foods in schools. It now forbids promoting junk food, fast food restaurants or unhealthy product brands in front of students. That includes Dunkin Donuts, McDonald's, or other well-known and popular items. Please be mindful to minimize exposure in your classroom and ensure that your own personal use does not violate this regulation.

37. DIVERSITY

Managing diversity is the process of creating and maintaining a work culture that naturally enables all employees in our work force to contribute their full potential to our school's common pursuits. The term diversity refers to the differences and similarities that exist in the collective mixture of all employees in our workplace. These include differences that may be visible, such as race, generational values and age, gender, communication styles, differing hearing levels, etc., as well as those that are not as obvious such as culture, educational backgrounds, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and differing abilities, etc.

Here at this school, we experience an intersection of many diverse individuals and cultures. We recognize that this requires flexibility and inclusive practices that seek to help us learn more about each other and not to react or judge. At RISD, we seek to be consensus-building and not confrontational in our cross-cultural and cross-diversity efforts in the workplace.

Diversity is strongly desired and actively pursued. The ultimate goal is to build and sustain an equitable workplace where all staff may share their varied backgrounds and talents freely and creatively for the benefit of our students.

38. FAMILY ASL INSTRUCTION

Family members of enrolled students occasionally ask teachers about opportunities to learn ASL. We strongly encourage all families of Deaf/hard of hearing children to learn ASL and RISD offers several opportunities to do so.

All families (including PIP families) may take ASL classes through our partnerships with two community groups, *Perspectives*, and *ASL Academy*. These classes are held here at RISD and at other locations in RI, one night/week. To help parents/guardians learn to better communicate with their children, RISD will subsidize these ASL class

tuitions through six consecutive levels, while the family is a part of our school community. Staff should direct parents who wish to participate to the School Secretary in the Main Office or to the School website where they can register directly.

Specialized classes and offerings occur at RISD through the year for families and may include:

- *Personalized classes for Spanish speaking families*
- *Sibling Signs*
- *Shared Reading Saturdays*
- *Opportunities for 1:1 ASL tutoring/ classes with selected staff members*

IV. FOR TEACHERS:

1. EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION/ PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

Every teacher must obtain a certificate in the educator's area of specialized academic content. All RI professional certifications and licenses must remain updated and current to maintain employment at RISD. Initial certifications are active for three years.

It is the teacher's responsibility to obtain certification and follow renewal procedures prior to the expiration date.

Please note your expiration date as soon as possible when you receive your certification. Per Rhode Island Law, those with an expired certification, no matter how recent, cannot teach in a RI classroom. The renewal process through RIDE can often require up to fourteen weeks, therefore it is recommended that all professionals take a proactive approach and apply for renewal in January/February of the year that their certification is due to expire. (Most certifications fully expire in August.) If a certification expires, RISD cannot re-employ, and the candidate for renewal is required to meet **current** educator certification standards in order to renew. This may involve taking several PRAXIS or content area tests not previously taken.

PLUs (Professional Learning Units) are now required for certification renewal in your content area through RIDE. Starting in 2021, certifications will be renewed for five years.

Teachers are responsible for keeping a log of professional development and PLUs. It is best practice to review these annually with a supervisor.

In the case where RISD may obtain an emergency certification for an employee, RIDE will award the emergency certification with the joint understanding that the employee has up to 2 1/2 years to meet the requirements detailed for each certificate in order to maintain employment. In some cases, if extensive coursework is required, permission may be obtained to extend the emergency certification as long as the PRAXIS tests have been completed and passed. Employees working under an emergency certification, must show evidence of progress towards completion of the requirements for full certification annually. Emergency certifications will not be extended if no progress has been made toward obtaining certification in the State of RI.

Parents may request information regarding the qualifications of both classroom teachers and paraprofessionals who work with their children. This request should be made in writing to the school Principal.

2. CURRICULUM AND SCHEDULES

The RI School for the Deaf has a list of approved curricular materials and several expected educational approaches throughout the grade levels. Educators shall use, teach, and model all **approved** curriculum content, textbooks, and approaches as assigned.

Because this school serves Deaf and hard of hearing children, all faculty are expected to use best practices in Deaf Education to deliver instruction. This especially includes the consistent use of clear American Sign Language and helpful visual supports to strengthen student learning.

Bulletin boards and wall space are to be considered curricular supports and, as such, should contain visuals that are related to current content and updated frequently to correlate with topics being learned by students.

Student schedules are carefully designed to comply with graduation requirements, IEP compliance, and critical conversations with parents and faculty. These schedules, as assigned, shall be maintained and implemented with fidelity. If a schedule conflict becomes apparent, approval is needed by the principal before changes can be made.

Teachers may not make schedule changes without approval. All changes must be reported by the school to RIDE, therefore reporting changes correctly are essential to the accuracy of our Student Information System.

3. STATE TESTING/ STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

Rhode Island administers standard assessments at specific grade levels. Students in grades 3-8 are administered the RI Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. Students in grades 5, 8, and 11, also take the RI Next Generation Science Assessments (RINGSA). Although these tests are often very challenging to second language learners, preparing our students to achieve on these tests is our legal responsibility as stated in RI General Law.

Teachers shall ensure that each classroom above grade 3 provides regular opportunities to practice answering RICAS and RINGSA-type questions.

Students who are determined eligible for Alternate Assessment by their IEP team are administered the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) web-based assessment. These students take the DLM assessment in ELA and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11. They also take the DLM science assessment in grades 5, 8, and 11.

For students who attend this school who live out-of-state, we are legally obligated to prepare them for the state tests administered by their state. For Massachusetts students, this is the MCAS or MCAS-Alt, which commences at Grade 3. For Connecticut students, this is the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

At the high school level (grade 10 and 11) the PSAT10 and SAT are administered annually during the school day. The same responsibility to provide regular practice in test approaches applies to teachers of these students, as well.

Students who are identified as MultiLingual Learners per the Federal guidelines take the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State assessment (ACCESS) annually in the Spring. The ACCESS test assesses English Language Proficiency in multiple domains.

4. TEACHER LESSON /UNIT PLANS DUE BIWEEKLY

The purpose of a lesson plan is to communicate the direction and modification of daily lessons within the structure of approved curriculum. Good lesson design begins with a “hook” to engage learners. Previously learned material may be reviewed when needed as long as new material is introduced daily, followed by opportunities for learners to practice and be evaluated, both in formative and summative fashion, on what they are learning. A lesson plan is not a list of activities but is, instead, a cohesive story about both teaching and learning goals and daily assessment activities.

Teachers shall prepare clear and thorough lesson plans that are aligned to Common Core State Standards, RI Early Learning and Development Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, RI Social Studies Standards, or Grade Level Expectations. Plans for preschool through high school classes shall be shared biweekly in a Google folder, for information and alignment purposes. Feedback will be provided when needed. The initial lesson plan is due Monday of the second full week of school and should include plans for at least the following 2 weeks of instruction.

Note: The first unit plans for preschool, kindergarten and elementary cover 6 weeks (following *Responsive Classroom* interactive modeling protocols), and they are due Monday of the second full week of school.

*** All plans should include the following components:

- Dates
- Subject matter/content goals
- Standards that apply
- Description of the students’ work/ activities
- Significant differentiation expectations if necessary
- Special events, if planned
- Formative assessment activities (daily) that measure learning

Planning Shall Use Backwards Design for Completing Units.

Pacing target is 8-9 distinct units per School Year per academic subject.

5. SUBSTITUTE PLANS

It is the responsibility of every teacher to prepare clear, complete, and appropriate *Substitute Teacher Plans* and have them available whenever they are absent from work. This lesson plan should address enough items to allow the students in each class to be productively occupied for the

full period of time or day(s). Teachers shall prepare at least 3-days worth of emergency lesson plans to be used in the event of an unexpected absence. Emergency lesson plans should be updated regularly to reflect current course content.

Please remember to include critical information such as student names, behavior plans, health & allergies info, if a classroom assistant is usually present, any reward systems used, special classes scheduled, etc. These should be in a folder or binder clearly labeled "Substitute Teacher's Folder (Binder)" on the teacher's desk.

6. REPORTING STUDENT ATTENDANCE

IMPORTANT: Teachers must report student attendance for their HOMEROOM class in Rediker each morning before 9:00 AM using the following codes:

If a student is present, do nothing, leave the cell blank

2K- absent

1F- virtual learning- present (we can only use this code if our virtual learning plan is approved by RIDE for snow days. As of 8/21/2024, we do not have an approved plan. Code 1F should not be used at this time.)

Tardy or early dismissal- do nothing, Information Aide will change the student's status in Rediker.

If a teacher is unsure how to do this, please contact your mentor, the principal, or the school information specialist for training.

Reporting attendance accurately is very important. This information is used to account for students during an emergency and is sent directly to RIDE each day. It is also used for the federal free and reduced lunch program and other tuition-based programs. The School Nurse also relies on this list for medication distribution.

The absentee list will be sent out as soon as all information is received from teachers. It will be updated if students arrive late. If a student does not appear on the absentee list and does not appear in your scheduled class, please inform Information Aide immediately.

The school reception area will maintain a log of early dismissal/ late arrivals. No student can be released from school early without notification to the School Secretary and a written and signed notification from the parent/ guardian. If these requests come to the classroom

teacher, please pass them along to the Main Office immediately. Parents should be encouraged to report late arrivals or early dismissals via the absent@rideaf.net email address.

This written and signed notification now applies to 18-year old students, as well. If they choose to leave school early, they are required to supply a written request with reason for early dismissal. They are encouraged to view school as their job and demonstrate accountability for good attendance. Students who leave early are responsible for any and all assignments and work missed.

Use hall passes. Middle and High School students need a hall pass to enter a class late. If the student is tardy, send them back to their last scheduled location to get a pass. If the last location cannot or will not supply a hall pass, the student shall proceed to the Principal to explain their unusual request for a pass.

7. FOLLOWING TEACHERS, GRADUATION COACHES, and CASE MANAGERS

Each certified teacher of the deaf and/or special education teacher will be assigned a role of Following Teacher for specific students through middle school or a Graduation Coach for those students in high school. The Following Teacher/Graduation Coaches serve several functions including being the primary contact to the family regarding specific student concerns, case management for IEP purposes and graduations coaches will provide guidance for high school students completing PBGR requirements. Academic concerns about a child that are raised by others should be brought to the child's Following Teacher/Graduation Coach. Following Teachers/Graduation Coaches are responsible to communicate at least 4-5 times per year with each family. Following Teacher/Graduation Coaches shall be responsible for ensuring that child-centered and appropriate IEPs are developed annually.

Bear in mind that building a personal relationship is the goal to engage parents. For that reason, aim to have as many positive conversations as possible to soften the words raised during any hard conversations that may be necessary. When the language of the child's home is not English, the Following Teacher/Graduation Coach still has the obligation to communicate regularly. To achieve this, we have purchased a subscription to *Language Line*, a translator on-call system. A world language translator may be used, sitting beside the teacher, as they speak with the family. Under no circumstances should the school social

worker be expected to continue to assume this responsibility for the teacher.

8. PARENT COMMUNICATION/ LOGS

As stated above, each Following Teacher/Graduation Coach is expected to communicate directly with each child's parent/guardian at least 4-5 times per school year. All correspondence should be reported on a parent communication log that can be shared, when requested. The first communication should be a letter of introduction about yourself sent within the first week of school.

9. CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Classroom assistants are valuable members of the faculty who are thoughtfully assigned to classrooms to provide support to the teacher and students. They serve students during the day and provide an important and unique perspective to our program. Their schedules are reviewed at least quarterly to ensure that the School is using their skills to the maximum benefit of its students, as schedules and student needs tend to change. Six classroom assistants work directly for RISD.

Others may be hired for behavioral and personal care support through a contract agency (i.e., ADIL) or by an individual district, as described on a child's IEP. Those hired through contract or a school district may have different hours of work and have limited specific responsibilities related to the student they support.

Classroom assistants may not communicate directly with parents about classroom matters. This is the responsibility of a certified teacher.

10. BACKWARDS DESIGN

Below is a brief summary of the three stages of backward design used in *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins, 2011):

Stage 1- Identify Desired Results

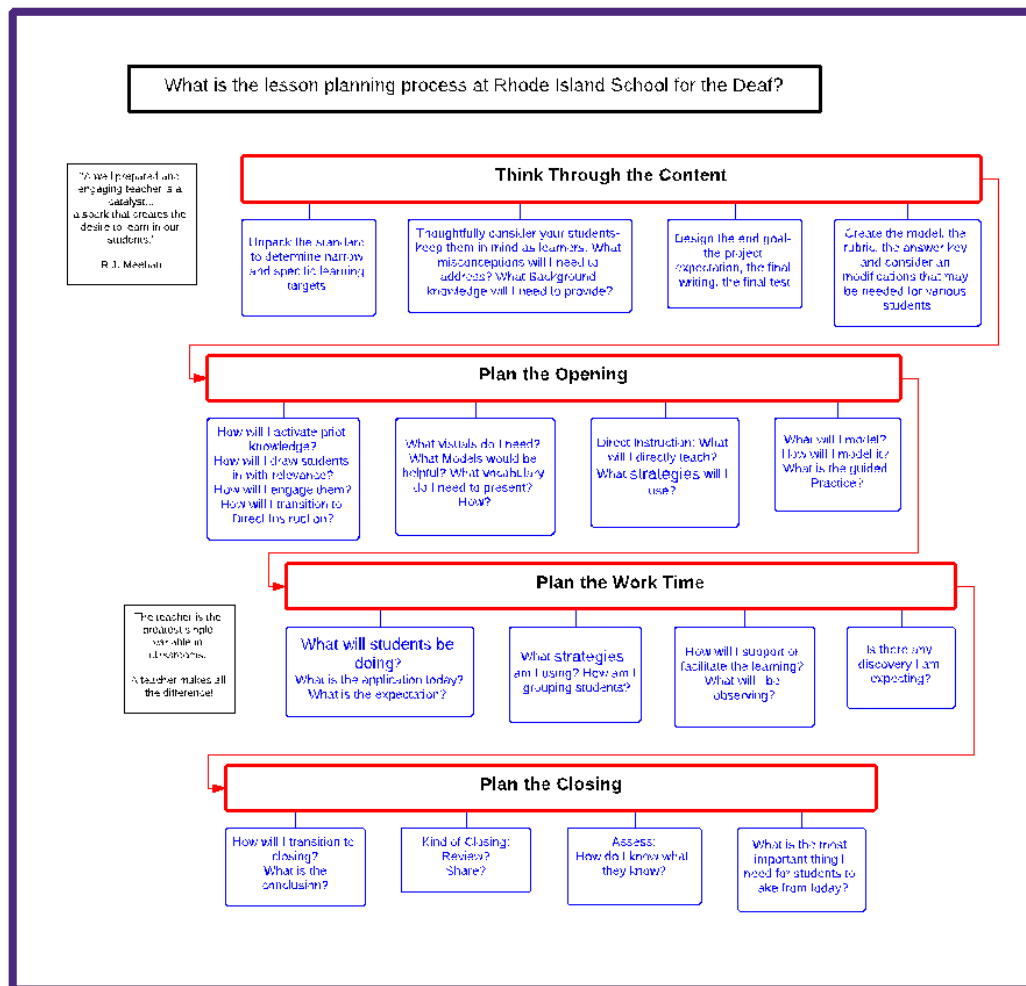
- What long-term transfer goals are targeted?
- What meanings should students make to arrive at important understandings?
- What essential questions will students keep considering?
- What knowledge and skill will students acquire?
- What established goals/standards are targeted?

Stage 2- Determine Acceptable Evidence

- What performances and products will reveal evidence of meaning-making and transfer?
- By what criteria will performance be assessed, in light of Stage 1 desired results?
- What additional evidence will be collected for all Stage 1 desired results?
- Are the assessments aligned to all Stage 1 elements?

Stage 3-Plan Learning Experiences and Instruction Accordingly

- What activities, experiences, and lessons will lead to achievement of the desired results and success at the assessments?
- How will the learning plan help students achieve transfer, and meaning and acquisition, with increasing independence?
- How will progress be monitored?
- How will the unit be sequenced and differentiated to optimize achievements for all learners?
- Are the learning events in State 3 aligned with Stage 1 goals and Stage 2 assessments?



11. IEPs

Each Following Teacher/Graduation Coach will also serve as IEP case manager for their students. This special education role is different from that of a Following Teacher/Graduation Coach, although the roles often overlap. IEP case managers are the key players in gathering information regarding, successes and concerns of both parents and staff, prior to the IEP meeting. To gather information from the parent the **IEP Planning, Parent Information form** should be sent home 2-3 weeks prior to the IEP meeting. The Following Teacher/Graduation CoachThey most often facilitate the meeting, and they ensure that all faculty members of the IEP team complete their IEP entries and summaries. Additionally, they ensure that demographic information is up to date and that the IEP meeting date, effective dates, service delivery dates and Supplementary Aids dates are updated annually. The IEP document must be completed at least 3 school days prior to the scheduled meeting date in order to provide the parent/guardian and LEA copies prior to the meeting. * They also coordinate the completion of the quarterly reports that comment

on the students' progress toward the achievement of IEP goals. *See Case Manager binders provided to each teacher authorized to conduct IEP meetings.

IEP meetings are conducted in the manner most accessible to the parent/guardian. This can include in person, through ZOOM (or other virtual meeting platforms), or via phone conference. Interpreters are included as part of the Special Education Team as needed.

12. HOMEWORK

Homework is an important tool for practice of skills and for communication with families about their child's academic development and class content.

Homework is expected to be assigned for all students at RISD from Grade 1 and above at least 3x/week. For more specific information about homework amounts to be assigned, please see the information in the Student Handbooks for each department level.

13. RISD IS A PEANUT-FREE AND LATEX-FREE SCHOOL

Due to severe allergies to peanuts and tree nuts present in our student body and with some staff members as well, we do not permit any food in the classrooms or at school events that contain nuts or nut products. All staff members are expected to honor this policy in their own food choices, in lunches and snacks, in selecting ingredients used for cooking activities with children, and in any food sales planned as part of student activities.

Our school nurse must approve ingredients purchased or brought from home for use in the classrooms or during any cooking activities at least one day prior to the activity. An orange sticker will be placed on each item to indicate that it has been approved for use in the School.

Latex gloves, balloons, and materials are prohibited during school hours. Our nursing department uses only latex-free gloves. If balloons or gloves are needed for a celebration, or event, staff should choose latex-free products and/or mylar balloons instead.

Exceptions are possible for special events where latex balloons will be used high above student reach for decorative purposes; however, these exceptions must be first authorized by the school nurse. Occasionally a science or art project may require use of a latex balloon. Again, the school nurse must approve and the use will be monitored carefully

through following our established Board of Trustees policy on one-time use of latex.

14. SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

Field trips and excursions outside of the school grounds are valuable tools for Deaf and hard of hearing students for extending learning about the real-world beyond the classroom. The school administration encourages “hands-on” enrichment opportunities that can be shared with students outside of the classroom, therefore field trips that add to the curriculum are strongly supported. Our goal is to provide students with “bridging” experiences that will connect various real-life applications of skills with general knowledge. Most of our students are visual learners and benefit greatly from “seeing while learning. “

It is expected that field trips will be tied to classroom content. The Rhode Island Department of Education does not permit recreational trips that are not tied to classroom instruction to be counted as “time on learning.” Field trips should be selected and planned to support the curriculum and structured with careful consideration for student safety.

Approval for these trips must be requested using the Jotform on the staff portal on the school website at least 2 weeks in advance (see Field Trip Request Form) to the Director and subsequently to the Nursing and Transportation departments. All approvals must be received PRIOR to making financial contractual arrangements. If school vehicles will be used, remember to request them at least 2 weeks ahead of time. We have limited chauffeurs available on staff, and scheduling drivers may not be possible if requests are submitted with less than 2-weeks notice .

Cafeteria personnel must be notified at least 5 days in advance if bag lunches are needed or if students will not need lunch. Our cafeteria employee makes every effort to order lunches for students in the event of their absence or if they forget to order. Advance notice of field trips will ensure that she does not mistakenly order lunches for those students.

Costs should be reasonable and directed to parents/guardians. If a family indicates an inability to pay, please bring this confidential information to the Principal so that arrangements, if possible, may be made to sponsor the child’s participation.

15. FIELD TRIP EXPECTATIONS

To ensure maximum benefit from field trips, the following approach is required:

- **Pre-teaching** before the actual activity happens to familiarize students with the planned destination and to help them understand the anticipated purpose for the excursion.
- **Good planning** to ensure group safety, appropriate supervision, and maximum learning benefit for our students for the duration of the activity. It is always wise to visit the site yourself, if possible, beforehand to become familiar with what will be available to the children when they arrive. If you have a student who uses a wheelchair, check to ensure that the facility is accessible.
- **Language Access on Field Trips** Ask yourself whether you can ensure that all pertinent information will be fully accessible to the class group or if requesting the services of an ASL interpreter would be advisable. If so, arrange for an interpreter ahead of time. The American with Disabilities Act requires that public facilities provide access to those who require it under the Law. Many museums and public facilities will make every effort to secure ASL interpreters for your group if you provide sufficient time and notice of need.

If the museum/facility is unable to secure an ASL interpreter, speak with our school interpreter. Our school interpreter can often negotiate directly on our behalf with the museum or facility to provide interpreting services for a fee. At other times, the public facility may negotiate a lower fee or drop the fee, if RISD provides its own interpreters. Don't be afraid to discuss these options when making necessary accommodations or ask our Staff Interpreter to help negotiate.

The following requirements must be in place before leaving school grounds:

1. Signed parent notification that a field trip is planned. Teachers should indicate location, purpose, date, times, costs, and mode of transportation.
2. Confirmed reservations.
3. Reserved vehicles as well as car seats, if necessary, with licensed drivers identified OR clear discussions with students before the trip about using public transportation in a safe manner.
4. Sufficient chaperones to ensure appropriate ratios of faculty to students.
5. ASL interpreters arranged, as needed.
6. Necessary medications that will be needed for students must be arranged beforehand through coordination with the Nursing Department.

7. Complete First Aid/ OSHA kit and student emergency information for the students traveling in that vehicle must be available on each vehicle if possible.

- **Post-teaching** is expected upon return to the classroom. Teachers should connect the students' experiences once again to the curriculum and reinforce important academic highlights.

Parents/guardians are always welcome as chaperones, especially in preschool, once they have received the annual required BCI and fingerprint check.

****Unfortunately, we cannot assume responsibility for or allow younger siblings in our school vehicles.**

16. RECESS

R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-22-4.2 states, *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.*

Unless the weather is severe (below 33 degrees or severe wind chill) or it is steadily raining, teachers in these younger grades should plan their outerwear and footwear accordingly.

During outdoor play, using sidewalk chalk is a fun activity for drawing and writing on the ground. Please do not permit writing by the students on the school building itself.

The playground sheds are provided for securing the students' outdoor toys, balls, bikes, and materials. Staff should lock the sheds at the conclusion of recess every day.

17. MOVIES

Commercial and web-based films may be shown to support learning at school. When choosing movies and internet-based materials, however, all staff must take care to ensure that the material matches the age of the target student audience and contains

age-appropriate content. Movie and maturity ratings must be followed. Movies must be closed captioned or interpreted for access. We do not generally allow R- rated movies to be shown in school to our high school students, however a clip or scene may be approved by the Principal and shown to students, if it is appropriate to classroom content and contains no explicit and inappropriate language or extreme violence.

18. CLASSROOM PETS

Pets (with the exception of snakes) are permitted and encouraged at school and in classrooms, if no student in that classroom has a documented allergy to such a pet. Prior approval must be obtained from your supervisor before bringing a pet to school. Teachers must assume total care for the pet and must make plans to ensure that the pet has care during school breaks and holidays.

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF DAILY PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK SIGN-OFF Form

To ensure that you have received and read the RISD Daily Procedures and Operational Guidelines for Direct Service Faculty and Staff, you will receive a Google employee sign-off form.

Employee sign-off forms must be completed within four days of receipt of the handbook and will be maintained by the personnel office throughout your service years.

PLEASE NOTE:

****For the 2024-2025 School year, YOU WILL RECEIVE AN ELECTRONIC GOOGLE FORM (From Amy V) THAT MUST BE COMPLETED.**

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK SIGN-OFF FORM 2024-2025

To: Personnel Office

I am in receipt of the 2024-2025 Rhode Island School for the Deaf *Faculty and Staff Daily Procedures and Operational Guidelines Handbook*. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and I have read and understood the staff expectations and procedures outlined within the handbook.

Signature

to be submitted electronically

Date: